Since December 1998, Baghdad has refused to allow UN inspectors into Iraq as required by the Security Council resolutions. Technical monitoring systems installed by the UN at known and suspected WMD and missile facilities in Iraq no longer operate. Baghdad prohibits Security Council-mandated monitoring overflights of Iraqi facilities by UN aircraft and helicopters. Similarly, Iraq has curtailed most IAEA inspections since 1998, allowing the IAEA to visit annually only a very small number of sites to safeguard Iraq's stockpile of uranium oxide.

In the absence of inspectors, Baghdad's already considerable ability to work on prohibited programs without risk of discovery has increased, and there is substantial evidence that Iraq is reconstituting prohibited programs. Baghdad's vigorous concealment efforts have meant that specific information on many aspects of Iraq's WMD programs is yet to be uncovered. Revelations after the Gulf war starkly demonstrate the extensive efforts undertaken by Iraq to deny information.

• Limited insight into activities since 1998 clearly show that Baghdad has used the absence of UN inspectors to repair and expand dual-use and dedicated missile-development facilities and to increase its ability to produce WMD.

Nuclear Weapons Program

More than ten years of sanctions and the loss of much of Iraq's physical nuclear infrastructure under IAEA oversight have not diminished Saddam's interest in acquiring or developing nuclear weapons.

• Iraq's efforts to procure tens of thousands of 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.

Iraq had an advanced nuclear weapons development program before the Gulf war that focused on building an implosion-type weapon using highly enriched uranium. Baghdad was attempting a variety of uranium enrichment techniques, the most successful of which were the electromagnetic isotope separation (EMIS) and gas centrifuge programs. After its invasion of Kuwait, Iraq initiated a crash program to divert IAEA-safeguarded, highly enriched uranium from its Soviet and French-supplied reactors, but the onset of hostilities ended this effort. Iraqi declarations and the UNSCOM/IAEA inspection process revealed much of Iraq's nuclear weapons efforts, but Baghdad still has not provided complete information on all aspects of its nuclear weapons program.

• Iraq has withheld important details relevant to its nuclear program, including procurement logs, technical documents, experimental data, accounting of materials, and foreign assistance.

- Baghdad also continues to withhold other data about enrichment techniques, foreign procurement, weapons design, and the role of Iraqi security services in concealing its nuclear facilities and activities.
- In recent years, Baghdad has diverted goods contracted under the Oil-for-Food Program for military purposes and has increased solicitations and dual-use procurements—outside the Oil-for-Food process—some of which almost certainly are going to prohibited WMD and other weapons programs. Baghdad probably uses some of the money it gains through its illicit oil sales to support its WMD efforts.

Before its departure from Iraq, the IAEA made significant strides toward dismantling Iraq's nuclear weapons program and unearthing the nature and scope of Iraq's past nuclear activities. In the absence of inspections, however, most analysts assess that Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear program—unraveling the IAEA's hard-earned accomplishments.

Iraq retains its cadre of nuclear scientists and technicians, its program documentation, and sufficient dual-use manufacturing capabilities to support a reconstituted nuclear weapons program. Iraqi media have reported numerous meetings between Saddam and nuclear scientists over the past two years, signaling Baghdad's continued interest in reviving a nuclear program.

Iraq's expanding international trade provides growing access to nuclear-related technology and materials and potential access to foreign nuclear expertise. An increase in dual-use procurement activity in recent years may be supporting a reconstituted nuclear weapons program.

- The acquisition of sufficient fissile material is Iraq's principal hurdle in developing a nuclear weapon.
- Iraq is unlikely to produce indigenously enough weapons -grade material for a deliverable nuclear weapon until the last half of this decade. Baghdad could produce a nuclear weapon within a year if it were able to procure weapons grade fissile material abroad.

Baghdad may have acquired uranium enrichment capabilities that could shorten substantially the amount of time necessary to make a nuclear weapon.

Iraq: Declared Nuclear Facilities

