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WE MUST BE FIRM WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I will speak tomorrow on the subject of fast track. I wish to talk this evening about another subject that has not received as much conversation on the floor of the **Senate** as it merits--because, while we have been focused on fast track and on a lot of loose ends which must be tied up before this first session of the 105th Congress can be brought to a close, a very troubling situation has developed in the Middle East that has ominous implications, not just for our national security but literally for the security of all civilized and law-abiding areas of the world.

Even after the overwhelming defeat that the coalition forces visited upon **Iraq** in and near Kuwait in the Desert Storm conflict, Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's truculence has continued unabated. In the final days of that conflict, a fateful decision was made not to utterly vanquish the Iraqi Government and armed forces, on the grounds that to do so would leave a risky vacuum, as some then referred to it, in the Middle East which Iran or Syria or other destabilizing elements might move to fill.

But instead of reforming his behavior after he was handed an historic defeat, Saddam Hussein has continued to push international patience to the very edge. The United Nations, even with many member nations which strongly favor commerce over conflict, has established and maintained sanctions designed to isolate **Iraq**, keep it too weak to threaten other nations, and push Saddam Hussein to abide by accepted norms of national behavior. These sanctions have cost **Iraq** over \$100 billion and have significantly restrained his economy. They unavoidably also have exacted a very high price from the Iraqi people, but this has not appeared to bother Saddam Hussein in the least. Nor have the sanctions succeeded in obtaining acceptable behavior from Saddam.

Now, during the past 2 weeks, Saddam again has raised his obstinately uncooperative profile. We all know of his announcement that he will no longer permit United States citizens to participate in the U.N. inspection team searching **Iraq** for violations of the U.N. requirement that **Iraq** not build or store weapons of mass destruction. And he has made good on his announcement. The UNSCOM inspection team, that is, the United Nations Special Commission team, has been refused access to its inspection targets throughout the week and once again today because it has Americans as team members. While it is not certain, it is not unreasonable to assume that Saddam's action may have been precipitated by the fear that the U.N. inspectors were getting uncomfortably close to discovering some caches of reprehensible weapons of mass destruction, or facilities to manufacture them, that many have long feared he is doing everything in his power to build, hide, and hoard.

Another reason may be that Saddam Hussein, who unquestionably has demonstrated a kind of perverse personal resiliency, may be looking at the international landscape and concluding that, just perhaps, support may be waning for the United States's determination to keep him on a short leash via multilateral sanctions and weapons inspections. This latest action may, indeed, be his warped idea of an acid test of that conclusion.

We should all be encouraged by the reactions of many of our allies, who are evincing the same objections to **Iraq's** course that are prevalent here in the United States. There is an inescapable reality that, after all of the effort of recent years, Saddam Hussein remains the international outlaw he was when he invaded Kuwait. For most of a decade he has set himself outside international law, and he has sought to avoid the efforts of the international community to insist that his nation comport itself with reasonable standards of behavior and, specifically, not equip itself with implements of mass destruction

which it has shown the willingness to use in previous conflicts.

Plainly and simply, Saddam Hussein cannot be permitted to get away with his antics, or with this latest excuse for avoidance of international responsibility.

This is especially true when only days earlier, after months of negotiations, the administration extracted some very serious commitments from China, during President Jiang Zemin's state visit to Washington, to halt several types of proliferation activities. It

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is unthinkable that we and our allies would stand by and permit a renegade such as Saddam Hussein, who has demonstrated a willingness to engage in warfare and ignore the sovereignty of neighboring nations, to engage in activities that we insist be halted by China, Russia, and other nations.

Let me say that I agree with the determination by the administration, at the outset of this development, to take a measured and multilateral approach to this latest provocation. It is of vital importance to let the United Nations first respond to Saddam's actions. After all, those actions are first and foremost an affront to the United Nations and all its membership which has, in a too-rare example of unity in the face of belligerent threats from a rogue State, managed to maintain its determination to keep **Iraq** isolated via a regime of sanctions and inspections.

I think we should commend the resolve of the Chief U.N. Inspector, UNSCOM head Richard Butler, who has refused to bend or budge in the face of Saddam's intransigence. Again and again he has assembled the inspection team, including the U.S. citizens who are part of it, and presented it to do its work, despite being refused access by **Iraq**.

He rejected taking the easy way out by asking the U.S. participants simply to step aside until the problem is resolved so that the inspections could go forward. He has painstakingly documented what is occurring, and has filed regular reports to the Security Council. He clearly recognizes this situation to be the matter of vital principle that we believe it to be.

The Security Council correctly wants to resolve this matter if it is possible to do so without plunging into armed conflict, be it great or small. So it sent a negotiating team to Baghdad to try to resolve the dispute and secure appropriate access for UNSCOM's inspection team. To remove a point of possible contention as the negotiators sought to accomplish their mission, the United Nations asked that the U.S. temporarily suspend reconnaissance flights over **Iraq** that are conducted with our U-2 aircraft under U.N. auspices, and we complied. At that time, in my judgment this was the appropriate and responsible course.

But now we know that Saddam Hussein has chosen to blow off the negotiating team entirely. It has returned emptyhanded to report to the Security Council tomorrow. That is why I have come to the floor this evening to speak about this matter, to express what I think is the feeling of many Senators and other Americans as the Security Council convenes tomorrow.

We must recognize that there is no indication that Saddam Hussein has any intention of relenting. So we have an obligation of enormous consequence, an obligation to guarantee that Saddam Hussein cannot ignore the United Nations. He cannot be permitted to go unobserved and unimpeded toward his horrific objective of amassing a stockpile of weapons of mass destruction. This is not a matter about which there should be any debate whatsoever in the Security Council, or, certainly, in this Nation. If he remains obdurate, I believe that the United Nations must take, and should authorize immediately, whatever steps are necessary to force him to relent--and that the United States should support and participate in those steps.

The suspended reconnaissance flights should be resumed beginning tomorrow, and it is my understanding they will be. Should Saddam be so foolish as to take any action intended to endanger those aircraft or interrupt their mission, then we should, and I am confident we will, be prepared to take the necessary actions to either eliminate that threat before it can be realized, or take actions of retribution.

When it meets tomorrow to receive the negotiators' report and to determine its future course of action, it is vital that the Security Council treat this situation as seriously as it warrants.

In my judgment, the Security Council should authorize a strong U.N. military response that will materially damage, if not totally destroy, as much as possible of the suspected infrastructure for developing and manufacturing weapons of mass destruction, as well as key military command and control nodes. Saddam Hussein should pay a grave price, in a currency that he understands and values, for his unacceptable behavior.

This should not be a strike consisting only of a handful of cruise missiles hitting isolated targets primarily of presumed symbolic value. But how long this military action might continue and how it may escalate should Saddam remain intransigent and how extensive would be its reach are for the Security Council and our allies to know and for Saddam Hussein ultimately to find out.

Of course, **Mr. President**, the greatest care must be taken to reduce collateral damage to the maximum extent possible, despite the fact that Saddam Hussein cynically and cold-heartedly has made that a difficult challenge by ringing most high-value military targets with civilians.

As the Security Council confronts this, I believe it is important for it to keep prominently in mind the main objective we all should have, which is maintaining an effective, thorough, competent inspection process that will locate and unveil any covert prohibited weapons activity underway in **Iraq**. If an inspection process acceptable to the United States and the rest of the Security Council can be rapidly reinstated, it might be possible to vitiate military action.

Should the resolve of our allies wane to pursue this matter until an acceptable inspection process has been reinstated--which I hope will not occur and which I am pleased to say at this moment does not seem to have even begun--the United States must not lose its resolve to take action. But I think there is strong reason to believe that the multilateral resolve will persist.

To date, there have been nine material breaches by **Iraq** of U.N. requirements. The United Nations has directed some form of responsive action in five of those nine cases, and I believe it will do so in this case.

The job of the administration in the next 24 hours and in the days to follow is to effectively present the case that this is not just an insidious challenge to U.N. authority. It is a threat to peace and to long-term stability in the tinder-dry atmosphere of the Middle East, and it is an unaffordable affront to international norms of decent and acceptable national behavior.

We must not presume that these conclusions automatically will be accepted by every one of our allies, some of which have different interests both in the region and elsewhere, or will be of the same degree of concern to them that they are to the U.S. But it is my belief that we have the ability to persuade them of how serious this is and that the U.N. must not be diverted or bullied.

The reality, **Mr. President**, is that Saddam Hussein has intentionally or inadvertently set up a test which the entire world will be watching, and if he gets away with this arrogant ploy, he will have terminated a most important multilateral effort to defuse a legitimate threat to global security--to defuse it by tying the hands of a rogue who thinks nothing of ordering widespread, indiscriminate death and destruction in pursuit of power.

If he succeeds, he also will have overwhelmed the willingness of the world's leading nations to enforce a principle on which all agree: that a nation should not be permitted to grossly violate even rudimentary standards of national behavior in ways that threaten the sovereignty and well-being of other nations and their people.

I believe that we should aspire to higher standards of international behavior than Saddam Hussein has offered us, and the enforcement action of the United Nations pursues such a higher standard.

We know from our largely unsuccessful attempts to enlist the cooperation of other nations, especially industrialized trading nations, in efforts to impose and enforce somewhat more ambitious standards on nations such as Iran, China, Burma, and Syria

that the willingness of most other nations--including a number who are joined in the sanctions to isolate **Iraq**--is neither wide nor deep to join in imposing sanctions on a sovereign nation to spur it to "clean up its act" and comport its actions with accepted international norms. It would be a monumental tragedy to see such willingness evaporate in one place where so far it has survived and arguably succeeded to date,

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especially at a time when it is being subjected to such a critical test as that which **Iraq** presents.

In a more practical vein, **Mr. President**, I submit that the old adage "pay now or pay later" applies perfectly in this situation. If Saddam Hussein is permitted to go about his effort to build weapons of mass destruction and to avoid the accountability of the United Nations, we will surely reap a confrontation of greater consequence in the future. The Security Council and the United States obviously have to think seriously and soberly about the plausible scenarios that could play out if he were permitted to continue his weapons development work after shutting out U.N. inspectors.

There can be little or no question that Saddam has no compunctions about using the most reprehensible weapons--on civilians as readily as on military forces. He has used poison gas against Iranian troops and civilians in the Iran-**Iraq** border conflict. He has launched Scud missiles against Israel and against coalition troops based in Saudi Arabia during the gulf war.

It is not possible to overstate the ominous implications for the Middle East if Saddam were to develop and successfully militarize and deploy potent biological weapons. We can all imagine the consequences. Extremely small quantities of several known biological weapons have the capability to exterminate the entire population of cities the size of Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. These could be delivered by ballistic missile, but they also could be delivered by much more pedestrian means; aerosol applicators on commercial trucks easily could suffice. If Saddam were to develop and then deploy usable atomic weapons, the same holds true.

Were he to do either, much less both, the entire balance of power in the Middle East changes fundamentally, raising geometrically the already sky-high risk of conflagration in the region. His ability to bluff and bully would soar. The willingness of those nations which participated in the gulf war coalition to confront him again if he takes a course of expansionism or adventurism may be greatly diminished if they believe that their own citizens would be threatened directly by such weapons of mass destruction.

The posture of Saudi Arabia, in particular, could be dramatically altered in such a situation. Saudi Arabia, of course, was absolutely indispensable as a staging and basing area for Desert Storm which dislodged Saddam's troops from Kuwait, and it remains one of the two or three most important locations of U.S. bases in the Middle East.

Were its willingness to serve in these respects to diminish or vanish because of the ability of Saddam to brandish these weapons, then the ability of the United Nations or remnants of the gulf war coalition, or even the United States acting alone, to confront and halt Iraqi aggression would be gravely damaged.

Were Israel to find itself under constant threat of potent biological or nuclear attack, the current low threshold for armed conflict in the Middle East that easily could escalate into a world-threatening inferno would become even more of a hair trigger.

Indeed, one can easily anticipate that Israel would find even the prospect of such a situation entirely untenable and unacceptable and would take preemptive military action. Such action would, at the very least, totally derail the Middle East peace process which is already at risk. It could draw new geopolitical lines in the sand, with the possibility of Arab nations which have been willing to oppose Saddam's extreme actions either moving into a pan-Arab column supporting him against Israel and its allies or, at least, becoming neutral.

Either course would significantly alter the region's balance of power and make the preservation and advancement of U.S. national security objectives in the region unattainable--and would tremendously increase

the risk that our Nation, our young people, ultimately would be sucked into yet another military conflict, this time without the warning time and the staging area that enabled Desert Storm to have such little cost in U.S. and other allied troop casualties.

Finally, we must consider the ultimate nightmare. Surely, if Saddam's efforts are permitted to continue unabated, we will eventually face more aggression by Saddam, quite conceivably including an attack on Israel, or on other nations in the region as he seeks predominance within the Arab community. If he has such weapons, his attack is likely to employ weapons of unspeakable and indiscriminate destructiveness and torturous effects on civilians and military alike. What that would unleash is simply too horrendous to contemplate, but the United States inevitably would be drawn into that conflict.

Mr. President, I could explore other possible ominous consequences of letting Saddam Hussein proceed unchecked. The possible scenarios I have referenced really are only the most obvious possibilities. What is vital is that Americans understand, and that the Security Council understand, that there is no good outcome possible if he is permitted to do anything other than acquiesce to continuation of U.N. inspections.

As the world's only current superpower, we have the enormous responsibility not to exhibit arrogance, not to take any unwitting or unnecessary risks, and not to employ armed force casually. But at the same time it is our responsibility not to shy away from those confrontations that really matter in the long run. And this matters in the long run.

While our actions should be thoughtfully and carefully determined and structured, while we should always seek to use peaceful and diplomatic means to resolve serious problems before resorting to force, and while we should always seek to take significant international actions on a multilateral rather than a unilateral basis whenever that is possible, if in the final analysis we face what we truly believe to be a grave threat to the well-being of our Nation or the entire world and it cannot be removed peacefully, we must have the courage to do what we believe is right and wise.

I believe this is such a situation, **Mr. President**. It is a time for resolve. Tomorrow we must make that clear to the Security Council and to the world.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TORRICELLI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to return to morning business and address the **Senate** for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.
