U.N. Chief calls for tighter nuclear materials controls

ElBaradei urges Iran to suspend uranium enrichment, activities and don't require sharing North Korea to dismantle nuclear weapons program

BY EDITH M. LEDERER

UNITED NATIONS - The chief of the United Nations nuclear agency urged Iran and North Korea on Monday to prove their nuclear programs are peaceful and called for tighter controls to halt the globe's "illicit market" in nuclear materials.

In his annual report to the U.N. General Assembly, Mohamed ElBaradei said Iran should suspend its uranium enrichment program "as a confidence building measure" and North Korea should dismantle its nuclear weapons program or allow inspections to ensure it is peaceful.

ElBaradei, who heads the International Atomic Energy Agency, also

U.N. nuclear inspections in Iraq "as soon as the security situation permits" to ensure that items with both civilian and military applications are not being misused.

He told the General Assembly that "the most disturbing lesson" from the revelation of nuclear programs in Iran and Libya was "the existence of an extensive illicit market for the supply of nuclear items."

"The relative ease with which a multinational illicit network could be set up and operated demonstrates clearly the inadequacy of the present export system," he said.

ElBaradei noted that current controls on exports of nuclear materials aren't binding, don't include many

information with his agency.
"It is very serious," he said afterward. "We're talking about 25 to 30 companies involved with this in at least 20 to 30 countries - not with the knowledge of their governments - but it shows that there is a lot of cracks in this export control regime which we need to fix quite soon."

For now, the most pressing issue before the nuclear agency is what to do about Iran's moves to enrich uranium. The agency's board of governors will decide on the next steps when it meets Nov. 25 at its headquarters in Vienna, Austria, to consider a report ElBaradei is writing.

Britain, Germany and France have warned that most European countries would back the United States' call to refer Iran to the U.N. Security Council if the Iranian government does not abandon all enrichment activities by Nov. 25.



Colin Elliott, a senior history major, has spent every Monday morning for the last four weeks participating as an undecided voter on a segment of MSNBC LIVE

Undecided: University student says farewell to blog

page as the campaigns cascaded toward today's election.

Voters in swing states may hold the key to victory in this highly contentious election, which is a main reason the network asked Elliott to participate. But, Elliott said swing voters - especially college students were rare to begin with and are quickly dwindling.

"I've found that being undecided, it's a pretty hot commodity, I guess," Elliott said.

And the numbers seem to back him up. According to results of a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll released Monday, out of likely voters only 3 percent reported they were completely undecided about who to

Elliott also said he was chosen for the shows because he brought a new viewpoint to the table. "That's not any kind of skill set I have, but it's more the viewpoint that I brought because I brought a thirdparty viewpoint, and in this election it's all been Bush, Kerry, Bush, Kerry, Bush, Kerry, Bush, Kerry, Bush, Kerry," he said. On Monday, Elliott announced on his blog that he'll soon be leaving the ranks of undecided voters, however, by voting for Libertarian presidential candidate Michael Badnarik

"I haven't drawn the line in yet, but I will. I've made my decision." Elliott said. "One of the reasons I stayed undecided was because I'd have to sift through the garbage that's been flung back and forth on both sides, and that's like trying to find an uneaten sandwich in a Dumpster."

Elliott said he had trouble deciding who to vote for because this

year's election involved more glorifying and criticizing of candidates than the 2000 election. What he and other college students look for is debate about the issues, he said, adding that what they got this year was a race based on the candidates' popularity, something seen in a monarchy or dictatorship, but not in a democracy.

'Issues are the blood that runs through democracy," Elliott said.

Today's election means Monday's airing of "The Undecided Voter" was the last foreseeable time Elliott will stand in the spotlight in the Knight Library's basement, broadcasting live around the nation. It also means his blog on The Oregonian Web site will be coming to an end.

"I have spent the last nine months of this blog asking questions. Some were answered by readers, others by the ebb and flow of current events, but others were answered by myself," Elliott wrote in Monday's entry. "Ultimately, deciding how to use one's vote is a soulsearching quest, especially if one believes in voting out of pure selfish interest - as the democratic process is intended ...

"Thanks to my readers and the many people that sent in e-mails, from typos to essays, from anger to support. Thanks to the other bloggers for emphasizing a sense of community and friendship between us all. It's been a wild ride this election, and I'm happy to see it come to an end - I probably won't be happy with the outcome but at least both you, and I, now know where

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