

## Allies Fear U.S. Stance On Iran

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### Allies Fear U.S. Stance On Iran

By ROBIN WRIGHT The Washington Post

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WASHINGTON - America's allies are increasingly concerned about the Bush administration's plans to unilaterally escalate pressure on Iran, fearing that an evolving strategy could lead to military action if Iran does not back down, diplomats and officials of foreign countries say.

Although they share concern about Iran's possible nuclear ambitions, European and Arab governments are alarmed about new U.S. moves, including plans to cite Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps as a "specially designated global terrorist." That would block the elite unit's assets and pressure foreign companies doing business with it.

Allies are less concerned about that step than they are about the new momentum.

"If the region is strewn with crises, then there's potential for real disaster. There's a fear that they will all merge into a superemergency bigger than any one country can deal with," a top Arab envoy said.

Language on Wednesday triggered further alarm, with State Department spokesman Sean McCormack saying, "We are confronting Iranian behavior across a variety of different fronts on a number of different 'battlefields,' if you will."

European envoys expressed alarm at the use of "battlefield" in describing policy on Iran.

Still, Yahya Rahim Safavi of the Revolutionary Guard said Wednesday that Iranian missiles can hit warships anywhere in the Persian Gulf, where the United States has a carrier battle group.

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