

Bush, Israel's Sharon discuss Iraq war

Bob Kemper and Howard Witt
Chicago Tribune (KRT)

WASHINGTON — President Bush called on the United Nations to "face up to our global responsibilities" and force Iraq to disarm, even as he met with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Wednesday to discuss the fallout Israel could face from a U.S.-led war against Baghdad.

The United Nations, meanwhile, began a contentious two-day debate over an Iraq resolution, and at the White House, the president signed a congressional resolution formally authorizing the use of U.S. military force against the regime of Saddam Hussein.

Neither Bush nor Sharon would

say after their meeting whether Bush had asked Israel to hold its fire should Iraq attack the Jewish state in retaliation for the U.S. invasion and, if so, whether Sharon had agreed. But Bush said Sharon would be free to respond if "Iraq attacked Israel tomorrow."

The two leaders also did not say whether Bush promised to target Iraqi missile sites that could threaten Israel.

"Our hope is that the Iraqi regime will disarm peacefully," Bush said.

As the U.N. debate opened, Bush called on its members to force Hussein to dismantle his chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs.

"The time has arrived once again for the United Nations to live up to the purposes of its founding to protect our common security," Bush said. "Every nation that shares in the benefits of peace also shares in the duty of defending the peace."

As U.S. diplomats continue to negotiate with members of the U.N. Security Council over the form and language of an Iraq resolution, Bush said he expected the world body to significantly toughen its stance against Hussein. For 11 years — 4,199 days by Bush's count — Hussein has defied U.N. resolutions demanding that he disarm.

"For Iraq, the old weapons in-

spection process was little more than a game, in which cheating was never punished," Bush said. "And that game is over."

Bush said the United States wants a U.N. resolution requiring Hussein to account for all elements of his weapons programs and to allow U.N. weapons inspectors "access to any site in Iraq, at any time, without pre-clearance, without delay, without exceptions." Witnesses to Hussein's weapons activities should be allowed to leave the country, along with their families, so they can be debriefed by U.S. officials, Bush said.

Bush began his day by signing a congressional resolution for-

mally authorizing him to use the U.S. military against Iraq. Despite that authority, Bush said, military action should not be considered inevitable.

"Yet confronting the threat posed by Iraq is necessary, by whatever means that requires," he said. "Either the Iraqi regime will give up its weapons of mass destruction, or, for the sake of peace, the United States will lead a global coalition to disarm that regime."

"If any doubt our nation's resolve, our determination," Bush said, "they would be unwise to test it."

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North Korea reveals it has nuclear weapons program

David E. Sanger
New York Times

WASHINGTON — Confronted by new American intelligence, North Korea has admitted that it has been conducting a major clandestine nuclear-weapons development program for the past several years, the Bush administration said Wednesday night. Officials added that North Korea had also informed them that it was terminating a 1994 agreement with the United States to freeze all of its nuclear activity.

North Korea's surprise revelation came 12 days ago in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, after a senior American diplomat confronted his North Korean counterparts with American intelligence data suggesting a secret project was under way. At first, the North Korean officials denied the allegation, according to an American official who was present.

The next day they acknowledged the nuclear program and according

to one American official said "they have more powerful things as well." American officials have interpreted that cryptic comment as an acknowledgment that North Korea possesses other weapons of mass destruction.

Administration officials refused to say Wednesday night whether the North Koreans had acknowledged successfully producing a nuclear weapon from the project, which uses highly enriched uranium. Nor would administration officials say whether, based on American intelligence, they believe North Korea has produced such a weapon.

"We're not certain that it's been weaponized yet," said one official, noting that North Korea has conducted no nuclear testing, which the United States could easily detect.

The news immediately alters the delicate nuclear balance in Asia and confronts the Bush administration with two simultaneous crises involving nations developing weapons of

mass destruction: one in Iraq, the other on the Korean Peninsula.

"We seek a peaceful resolution to this situation," a senior administration official said Wednesday night, briefing reporters as news of the North Korean program began to leak. "No peaceful nation wants to see a nuclear-armed North Korea."

At a meeting Wednesday of the National Security Council, President Bush and his aides, who have been seeking to rid Iraq of suspected weapons of mass destruction (by U.N. mandate if possible, and by force if necessary), decided to handle the North Korean declarations through diplomatic channels.

They have dispatched two senior officials to China and other nations in the region in hopes of defusing the situation. One senior official said Wednesday that North Korea was "belligerent," rather than apologetic, in its declaration and that it would not end its program.

U. Maryland students deal with tension of sniper killings

Jessica Billingsley
and Laura Kennedy

The Diamondback (U. Maryland)

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (U-WIRE) — For the first time since Sept. 11, 2001, University of Maryland students have been forced to bridge a unique gap between the isolated university community and the outside world. Area residents remain on heightened alert as a sniper continues to attack people in the Washington area. The sniper has already killed nine victims and injured two others in the past two weeks, continuing to instill fear in many.

Last year, in addition to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the university community was rocked by the September deaths of students Alexander Klochkoff and Colleen and Erin Marlatt from drug intoxication and tornadoes, respectively.

With yet another series of tragedies occurring close to home, some students are fearful of the sniper, while others take comfort in what they consider to be the security of their environment.

Jonathan Kandell, assistant di-

rector of the university Counseling Center, said students' differing reactions result from their relatively recent experiences with traumatic events.

"People on campus seem to be experiencing less stress related to this event, especially in light of events like 9/11 and the tornadoes (on the campus) last year," Kandell said.

Appointments at the Counseling Center have not increased as a result of the shootings, but the issue sometimes arises in discussions, he said.

For many, the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks had little effect on daily routines. The sniper attacks have the opposite effect, as many College Park residents are now more cautious when performing everyday tasks.

"When I cross Route 1, I make sure to cross with a pack of girls from my (sorority) house," said sophomore American studies major Lauren Angelo. "I feel like it's more of a deterrent (to any shooters)." Angelo also said she parked closer

to the Target store's entrance in Greenbelt on a recent visit.

Some students said they feel the events of the last year, particularly those near the university, numbed them to tragedy.

"I can't really say that (coping with the shootings is) easier. Tragedy is tragedy," sophomore communication major Daniel Lee said. "Nine-eleven was a tragedy like we'd never seen before, so yeah, I feel a little bit desensitized."

Similarly, many students said the impact of the shootings has been dulled by the onslaught of media coverage. The relentless coverage following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks has been paralleled on a smaller scale by the sniper coverage, and many students are calling it excessive.

"It's definitely something we need to know about," said Ryan Fisher, a freshman mechanical engineering major. "But we don't need to be constantly reminded. They don't need to interrupt the NLCS game five times to give us the latest updates."



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