



washingtonpost.com > Politics > Bush Administration

Print This Article
E-Mail This Article

MOST VIEWED ARTICLES

Politics On the Site

Updated 12:15 a.m. ET

- Bush Weighs Offers To Iran
- A Smiley Face on Social Security
- Governors Urged to Reach Deal on Medicaid
- GOP May Seek a Deal on Accounts
- U.S. Set to Oppose Efforts To Restrict Use of Sonar

RSS NEWS FEEDS

Top News

Bush Administration

What is RSS? | All RSS Feeds

Bush Tries To Allay E.U. Worry Over Iran

Notion of U.S. Attack 'Is Simply Ridiculous'

By Michael A. Fletcher and Keith B. Richburg
Washington Post Staff Writers
Wednesday, February 23, 2005; Page A01

BRUSSELS, Feb. 22 -- President Bush said Tuesday that concern about possible U.S. military action against Iran "is simply ridiculous," but he added at a news conference that "all options are on the table" in dealing with suspected Iranian attempts to acquire nuclear weapons.

After meeting with NATO and European Union officials, Bush welcomed modest pledges from opponents of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq to help train and equip security forces there. While U.S. and European officials said there was an improved tone in their discussions, serious divisions remained over U.S. policy toward Iran and the Bush administration's objection to European plans to lift an arms embargo against China.

U.S. charges that Iran wants to build nuclear weapons have raised concern in Europe about U.S. military planning. Bush has repeatedly said he wants diplomacy with Tehran's theocratic government to work.

"This notion that the United States is getting ready to attack Iran is simply ridiculous," Bush said. "And having said that, all options are on the table."

He said he was "getting good advice from European partners," who agreed with the United States that "it's in our interests for them not to have a nuclear weapon."

European nations would like the United States to join talks with Iran -- now involving Germany, France and Britain -- by offering Tehran security and economic guarantees in exchange for abandoning its nuclear ambitions. The Bush administration has refused to participate in the talks. The Iranian government has said its nuclear program is intended only for peaceful purposes.

On China, Bush said he was deeply concerned that an E.U. proposal to lift a 15-year ban on arms sales would "change the balance of relations between China and Taiwan." European officials dispute that, saying they could build in safeguards to allay U.S. concerns.


Despite his reservations, Bush said he would consider European views on the issue. "They think they can develop a protocol that . . . shouldn't concern the United States," Bush said. "And I said I'm looking forward to seeing it."

Bush focused on cooperation and said that new pledges of support on Iraq meant all 26 NATO nations had agreed to help train Iraqi security forces, a development hailed by U.S. and European officials as evidence that they had put aside their deep disagreements over the invasion and occupation.

"Twenty-six nations sitting around that table said it's important for NATO to be involved in Iraq," Bush said. "That's a strong statement."

—From Brussels—

- **Video:** Bush dismisses speculation of a U.S. attack on Iran as "ridiculous," but says "all options are on the table."
- **Transcript: Bush Discusses Iran, Russia** (FDCH E-Media, Feb 22, 2005)
- **Transcript: Bush, Blair Meet in Brussels** (FDCH E-Media, Feb 22, 2005)
- **Transcript: Bush, NATO Chief Talk to Reporters** (FDCH E-Media, Feb 22, 2005)



Advertisement



FEATURED ADVERTISER LINKS

- Unlimited Calls to US & Canada \$24.99/month
- Falling Dollar SHOCK! 5 best stocks for 2005
- Final Four Tickets, Maryland Terps Tickets
- Find a lawyer, Find a Vioxx/Celebrex attorney.
- Drink Less Water
- \$160,000 Mortgage for Under \$735/Month!
- Bose Triport Headphones. Save \$20
- 30 COMMISSION-FREE trades. Now at Ameritrade.
- Up to \$300 off select Dell Home PCs. Details

POLITICSTRIVIA

Friday's Question:

President Bush's summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin is just the most recent meeting between representatives of the two countries. Which of the following people, who would go on to become president, was the first official representative of the United States to travel to Russia?

- John Quincy Adams
- James Buchanan
- Theodore Roosevelt
- Woodrow Wilson

Check Your Answer

Besides the United States, 15 NATO nations have at least small troop contingents in Iraq, while the others have committed to providing money or expertise to help train Iraqi security forces inside or outside the country.

France on Tuesday became the final NATO member to commit to the training effort, following recent commitments by Germany, Greece and Belgium. France pledged one military officer to help in coordination at NATO headquarters and agreed to train 1,500 Iraqi military police officers outside Iraq.

"We're very pleased that we have not only unity in theory, but, on the question of Iraq, for the first time in three years we now have unity of purpose," said a senior administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The NATO commitment is much smaller than the Bush administration had originally hoped. Last year, the United States proposed that NATO take charge of an entire sector of Iraq, now overseen by Poland. But members of the alliance roundly rejected that idea.

CONTINUED 1 2 Next >

[Print This Article](#)

[E-Mail This Article](#)

[Permission to Republish](#)

© 2005 The Washington Post Company

Advertising Links

[What's this?](#)

Refinance Rates Hit Record Lows

Get \$150,000 loan for \$625 per month. Refinance while rates are low.
www.lowermybills.com

MyCashNow - \$100 - \$1,000 Overnight

Payday Loan Cash goes in your account overnight. Very low fees. Fast decisions. Direct deposit is not required. No credit check. Confidential - secure.
www.mycashnow.com

Compare Mortgage Offers

Up to four free mortgage, refinance or home equity offers - one easy form.
www.nextag.com

Advertisement



The Beauty Event
Complimentary tote and beauty samples

Neiman Marcus
CLICK FOR DETAILS ▶

SEARCH: News Web

powered by **YAHOO!** SEARCH

[Top 20 E-mailed Articles](#)

© Copyright 1996-2005 The Washington Post Company | [User Agreement and Privacy Policy](#) | [Rights and Permissions](#) | [Home](#)

[washingtonpost.com](#): [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Work at washingtonpost.com](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Media Center](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Archives](#)
[E-mail Newsletters](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) | [Wireless Access](#) | [Our headlines on your site](#) | [Make Us Your Homepage](#) | [mywashingtonpost.com](#)

The Washington Post: [Subscribe](#) | [Subscriber Services](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Electronic Edition](#) | [Online Photo Store](#) | [The Washington Post Store](#)

The Washington Post Company: [Information](#) | [Other Post Co. Websites](#)