

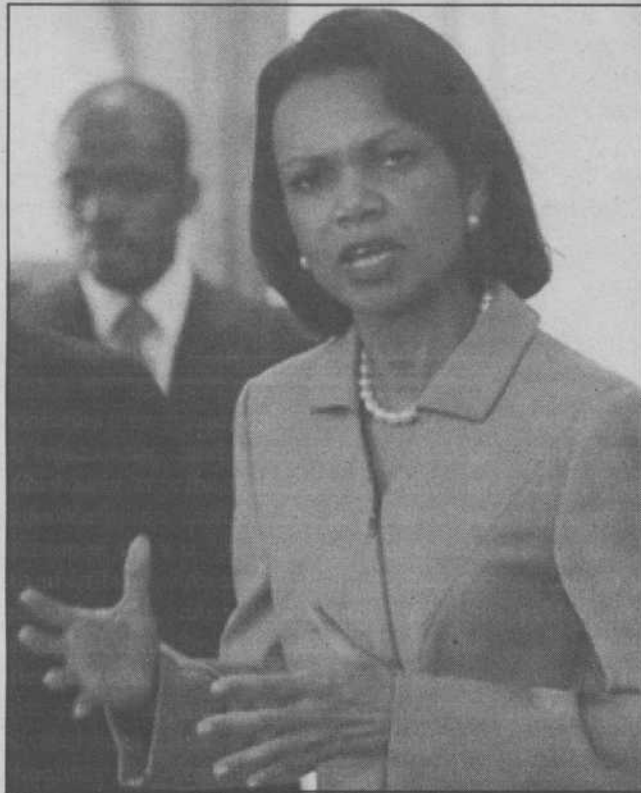
Rice calls for 'strong steps' against Iran

WASHINGTON (AP)—Denouncing Iran's successful enrichment of uranium as unacceptable to the international community, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Wednesday the U.N. Security Council must consider "strong steps" to induce Tehran to change course.

Rice also telephoned Mohamed ElBaradei, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to ask him to reinforce demands that Iran comply with its nonproliferation requirements when he holds talks in Tehran on Friday.

While Rice took a strong line, she did not call for an emergency meeting of the Council, saying it should consider action after receiving an IAEA report by April 28. She did not elaborate on what measures the United States would support, but economic and political sanctions are under consideration.

The European Union is considering travel restrictions on Iranian officials, but White House and State Department spokesmen said what the Security Council might be asked to do was



U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice gestures as she speaks to members of the media at the State Department in Washington on Wednesday.

under discussion. "It's time for action and that is what the secretary was expressing," Scott McClellan, the White House spokesman, said. "The president wanted to make sure that she made that very clear to all that were listening."

On March 29, the Security Council adopted a statement

that gave Iran 30 days to clear up suspicion that it wants to become a nuclear power. The statement demanded Iran comply with IAEA demands

that it suspend enrichment and allow unannounced IAEA inspections.

If Iran goes ahead with its enrichment program the United States and European allies are certain to press for a Council resolution.

"You can be sure that it needs to be more than a presidential statement at this point," McClellan said.

Asked if the United States would be running a risk of a disagreement with other members of the Council by pushing for strong measures, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said, "There is now a consensus Iran should not be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapons program."

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, announcing on Tuesday that his country had crossed the line into enrichment, said Iran's objectives were peaceful. Iran is said by many analysts to lack the equipment, including a nuclear reactor, to make nuclear weapons.

But Rice brushed aside suggestions Iran was far from the goal the United States and its allies suspect — nuclear weaponry.

She said the world believes Iran has the capacity and the technology that lead to nuclear weapons. "The Security Council will need to take into consideration this move by Iran," she said. "It will be time when it reconvenes on this case for strong steps to make certain that we maintain the credibility of the international community."

"This is not a question of Iran's right to civil nuclear power," she said while greeting President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Moasogo of Equatorial Guinea. "This is a question of, ... the world does not believe that Iran should have the capability and the technology that could lead to a nuclear weapon."

At the private Arms Control Association, executive director Daryl Kimball said the administration should consider direct talks with

Iran on the nuclear issue. And, he said in an interview, "the administration should be extending non-aggression pledges rather than implied threats in order to weaken Iran's rationale for a nuclear weapons program."

"Otherwise," Kimball said, "the Bush administration is creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure and military confrontation."

At the private Center for Strategic and International Studies, analyst Anthony Cordesman said, "What we need to understand when we call for strong action by the Security Council, we may not expect it today or on this particular round."

But, Cordesman added in an interview, "this issue is not going away. The more Iran pushes the tolerance of the international community to its limits, the more support the United States can count on in the future."

"This is a very complex and uncertain process," he said.

U.N.: Lack of doctors hurts in AIDS battle

GENEVA (AP) — A global shortage of doctors and nurses is hampering the fight against AIDS and other fatal diseases and could leave the world vulnerable to a flu outbreak or major disaster, the U.N. health agency said Friday.

Doctors and nurses are urgently needed in the 57 worst-affected countries to immunize children against illness and to treat AIDS-related ailments, malaria and tuberculosis, the World Health Organization said in its annual report.

"The global shortage approaches 4.3 million health workers," the report said.

The lack is greatest in the areas that need medical care the most — South and East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, it said.

"The global population is growing, but the number of health workers is stagnating or even falling in many of the places where they are needed most," said Lee Jong-wook, WHO director-general.

The report said more than a billion people worldwide lack access to the most basic health care — often because there is no health worker.

At the same time there are growing fears, in rich and poor countries alike, of new infectious threats such as avian influenza, the report said.

Health experts fear a bird flu outbreak should the virus mutate into a strain that easily passes from person to person.

"Recent concern about the threat of avian influenza has drawn attention to the devastating impact a global pandemic could have, given the current shortage of health workers, combined with their insufficient preparedness and often poor working conditions," WHO said.

"Sudden catastrophic events can quickly overwhelm local and national health systems already suffering from staff shortages or lack of funds."

"Such countries are likely to attract even more foreign staff because of their aging populations who will need more long-term, chronic care," said WHO Assistant Director-General Timothy Evans.

Your Horoscope Says... April 13 - 19

ARIES

Happiness with partners remains the order of the week. Relations between partners are exceptionally harmonious right now. You are in sync with loved ones. Much is being accomplished by your attitude. Don't overdo your physical workout.

Soul Affirmation: I master fear by knowing that all is well.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 19, 37

TAURUS

The time has come to forgive and forget. Take the first step in reconciling a friendship. You thought no one knew, but you may be romantically attracted to an old pal. Check out the dangers before giving the romance a chance.

Soul Affirmation: Friendships are treasures I cherish.

Lucky Numbers: 14, 44, 54

GEMINI

Your self-confidence is making you glow all over. People are attracted to your outlook this week, and you may be deluged with offers. Some may not be sincere, but trust your fabulous instincts and you'll pick and choose what's real for you.

Soul Affirmation: Clinging to the old will inhibit my growth this week.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 3, 10

CANCER

Partnerships continue to be featured this week. This week is especially favorable for a fresh start or a new beginning for you in love. Avoid distractions at work this week and you'll get much accomplished.

Soul Affirmation: There is a funny side to everything I see.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 17, 37

LEO

Friendship remains highlighted; you may be attending a social event with good friends, or may be planning one. Whichever, it will be a very happy occasion. Be happy. You've got many loving friends.

Soul Affirmation: Hope is a beautiful jewel. I enjoy owning it.

Lucky Numbers: 22, 26, 31

VIRGO

You may find out this week that the project you didn't really want to work on has been scrapped. That leaves you plenty of time to finish up the stuff you want to work on. Money concerns ease up. This week a romantic get-together will remind you of what bliss really is.

Soul Affirmation: He who asks might seem foolish for a while.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 10, 17

LIBRA

Stay focused on the tasks before you this week and find a way to do your work with love. The pace will pick up soon enough, and the vibrations will be more to your liking. Enjoy a sociable week.

Soul Affirmation: I let imagination light up my work.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 11, 22

SCORPIO

Call early in the week and make a date so you can catch the person that you want to spend time with this week. An old love may turn up in your romantic mix, and romance will be very sweet if you rise above the temptation to remember why you split in the first place.

Soul Affirmation: What I need to be is fully present inside of me.

Lucky Numbers: 21, 36, 43

SAGITTARIUS

Don't be dismayed if you tried to

prevent it but couldn't. It was meant to happen, and you were intended to learn from it. Nothing was lost. Something was delayed. After you've learned your lesson the chance will come again.

Soul Affirmation: I see myself as a finisher rather than a starter this week.

Lucky Numbers: 11, 12, 53

CAPRICORN

News that comes by phone, e-mail or snail mail makes it easier for you to remain upbeat. Focus on what is said. No matter what it is, find the good in it. Invite new insights. They could well come from your lover.

Soul Affirmation: I fill my dreams with good wishes for others.

Lucky Numbers: 15, 37, 39

AQUARIUS

They get on your nerves but you'll profit from joining with them in a common effort. Pull close to an annoying buddy. Joint adventures will pay ten-fold. Household projects call. You and a lover can finally reach the same page.

Soul Affirmation: As chances come around again, I take advantage of them.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 11, 32

PISCES

This week begins three weeks during which success and romance are closely related. Kill two birds with one stone. Enjoy your feelings and let your brain relax. Suspend all judgments of others. Being stern won't work for you this week.

Soul Affirmation: My smile is a radiant light to those I encounter.

Lucky Numbers: 19, 23, 41