

Iran calls “6+2” model best way to defend Gulf region’s security

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, October 29, 2006

www.chinaview.cn 29 October 2006

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TEHRAN, Oct. 29 (Xinhua) — Iran said on Sunday that a security cooperation treaty among the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) plus Iran and Iraq would be the best way to maintain security in the Gulf region, the official IRNA news agency reported.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad-Ali Hosseini made the remarks when asked at a weekly press briefing to comment upon the military maneuvers by the United States, Britain, France, Italy, Australia and Bahrain in the Gulf.

On Sunday, the U.S. Navy said that vessels from six countries began a naval training exercise off the Iranian coast in the Persian Gulf aimed at blocking smuggling of nuclear weapons and arms proliferation.

“The GCC states plus Iran and Iraq can very well hold a meeting to agree on a security arrangement that will meet the interests of their nations,” Hosseini said.

Founded in 1981, the GCC is a regional political and economic alliance grouping Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

“Regional countries should agree on the security cooperation they want among themselves so foreigners will not have the excuse to stay in the region,” Hosseini said.

The Iranian official added that regional states themselves can best guarantee the security of the Gulf region.

“The United States goes after the policy of adventurism and creates tensions in the region,” Hosseini said, adding that “Iran’s response will be rational and wise.”

Asked whether Iran had protested over the planned maneuvers or possible inspection of Iranian ships, he said the six countries had announced that their joint maneuvers would not be against Iran. “No issue has been raised regarding possible inspection of Iranian ships,” he added.

The maneuvers are being held under the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) proposed by U.S. President George W. Bush in May, 2003. Bahrain’s participation marks the first time a Gulf nation joins a PSI exercise.

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