

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

Central Intelligence Agency

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Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50
U.S.C., section 403g)

Senior Executive Memorandum

11 January 2002

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Memorandum

In response to a query about the status of Iraq's nuclear program:

Procurement activities detected in the past year are consistent with Iraq attempting to jump-start a clandestine uranium enrichment program to produce the fissile material needed to make a nuclear weapon, potentially by late this decade. Iraq retains a significant number of nuclear program scientists, program documentation, and probably the manufacturing infrastructure to support a nuclear weapons program.

- [REDACTED] E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c) [REDACTED] procurement network that could be used to support a centrifuge program, as in the recent aluminum tube procurement effort, which CIA assesses to be an integral part of Iraq's centrifuge program.
- The most significant collection gap on restarting a centrifuge program is feed material production; Iraq has no known UF₆ production capability. As part of reconstituting its gas centrifuge program, Baghdad would need to acquire a uranium conversion capability to transform uranium ore into UF₆ gas. [REDACTED]

The worstcase scenario is illicit acquisition of sufficient fissile material, uranium or plutonium, to allow Baghdad to produce a crude nuclear weapon within a year. CIA has not detected a dedicated Iraqi effort to obtain fissile material from another government or on the black market, but Baghdad could be expected to obtain any offers it deemed credible. [REDACTED]

The Intelligence Community has less access to Saddam's nuclear intent and activities today than before the Gulf war, when significant nuclear weapons developments escaped detection. Saddam never abandoned his nuclear weapons program, but reporting on Iraqi efforts to revive it is limited. Iraq continues to employ effective denial and deception measures and there are no indicators that Baghdad has embarked on an extensive nuclear weapons effort as it did before the Gulf war. [REDACTED]

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INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

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CIA

For further information, contact [REDACTED]

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