

## Massive PR offensive to target Iran

Bush White House requests funds to wage war propaganda

By [Julian Borger](#)

Global Research, February 17, 2006

The Guardian 17 February 2006

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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

THE Bush Administration has made an emergency request to the US Congress for a seven-fold increase in funding to mount a huge propaganda campaign against the Tehran Government.

In a further sign of the worsening crisis between Iran and the West, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the \$US75 million (\$A101 million) in extra funds, on top of \$10 million already allocated for this year, would be used to broadcast US radio and television shows into Iran, help pay for Iranians to study in America and back democracy groups inside Iran.

US officials acknowledge the limits of such a campaign, but the State Department is determined to bring in measures such as extending the government-run Voice of America's Farsi service from a few hours a day to round-the-clock coverage.

The sudden budget request, which follows an outlay of only \$4 million over the past two years, is to be accompanied by a diplomatic drive by Dr Rice to discuss Tehran's suspect nuclear weapons program. She is to begin with a visit to Gulf states.

Ms Rice told the Senate foreign affairs committee that Iranian leaders "have now crossed a point where they are in open defiance of the international community. "The US will actively confront the aggressive policies of the Iranian regime. At the same time, we will work to support the aspirations of the Iranian people for freedom ..."

The US is to increase funds to Iranian non-governmental bodies that promote democracy, human rights and trade unionism. It began funding such bodies last year for the first time since Washington broke off ties with Iran in 1980.

A US official said all existing citizens' groups and non-governmental organisations in Iran had been heavily infiltrated by the Tehran Government, so the US wanted to help build new dissident networks. US officials depicted the new pro-democracy spending as just one side of a multifaceted diplomatic offensive aimed at pressuring Tehran.

They said Dr Rice would make Iran a focal point of talks with Middle East leaders in her tour next week, put it centre-stage at the upcoming Group of Eight meeting in Moscow, and call a meeting of NATO political directors in late March or April to discuss policy on Iran.

US propaganda efforts in the Middle East since the September 11 attacks have been relatively unsuccessful. Analysts say its Arabic news station al-Hurra (the Free One) is regarded with suspicion and has poor listening figures.

A senior US official said there was “a broad degree of concern” in the Middle East and around the world about recent actions taken by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and that the proposed US offensive had been greeted “very enthusiastically”.

The crisis between Iran and the West worsened on Tuesday when Iran said it had resumed small-scale uranium enrichment, a step towards nuclear weapons capability.

The original source of this article is The Guardian  
Copyright © [Julian Borger](#), The Guardian, 2006

---

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

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Julian Borger](#)

**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](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)  
[www.globalresearch.ca](http://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](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)