

Leaked letter in full: UK diplomat outlines Iran strategy

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, March 26, 2006

Times Online 22 March 2006

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

John Sawers, a leading British diplomat, outlined his strategy for winning Russian and Chinese support for tougher action against Iran in a confidential letter dated March 16. It was addressed to his counterparts in France, Germany and the US:

“Stanislas de Laboulaye, Michael Schaefer, Nick Burns, Robert Cooper.

Nick, Michael and I had a word yesterday about how to handle the E3+3 meeting in New York on Monday. We agreed that we would need to have a shared concept of what would happen in the Security Council after the period specified by the proposed Presidential Statement. I agreed to circulate a short paper which we might use as a sort of speaking note with the Russians and Chinese. This is attached.

Implicit in the paper is a recognition that we are not going to bring the Russians and Chinese to accept significant sanctions over the coming months, certainly not without further efforts to bring the Iranians around.

Kislyak might argue that those diplomatic efforts should start straightaway after a Presidential Statement is adopted. Our own assessment here is that the Iranians will not feel under much pressure from PRST on its own, and they will need to know that more serious measures are likely. This means putting the Iran dossier onto a Chapter VII basis. We may also need to remove one of the Iranian arguments that the suspension called for is ‘voluntary’. We could do both by making the voluntary suspension a mandatory requirement to the Security Council, in a Resolution we would aim to adopt I, say, early May.

In return for the Russians and Chinese agreeing to this, we would then want to put together a package that could be presented to the Iranians as a new proposal. Ideally this would have the explicit backing of Russia, China and the United States as well as the E3, though Nick will want to consider the scope of presenting this in that way. Our thought is that we would need to finalise this during June, and the obvious occasion to do so would be in the margins of the G8 Foreign Ministers’ meeting. The period running up to the G8 Summit will be when our influence on Russia will be at its maximum, and we need to plan accordingly.

In parallel with agreeing a new proposal, we will also want to bind Russia and China into agreeing to further measures that will be taken by the Security Council should the Iranians fail to engage positively. That would be reflected in Step Four. We would not, at this stage, want to be explicit about what would be involved then – there will need to be extensive negotiations on that in May/June.

I am not sure how far we will get on Monday. The prospect of an E3+3

Ministerial in Berlin on 30 March would give Kislyak the opportunity to push this down the road by ten days. But I suspect we will need a meeting at Ministerial level anyway to get agreement to this sort of approach, including an early Chapter VII Resolution.

We have earmarked a conference call between the five of us on Friday afternoon. Can I suggest that we do this at 1530 GMT. We will need to be circumspect on an open line, but as we are not planning to hand a paper over to the Russians and Chinese, I don't think we need to go into detailed drafting. What we need is agreement on the concepts.

Looking forward to seeing you all in New York on Monday."

Follow-up article on the controversial leaked letter published by The Times Online, 25 March 2006

UK Pushes UN on Action Against Iran

BRITAIN is pressing for a United Nations resolution that would open the way for punitive sanctions and even the use of force if Iran were to refuse to halt its controversial nuclear programme.

In a confidential letter obtained by The Times, a leading British diplomat outlines a strategy for winning Russian and Chinese support by early summer for a so-called Chapter VII resolution demanding that Iran cease its nuclear activities.

If the Government in Tehran refused to comply with such a resolution, the UN Security Council would be legally compelled to enforce it.

The strategy marks a significant hardening of the Government's position. It contrasts with public statements by Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, this month. On March 13 he insisted that military action was "inconceivable" and that the dispute with Iran "has to be resolved by peaceful democratic means".

The confidential letter was written only three days later by John Sawers, the political director at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and sent to his American, French and German counterparts.

"They (the Iranians) will need to know that more serious measures are likely," wrote Mr Sawers, in a letter first leaked to the Associated Press. "This means putting the Iran dossier on to a Chapter VII basis."

He suggested making a suspension of all uranium enrichment by Iran "a mandatory requirement of the Security Council, in a resolution we would aim to adopt, I say, early May".

Mark Fitzpatrick, an expert on nuclear proliferation at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said that securing a Chapter VII resolution would provide the international community with a "stick" it could use against Iran. "It would be an important breakthrough," he said. "It would open the door to sanctions and other measures."

Before wielding any stick, however, Mr Sawers proposed that the international community give Iran a final chance in the form of a "revised offer" of incentives as a face-saving

solution to allow it to back down peacefully.

The two-track diplomacy was devised by the British in an attempt to reach a compromise between the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: America, China, Britain, France and Russia.

The US favours moving straight to a tough resolution that would punish Iran if it failed to halt its nuclear programme. Russia and China, which both have important commercial ties with Iran, favour a slower, less confrontational approach handled by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the nuclear watchdog.

“We are not going to bring the Russians and Chinese to accept significant sanctions over the coming months, certainly not without further efforts to bring the Iranians around,” Mr Sawers wrote.

“In parallel with agreeing a new proposal, we will also want to bind Russia and China into agreeing to further measures that will be taken by the Security Council should the Iranians fail to engage positively,” he wrote.

But the British initiative has so far failed to bring the parties together. On Monday Mr Sawers hosted talks at the UN between the five permanent members and Germany which broke up without agreement.

The US refused to take steps that would reward Iran or ease pressure on the regime. Russia, which has billions of pounds in contracts to supply Iran with civilian nuclear technology and sophisticated arms, and China, which has multibillion-pound deals to import Iranian oil and gas, rejected any move that could lead to punitive action. Yesterday follow-up talks at the UN were postponed.

Mr Sawers anticipated the hurdles in his letter. “I suspect we will need a meeting at ministerial level anyway to get agreement to this sort of approach, including an early Chapter VII resolution,” he wrote.

Nevertheless the international community will have to reach agreement if it hopes to halt Iran’s uranium enrichment work, which it resumed in February at Natanz.

The original source of this article is Times Online
Copyright © [Global Research](#), Times Online, 2006

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Global Research](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are

acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca