

# Link in dispute over Turkey aid

## Allies spurn Belgian bid to end standoff

any for the past month in blocking a NATO decision to begin planning to help fortify Turkey — the only NATO ally bordering Iraq — against reprisals. They argued that such a move would undermine UN efforts to avoid a war. The Belgian defense minister, Andre Dehaene, told Belga that Germany was supporting Belgium's position, at least initially. German diplomats at NATO could not comment as talks dragged on into the night.

To help end the stalemate, NATO put off a meeting Sunday to its Defense Planning Committee, which excludes France. Paris left NATO's military command structure in the late 1960s and participates only in political, not military, consultations.

The committee, which has the same authority as the policy-setting North Atlantic Council on most defense matters, was used before the 1991 war

against Iraq to approve aid for Turkey. But NATO has sought to limit its use since the end of the Cold War in a spirit of rapprochement with Paris.

The United States proposed a month ago that the alliance consider sending early-warning AWACS aircraft, missile defenses and anti-biochemical units to Turkey. But after France, Germany and Belgium blocked the planning for three weeks, Turkey last Monday invoked NATO's mutual defense treaty, which binds the allies to talks when one feels threatened, but so far to no avail.

Turkey feels especially vulnerable, especially as it is considering allowing U.S. soldiers to use Turkish facilities for a possible Iraq war.

The United States and its allies say that denying support for Turkey's defense erodes the alliance's credibility and sends the wrong signal to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

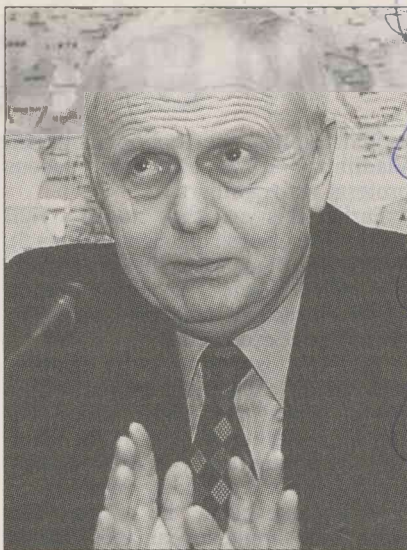
Some of the measures can be done bilaterally — Germany has already agreed to send Patriot missiles to Turkey via the Netherlands — but those missiles need to be linked to NATO radar networks to be effective.

Countries such as Germany also have promised AWACS crews, but the planes themselves are NATO assets.

Ahead of the meeting, Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt of Belgium said his country could lift its veto if NATO made more explicit that any planning would be strictly defensive and would not make the alliance a party to war preparations against Iraq. NATO officials insist that that has been the case all along.

But the demand to link any actual deployment of military aid to a second UN resolution was the most contentious issue. Belgian diplomats insisted the demand was of "crucial importance" to them to show support for the United Nations.

Their objections have driven a wedge into the alliance.



Britain's NATO representative, Emyr Jones Parry, in Brussels on Sunday.

Britain, Spain, Denmark and Italy have broadly backed U.S. President George W. Bush, while France and Germany have tried to slow what they see as his headlong rush to war.

# A divided EU to hold talks in search for unity on Iraq

By Thomas Fuller

International Herald Tribune

**BRUSSELS:** Leaders of the European Union are set to meet here Monday in an ambitious attempt to bridge their deep divisions over a possible U.S.-led war in Iraq.

The extraordinary summit meeting, which had been opposed by several governments skeptical about the possibility of reaching a common position, comes after weeks of jockeying by leaders evenly split on the Iraq question.

In what diplomats say was a foretaste of diplomatic wrangling Monday, European leaders openly disagreed last week on the guest list for the meeting.

Britain sought to reinforce its position by requesting that the 10 mostly East European countries scheduled to join the Union next year participate in the meeting. Many of these countries were signatories to two recently issued letters of support for the United States in the Iraq crisis.

France and Germany objected to the participation of the Eastern Europeans on the ground that they have not yet been inducted as members of the Union.

The Greek government, which currently holds the Union's rotating presidency, sided with France and Germany. Greece said the 10 countries scheduled to join next May would be briefed about the meeting Tuesday.

In an effort to reinforce the position of the United Nations in the current crisis, Greece announced that the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, would take part in the summit meeting, although it is unclear exactly what role Annan will play.

Turkey, an official candidate for membership in the Union, said its prime minister, Abdullah Gul, and foreign minister, Yasar Yakis, would also be in Brussels on Monday and Tuesday and would meet with leaders on the sidelines of the meeting.

"Our aim, and political will, is to go to Monday's meeting in search of common ground," said Panos Beglitis, a spokesman for the Greek government. Beglitis said the "EU will be plunged into a deep crisis" if it does not come up with a common stand.

Several leaders said the large anti-war demonstrations over the weekend in European capitals would pressure some of Washington's strongest allies to adopt the positions of France and Germany, both of which have made the case for giving more time to UN inspections teams in Iraq.

"In cities across Europe, people were clearly showing that they did not want war," said Guy Verhofstadt, the Belgian prime minister. A spokesman for the Belgian government told Bloomberg News that Belgium, Germany and France would issue a joint declaration at the summit talks.

But many diplomats say they are skeptical that divisions on Iraq that already exist among European countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the UN Security Council can be resolved at a one-day summit meeting in Brussels. Washington is believed to have the strongest support for its position from Britain, Denmark, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

"It is imperative that we maintain and increase the pressure on Saddam," Tony Blair, Britain's prime minister, said in a letter sent last week to the Greek prime minister, Costas Simitis, who is charged with setting the meeting's agenda.

"While we all, of course, regard military action as a last resort, we must make clear that no member state rules it out if needed to uphold the authority of the Security Council," Blair said. He added that "in the absence of full and immediate cooperation" by Iraq, the Security Council "should move quickly to a second resolution."

According to the treaty that created the European Union 11 years ago, EU countries are supposed to work toward a common foreign policy and "coordinate their action in international organizations."

The treaty also says EU governments "shall refrain from any action which is contrary to the interests of the Union or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations."

# Strategy is said to rely on delay, then street battles

or germ weapons against the U.S. allied forces.

American intelligence agencies have concluded that it is likely that Iraq will try to strike Israel with Scud missiles, weapons that officials said could be armed with poison gas or germ warheads.

We have indications that their goal is to delay, impede and deny U.S. forces a clear and quick victory," a defense official said. "The basic strategy can be summed up as disperse, absorb and move to military operations in urban areas."

As the United States, Britain, Australia and other members of President George W. Bush's "coalition of the willing" prepare for military action to oust Saddam, U.S. intelligence is working hard to figure out Iraq's intentions. Officials say Iraq's deployments and statements by Saddam provide an indication of Baghdad's strategy.

Senior U.S. military officials say they are aware of Iraq's options but confident of achieving a decisive victory and ending a prolonged war. Allied forces are far better trained and equipped than Iraqi troops, and allied forces already command the skies.

The Iraqi Army is about a third of its strength during the Gulf War of 1991. There are mounting indications that the morale within Iraq's regular army and even some of the Republican Guard forces is low. Saddam faces multiple threats: one from the U.S.-led invasion force and another from a restive Shiite population. Perhaps some elements of his armed forces that would rather try a



Ahmad Al-Rubaye/Agence France-Presse

Iraqi soldiers digging trenches in Tikrit, 150 kilometers north of Baghdad. U.S. intelligence says in the event of war, the Iraqis will try to slow allied forces by destroying bridges and igniting oil fields, but then rush to positions to defend Baghdad.

coup than see the United States invade and occupy the country.

"At the end of the day, if called on, we will win," General Tommy Franks, the head of the U.S. Central Command, said in an interview.

Iraq, however, is striving to take a weak hand and make the best of it. Its

objective is much different than in the 1991 conflict. During that war, Iraq's goal was to hold on to Kuwait, and it positioned the bulk of its ground forces far from its capital.

But this time, Saddam has one overriding goal: survival. His aim seems to be to force the Bush administration to seek a political compromise that stops short of ending his administration by spurring fears of extensive allied casualties, dragging out the war and raising concern around the world over the fate of Iraqi civilians.

"There is no victory option for Iraq," said General Joseph Hoar, a retired Marine and former chief of the U.S. Central Command. "The question for Iraq is how to prolong the conflict. For Saddam, the goal is to inflict casualties and allow the Arab news networks to broadcast pictures of civilians dying. He will try to gather international support and try to find a place in history."

A U.S. defense official said: "What lessons have they learned from the last war? They have learned that the possession of weapons of mass destruction is a force multiplier even if they are not used. And they have learned that they should not deploy forces out in the open but disperse them and then move into urban terrain and intermingle with the civilian population."

Drawing on its experience during the Gulf War, Iraq is not mounting a major defense of its borders. But it is taking several steps to try to bog down U.S. and allied forces as they try to advance to Baghdad. American defense officials said Iraq had shipped rail cars full of ammunition and demolition equipment to its oil fields. That raised concerns that Iraq planned to blow them up to hamper the invasion and portray it as an economic and environmental catastrophe.

Iraq has also considered plans to destroy dams and flood the Euphrates River, a move that could make it more difficult for American forces to cross the river, slowing an offensive, U.S. officials said.

Iraq's 11th Infantry Division has been stationed near the city of Nasiriya, where it can try to put down a Shiite rebellion in the city and guard the crossing points over the river. Iraq has also moved some light infantry and artillery south to the Basra area.

"If hostilities begin, Saddam is likely to employ a 'scorched earth' strategy, destroying food, transportation, energy and other infrastructures, attempting to create a humanitarian disaster significant enough to stop a military advance," Vice Admiral Lowell Jacoby, the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, advised Congress last week. Jacoby said the Iraqis would try to blame American forces for the damage.

Iraq is also positioning surface-to-surface missiles. Iraq has placed Al Samoud missiles north and west of Baghdad. U.S. intelligence says the missile can travel much farther than the 145-kilometer (90-mile) range that is allowed by the United Nations. Iraq has also placed Ababil-50 missiles, Ababil-100 missiles and Soviet-designed Frog rockets north of the capital.

American defense officials say the missiles have been put in place both to strengthen Iraq's defenses in the north and to threaten population centers like Kirkuk and Mosul if they fall into the hands of U.S. or Kurdish forces. To threaten Kuwait and U.S. forces there, Iraq has also deployed mobile missile systems in the south near Basra.

American intelligence has reported that Saddam has authorized his commanders to use chemical and perhaps biological weapons.

It is difficult for intelligence experts to determine if the munitions being sent to Iraqi forces have chemical or conventional warheads. But U.S. intelligence has noted that protective gear against chemical attack has been given to Special Republican Guard forces as well as intelligence and security personnel charged with defending Baghdad and other cities. It has been given to some Republican Guard units outside Baghdad as well.

## Industry Awaits Resolutions From Czech Republic

Across Not for finish have con from a c demand within 1 months. sheet 1 USS60 peak accor Of USS taine and pri the ar ir s

REGISTER TODAY FOR ONLY £799 US\$1350!