

BUSH IS RIGHT ON IRAQ: THE ISSUE IS COMPLIANCE, NOT INSPECTIONS

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President George W. Bush's resolve in confronting Iraq over its decade-long record of defiance of the United Nations has succeeded in getting Baghdad to agree unconditionally to the return of U.N. weapons inspectors. Their mission will continue to be to search out and destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles. While Baghdad's recent letter acquiescing to the inspections is promising, it does not mean that the crisis has been defused or that further confrontation with Iraq can be avoided. As the President has reminded the U.N. and Congress, the real issue is not the inspections but Iraq's consistent failure to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions, which require it to disarm, cease supporting terrorism and violating the human rights of its people, and account for those missing from the Persian Gulf War.

Because Iraq failed to comply with these resolutions even when U.N. inspectors were in Iraq, the return of inspectors is no guarantee of success in enforcing U.N. resolutions. The Security Council should adopt a new resolution that documents Iraq's violations of existing U.N. resolutions, demands compliance, and authorizes the use of force if Iraq fails to comply. It should not adopt a resolution that merely commends Iraq for allowing the inspectors to return.

TAKING A NEW AND RESOLUTE APPROACH

In his September 12 speech before the U.N. General Assembly, President Bush starkly laid out Iraq's systematic violation of 16 Security Council resolutions. Specifically, he described Saddam Hussein's determined efforts to possess WMD, his regime's support of and ties to terrorism, and its widespread human rights violations, including the brutal repression and mass murder of minorities.

Such violations are a clear threat to peace and stability to the region and the world, especially if Iraq continues to acquire and develop nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and ballistic missiles—dangerous weapons that Saddam Hussein could provide to the terrorist groups with which he is allied. A resolution that focuses solely on the matter of weapons inspections would merely reinforce the status quo,

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which has allowed Iraq to ignore the resolutions, evict the inspectors, and continue its WMD efforts.

The strategy suggested by French President Jacques Chirac embodies this flawed repetition of past mistakes. He is demanding two new Security Council resolutions—one ordering Iraqi compliance with Security Council demands and a second authorizing the use of force if Saddam Hussein does not comply. But the Security Council has passed nearly 60 resolutions involving Iraq since it invaded Kuwait in 1990, including numerous admonitions that Iraq comply with U.N. demands. Saddam Hussein has flouted these repeatedly, but faced no repercussions other than further admonitions. This record of defiance requires that any new resolution must be backed by an immediate authorization for the use of force, rather than a vague possibility of future action.

Others suggest instituting a more robust inspection regime backed up by U.N. peacekeepers to force Iraq's compliance. This approach has several flaws. First, Iraq will either comply with the U.N. resolutions or it will not. Having U.N.-led troops accompany the inspectors assumes Iraq's willingness to accede to U.N. demands. It also offers opportunities for endless debates over Iraq's compliance.

Second, a small group of peacekeepers will likely be of insufficient strength to force compliance if Iraq is willing to defy the U.N. by military means. The outcome of the effort to establish "safe havens" in Bosnia should have taught the U.N. a lesson regarding the perils of failing to match its stated political goals with military means. There, as Serb forces overran the safe havens with little difficulty, the peacekeepers could only watch the ethnic slaughter that followed.

Finally, as President Bush stated, the central issue is not the means of inspection but Iraqi disarmament, as well as the end of its support for terrorism and human rights violations and the return of prisoners taken during the Persian Gulf War. The U.N. should work to achieve these outcomes, rather than mire itself in debates over the modalities of inspection regimes.

WHAT A NEW U.N. RESOLUTION MUST INCLUDE

To avoid the pitfalls surrounding the Iraqi security threat, the U.N. Security Council must pass a resolution that will:

- **Restate the demands in existing U.N. Security Council resolutions on Iraq.** The Security Council has passed nearly 60 resolutions involving Iraq since it invaded Kuwait in 1990. These include: (1) Resolution 660, regarding its illegal invasion of Kuwait; (2) Resolution 678, authorizing U.N. member states cooperating with Kuwait "to use all necessary means" to implement resolutions calling for the end of Iraq's occupation of and withdrawal of forces from Kuwaiti territory and to "restore international peace and security in the area"; (3) Resolution 686, ordering Iraq to release prisoners of the Gulf War, return Kuwaiti property seized during the war, and pay damages resulting from the war; and (4) Resolution 687, requiring it to "unconditionally accept" the removal, destruction, or rendering harmless of all WMD and ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometers, allow weapons inspectors to operate in Iraq, and pledge not to seek to develop or acquire such weapons in the future.
- **Document Iraq's specific violations of these resolutions.** Iraq violated each of the above resolutions. It had to be forcibly evicted from Kuwait and continues to defy the U.N.-sanctioned no-fly zones. Iraq has not paid reparations for the war, has not returned illegally seized property, and has not freed all prisoners taken during the war. In violation of the terms of the 1991 ceasefire, Iraq routinely interfered with weapons inspectors and barred them entirely in 1998. Intelligence and statements of defectors provide ample evidence that Iraq still possesses chemical and biological weapons and is seeking to develop nuclear weapons.
- **Demand Iraqi compliance with the U.N. resolutions.** At a minimum, compliance with existing Security Council resolutions requires Iraq to: permit weapons inspectors unfettered

access to Iraq (in the words of Secretary of State Colin Powell, “any time, any place, any person”); eliminate all of its WMD and relevant ballistic missiles; cease its support for terrorism; cease its human rights violations; and properly account for persons missing from the Persian Gulf War, including prisoners.

- **Authorize member states to “use all necessary means” to ensure Iraq’s compliance with the conditions of this and all previous resolutions.** Despite the best efforts of past weapons inspectors to destroy Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, intelligence and testimony from defectors indicate that Iraq has rebuilt many of its weapons-related facilities, continues to possess weapons of mass destruction, and seeks to develop or obtain more. Saddam Hussein responds only to pressure, as the past decade of obfuscation and defiance amply demonstrate. Therefore, any resolution must be backed by the potential use of force. Specifically, the resolution should authorize the immediate use of force until Iraqi compliance has been achieved, whether voluntarily or not. Rescission of the use of force should be made only through a new and separate Security Council resolution affirming that Iraq has come into compliance with all Security Council resolutions.
- **Establish an immediate effective date for compliance.** Iraq has had ample time to bring itself into compliance with Security Council resolutions over the past decade. There is no reason to give Baghdad an open-ended time frame to comply with the demands of the new resolution. All authority to enforce Security Council mandates and the provisions of the 1991 cease-fire agreement provided by this resolution should be made effective upon the Security Council’s adoption of the resolution.

All of these sections are necessary in a new resolution. The first two establish the rationale for the resolution and the need for further Security Coun-

cil action. The third clarifies the actions that Iraq must take to come into compliance with U.N. demands. The fourth plainly lays out the consequences for Iraq’s continued lack of compliance—a vital part of the resolution, given Iraq’s flagrant unwillingness to abide by resolutions that lack such a stick. Finally, the fifth section puts Iraq on notice that it must act quickly.

CONCLUSION

President Bush has succinctly detailed Iraq’s consistent disregard for past U.N. Security Council resolutions. The members of the United Nations should not be lulled by Saddam Hussein’s retreat on the issue of inspectors. He has successfully pursued this strategy in the past to divide his adversaries and gain time. Inspections are a means to an end, such as disarmament, not an end in and of themselves. Unless the United Nations wishes to follow the League of Nations into irrelevance, U.N. member states must support a more aggressive policy toward Iraq to demonstrate the organization’s resolve and to make evident that its Security Council resolutions must be observed.

Steps must be taken by the Security Council to ensure that it does not repeat its past failed strategy of passing resolutions and merely chastising Iraq for lack of compliance. The Security Council must demand Iraq’s compliance with its past resolutions and back up its demands with a clear authorization for member states to “use all necessary means” to enforce its resolutions if Iraq does not comply. Failure to do so is an abdication of responsibility on the part of the United Nations and a *de facto* decision to yield that responsibility to the United States and other nations that are willing and able to protect international peace and security.

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