

# Key Judgments

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## Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs

**Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs in defiance of UN resolutions and restrictions. Baghdad has chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles with ranges in excess of UN restrictions; if left unchecked, it probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade.**

**Baghdad hides large portions of Iraq's WMD efforts.** Revelations after the Gulf war starkly demonstrate the extensive efforts undertaken by Iraq to deny information.

**Since inspections ended in 1998, Iraq has maintained its chemical weapons effort, energized its missile program, and invested more heavily in biological weapons; most analysts assess Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program.**

- Iraq's growing ability to sell oil illicitly increases Baghdad's capabilities to finance WMD programs; annual earnings in cash and goods have more than quadrupled.
- Iraq largely has rebuilt missile and biological weapons facilities damaged during Operation Desert Fox and has expanded its chemical and biological infrastructure under the cover of civilian production.
- Baghdad has exceeded UN range limits of 150 km with its ballistic missiles and is working with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which allow for a more lethal means to deliver biological and, less likely, chemical warfare agents.
- Although Saddam probably does not yet have nuclear weapons or sufficient material to make any, he remains intent on acquiring them.

**How quickly Iraq will obtain its first nuclear weapon depends on when it acquires sufficient weapons-grade fissile material.**

- If Baghdad acquires sufficient weapons-grade fissile material from abroad, it could make a nuclear weapon within a year.
- Without such material from abroad, Iraq probably would not be able to make a weapon until the last half of the decade.
- Iraq's aggressive attempts to obtain proscribed high-strength aluminum tubes are of significant concern. All intelligence experts agree that Iraq is seeking nuclear weapons and that these tubes could be used in a centrifuge enrichment program. Most intelligence specialists assess this to be the intended use, but some believe that these tubes are probably intended for conventional weapons programs.

- Based on tubes of the size Iraq is trying to acquire, a few tens of thousands of centrifuges would be capable of producing enough highly enriched uranium for a couple of weapons per year.

**Baghdad has begun renewed production of chemical warfare agents, probably including mustard, sarin, cyclosarin, and VX.** Its capability was reduced during the UNSCOM inspections and is probably more limited now than it was at the time of the Gulf war, although VX production and agent storage life probably have been improved.

- Saddam probably has stocked a few hundred metric tons of CW agents.
- The Iraqis have experience in manufacturing CW bombs, artillery rockets, and projectiles, and probably possess CW bulk fills for SRBM warheads, including for a limited number of covertly stored, extended-range Scuds.

**All key aspects—R&D, production, and weaponization—of Iraq’s offensive BW program are active and most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf war.**

- Iraq has some lethal and incapacitating BW agents and is capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax, for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives, including potentially against the US Homeland.
- Baghdad has established a large-scale, redundant, and concealed BW agent production capability, which includes mobile facilities; these facilities can evade detection, are highly survivable, and can exceed the production rates Iraq had prior to the Gulf war.

**Iraq maintains a small missile force and several development programs, including for a UAV that most analysts believe probably is intended to deliver biological warfare agents.**

- Gaps in Iraqi accounting to UNSCOM suggest that Saddam retains a covert force of up to a few dozen Scud-variant SRBMs with ranges of 650 to 900 km.
- Iraq is deploying its new al-Samoud and Ababil-100 SRBMs, which are capable of flying beyond the UN-authorized 150-km range limit.
- Baghdad’s UAVs—especially if used for delivery of chemical and biological warfare (CBW) agents—could threaten Iraq’s neighbors, US forces in the Persian Gulf, and the United States if brought close to, or into, the US Homeland.
- Iraq is developing medium-range ballistic missile capabilities, largely through foreign assistance in building specialized facilities.