

Report: Saddam had many terrorist links

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein had ties with terrorist groups but none directly with al-Qaida, says a report prepared for the U.S. Defense Department. Although no direct link was found between Saddam and al-Qaida, responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, the report did show Iraqi support for Egyptian Islamic Jihad, which eventually merged with al-Qaida, The Washington Times reported Friday. Also shown was the Iraqi Intelligence Service's relationship with Palestinian terrorist groups. The IIS sent representatives to meet with terrorists and trained non-Iraqi Arabs to attack Israel, the Times reported. "Iraq was a longstanding supporter of international terrorism," said Institute for Defense Analyses, which prepared the report. "Many terrorist movements and Saddam found a common enemy in the United States," the report said. "State sponsorship of terrorism became such a routine tool of state power that Iraq developed elaborate bureaucratic processes to monitor progress and accountability." In its disclosure of the IIS-Egyptian Islamic Jihad alliance, a 1993 memo from the IIS to Saddam said Iraq aided the group previously and was re-establishing contacts to help in attacks on the government of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

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