

U.S. report on Iran nuclear program rapped

by UPI

LONDON - A British diplomat questioned a U.S. report on Iran's nuclear program, saying it was too definitive in reporting Iran ceased work on nuclear weapons in 2003. The diplomat, speaking anonymously to the Financial Times, also hinted that U.S. intelligence offered such an assessment out of concern about repeating mistakes made in assessing Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The comments come as the European Union prepares to consider sanctions the U.N. Security Council unanimously approved this week, the newspaper said Thursday. The criticism also coincides with Israeli lawmaker Danny Yatom's pressing for renewed pressure on Iran to end its nuclear program. Last December's U.S. National Intelligence Estimate said Iran stopped work on a nuclear weapons program five years ago, hampering international efforts to pressure Tehran. "When the NIE came out, many of us were surprised at how emphatic the writers of it were, first of all (in saying) that the activity stopped in 2003, and secondly that they had medium confidence it had not been resumed and that they had high confidence it had been stopped," the diplomat told the Times. "I have never seen any intelligence that gives me even medium confidence that these programs have not been resumed."

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