

INTERNATIONAL

United Nations prepares to tighten sanctions

By The Associated Press

World leaders opened a U.N. General Assembly session Monday by condemning Iraq as a warlike state for its invasion of Kuwait, as Iraqi President Saddam Hussein vowed to fight for "a thousand years" to keep the oil-rich emirate.

While the world body prepared to tighten sanctions on Iraq, the economic repercussions of the Persian Gulf crisis spread and strengthened.

Oil prices closed at a record \$38.25 on the New York Mercantile Exchange, where oil futures have been traded since 1983. Gasoline and home heating oil both topped \$1 a gallon. The International Monetary Fund, meanwhile, moved to help poor countries whose economies are being devastated by the conflict.

The stock market in New York fell to a 14-month low Monday, battered by rising oil prices and trouble in the banking industry. The Dow Jones industrial average tumbled 59.41 points to 2,452.97.

French President Francois Mitterrand delivered the first of a series of condemnations of Iraq, warning that Iraq's aggression could lead to global anarchy.

Leaders from Brazil, Argentina, Poland and Indonesia joined the chorus of condemnation that opened the 45th session of the General Assembly, while the Iraqi U.N. ambassador watched in silence. The speakers set the stage for a Security Council vote Tuesday on extending sanctions against Iraq to include an air embargo.

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze speaks Tuesday, and President Bush is to address the 160-member assembly next Monday.

Bush said in Washington on Monday "I'm not going to be distracted" by Saddam's efforts to link the crisis with the Israeli-Palestinian dispute.

"First we've got to take care of the situation that exists right now, naked aggression of one country against the other. That cannot be permitted to stand," Bush told a group of Arab-American leaders in Washington.

Saddam has suggested one way to ease the crisis would be for Israel to leave the Arab territories it has occupied since 1967.

Iraq's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, was to address the United Nations the same day as Bush, but he has insisted on traveling to New York aboard Iraq's flag carrier, Iraqi Airways. The United States has not approved landing rights.

In Washington, the State Department said Aziz had U.S. permission to attend the U.N. session. But it was not clear what was meant by the U.S. decision, reported by department spokeswoman V. Kim Hoggard, to allow Aziz to come to the United States "commercially."

Iraq said Monday it had rebuffed an offer from the United States to allow the plane to land — if Baghdad releases more than 1,000 Americans being held in Iraq and Kuwait since Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion.

"Iraq categorically rejects any link between this issue and any other issue," said the official Iraqi News Agency, monitored in Cyprus.

State Department officials said they had no knowledge of such a claim by Iraq.

Aziz was not on hand as Mitterrand assailed the Baghdad government and said the international community would not retreat from its demand that

Iraq give up Kuwait.

"How could we not be disgusted by the taking of thousands of hostages?" Mitterrand asked, referring to the 290 French citizens and other Westerners being held in Iraq and Kuwait.

France, a former friend and arms merchant to Iraq, sent 4,000 troops to the gulf region after Iraqi soldiers raided the French ambassador's residence in Kuwait on Sept. 14. About a dozen foreign missions in the emirate are still resisting a month-old Iraqi order to close down.

Iraq on Sunday offered a belated apology for the raid. It was spurned by France.

"Excuses are fine," Interior Minister Pierre Joxe said on French radio, "but we're wait-

ing for Iraq to let captive Frenchmen leave in a normal manner."

At the United Nations, Mitterrand pointed to the dangers posed by the "expansionist determination of one man, of one warlike state."

"In order to prevent this anarchy and theory of might makes right ... I can't find any other answer than the rule of law, of right," he said.

The U.N. Security Council is expected to vote Tuesday on what would be the strictest resolution yet against Iraq. It would block all air traffic in and out of Iraq except for planes carrying humanitarian aid.

Iraq warned Sunday it might target Israel and the oil fields of

the Mideast if it is "strangled" by the sanctions and other steps against it. Israel said Monday it took the threat seriously, and warned Saddam not to underestimate its readiness to react.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Israelis were ready to "confront, prevent and ... defend ourselves" against Iraq.

Saddam, meanwhile, accused the United States of being the aggressor in the gulf crisis.

"America poses a threat to mankind, emerging as a new tyranny in the world," the official Iraqi News Agency quoted him as telling a group of Islamic theologians. Saddam also insisted his armies would never pull back.

Illegal food convoy to Baghdad cheered on by Jordanian crowd

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — A convoy of trucks loaded with food rolled out of Amman on Monday bound for Baghdad with horns honking, flags flying and hundreds of Jordanians cheering the violation of the U.N. embargo.

The 30 trucks, hauling rice, powdered milk and other foodstuffs rationed in Iraq, were decorated with red, green and black Jordanian and Iraqi flags. Banners declared the food a gift "from the Stone Children, the Heros of the Intifadeh in Palestine to the Children of Iraq."

The convoy was a small but clear violation of the U.N. embargo banning ship-

ments to Iraq unless cleared by the Security Council, and a symbol of the enthusiastic support Iraq enjoys here.

Many in the crowd were of Palestinian origin — like about half of Jordan's 3 million residents — and had donated food and money and brought their children to the late afternoon rally.

Posters showing Iraqi President Saddam Hussein being kissed by a brown-haired boy while hugging a wide-eyed girl were among the dozens of pro-Saddam, anti-American signs, banners and leaflets in the crowd.

"We are for any Arab child and any Arab regime which is against the Americans. We're with him because he's against the United States, that's all," said Mona Bitar, who brought her five daughters to the rally.

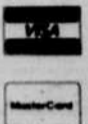
"I am teaching my children that Arabs should be unified," she added.

Outspoken popular support for Saddam in Jordan — whose King Hussein has been a U.S. ally — has mystified and infuriated the United States. But here, across the Jordan River from the West Bank, it seems perfectly logical.


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


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