

Nato applicants 'sold weapons to terrorist regimes'

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

SEVERAL countries hoping to join Nato soon have sold arms to regimes that sponsor terrorism, according to reports of leaked Central Intelligence Agency documents.

Poland, a front-runner to join the North Atlantic security alliance this spring, made five shipments to Iran of T72 tanks, the most recent last summer, according to the "top secret" report cited by *The Washington Times*.

The newspaper's leak comes as Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, is touring nine European capitals. She

has put the expansion of Nato at the top of her agenda in her talks with European and Russian leaders.

The CIA said yesterday that it could not comment on the existence or content of any documents. According to the newspaper, the CIA report, dated October 2 and entitled "Arms transfers to state sponsors of terrorism", focuses on deals made last summer.

The report identifies China, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Russia and Iran as the main suppliers or brokers of arms to what are in Washington's view terrorist

nations. However, it also records details of deals by companies in Poland, Slovenia and Bulgaria, all of which are prospective candidates for Nato membership.

The 16 present members of Nato, meeting this spring to discuss enlargement, are expected to invite Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and possibly Slovenia to join. Other Central and East European nations have asked to be considered for membership of the alliance.

Trade with "terrorist states" is against American policy and the State Department's annual report calls for "bringing maximum pressure on states that sponsor and support terrorism by imposing economic, diplomatic and political sanctions and by urging other states to do likewise".

According to reports, the CIA has identified a company in the former Yugoslav republic of Slovenia that was involved in a deal to supply M60 tank transmissions and other tank parts to Iran. It appears that the Slovenian Government halted part of the shipment in response to American government protests.

The documents also say that Ukraine has concluded deals with Libya to sell short-range missiles and to service Libyan submarines and surface vessels. The Ukrainian Government says that no contracts have been completed.

Albright promises to find Cyprus solution

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

AMERICA will redouble its efforts to get a political solution in Cyprus and calm rising tensions in the eastern Mediterranean. Madeleine Albright promised John Major yesterday.

Ms Albright, on her first visit to London as American Secretary of State, was also expected to brief Mr Major and Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, on her proposal for a joint Nato-Russia brigade and America's determination to overcome Russian opposition to the enlargement of Nato. Mr Major

was expected to give a warm welcome to her proposal, seen in Whitehall as an important signal that Washington is beginning to respond to Russian concerns.

In a survey of world trouble-spots, she was expected also to discuss Bosnia and the continuing allied efforts to bolster the fragile political process; Hong Kong and the likely fallout should Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese senior leader, die soon; and the trade and airline disputes between America and Europe that have soured transatlantic relations.

THE TIMES 20.2.97 P 16