



For Immediate Release  
Office of the Press Secretary  
September 14, 2002

## President Discusses Growing Danger posed by Saddam Hussein's Regime

Radio Address by the President to the Nation

-  [Audio](#)
-  [A Decade of Deception and Defiance](#)
-  [en Español](#)

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Today I'm meeting with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi about the growing danger posed by Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, and the unique opportunity the U.N. Security Council has to confront it.

I appreciate the Prime Minister's public support for effective international action to deal with this danger. The Italian Prime Minister joins other concerned world leaders who have called on the world to act. Among them, Prime Minister Blair of Great Britain, Prime Minister Aznar of Spain, President Kwasniewski of Poland. These leaders have reached the same conclusion I have -- that Saddam Hussein has made the case against himself.

He has broken every pledge he made to the United Nations and the world since his invasion of Kuwait was rolled back in 1991. Sixteen times the United Nations Security Council has passed resolutions designed to ensure that Iraq does not pose a threat to international peace and security. Saddam Hussein has violated every one of these 16 resolutions -- not once, but many times.

Saddam Hussein's regime continues to support terrorist groups and to oppress its civilian population. It refuses to account for missing Gulf War personnel, or to end illicit trade outside the U.N.'s oil-for-food program. And although the regime agreed in 1991 to destroy and stop developing all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, it has broken every aspect of this fundamental pledge.

Today this regime likely maintains stockpiles of chemical and biological agents, and is improving and expanding facilities capable of producing chemical and biological weapons. Today Saddam Hussein has the scientists and infrastructure for a nuclear weapons program, and has illicitly sought to purchase the equipment needed to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon. Should his regime acquire fissile material, it would be able to build a nuclear weapon within a year.

The former head of the U.N. team investigating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program, Richard Butler, reached this conclusion after years of experience: "The fundamental problem with Iraq remains the nature of the regime itself. Saddam Hussein is a homicidal dictator who is addicted to weapons of mass destruction."

By supporting terrorist groups, repressing its own people and pursuing weapons of mass destruction in defiance of a decade of U.N. resolutions, Saddam Hussein's regime has proven itself a grave and gathering danger. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence. To assume this regime's good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble. And this is a risk we must not take.

Saddam Hussein's defiance has confronted the United Nations with a difficult and defining moment: Are Security Council resolutions to be honored and enforced, or cast aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purposes of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?

As the United Nations prepares an effective response to Iraq's defense, I also welcome next week's congressional hearings on the threats Saddam Hussein's brutal regime poses to our country and the entire world. Congress must make it unmistakably clear that when it comes to confronting the growing danger posed by Iraq's efforts to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction, the status quo is totally unacceptable.

The issue is straightforward: We must choose between a world of fear, or a world of progress. We must stand up for our security and for the demands of human dignity. By heritage and choice, the United States will make that stand. The world community must do so, as well.

Thank you for listening.

END

---

**Return to this article at:**

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020914.html>

