



## Sport

## Argument

## Education

## Money

## Travel

## Enjoyment

## News

## UK

Crime  
Environment  
Health  
Legal  
Media  
Politics  
This Britain  
Transport  
Ulster

## Europe

## World

Environment  
Politics  
Science/Medical  
Africa  
Americas  
Asia China  
Australasia  
Middle East  
Pacific Rim

## Business

News  
News Analysis  
Comment  
Market Report  
Investment Column  
Citywire

## Digital

Features  
News  
Reviews

## People

Obituaries  
Profiles

Home > News > World > **Politics**

## Leaked report says German and US firms supplied arms to Saddam

### Baghdad's uncensored report to UN names Western companies alleged to have developed its weapons of mass destruction

**By Tony Paterson in Berlin**

18 December 2002

Iraq's 11,000-page report to the UN Security Council lists 150 foreign companies, including some from America, Britain, Germany and France, that supported Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction programme, a German newspaper said yesterday.

Berlin's left-wing Die Tageszeitung newspaper said it had seen a copy of the original Iraqi dossier which was vetted for sensitive information by US officials before being handed to the five permanent Security Council members two weeks ago. An edited version was passed to the remaining 10 members of the Security Council last night.

British officials said the list of companies appeared to be accurate. Eighty German firms and 24 US companies are reported to have supplied Iraq with equipment and know-how for its weapons programmes from 1975 onwards and in some cases support for Baghdad's conventional arms programme had continued until last year.

It is not known who leaked the report, but it could have come from Iraq. Baghdad is keen to embarrass the US and its allies by showing the close involvement of US, German, British and French firms in helping Iraq develop its weapons of mass destruction when the country was a bulwark against the much feared spread of Iranian revolutionary fervour to the Arab world.

The list contained the names of long-established German firms such as Siemens as well as US multi-nationals. With government approval,

21 December 2002 15:35

Search this site:

Printable Story



Across the site

### Related Links

- ▶ **War against terror**
- ▶ UK task force to head for Iraq in four weeks
- ▶ Leaked report says German and US firms supplied arms to Saddam
- ▶ Opposition summit papers over rivalries
- ▶ 'Al-Qa'ida regrouping in training camps on Afghan border, says UN
- ▶ Two US soldiers and interpreter hurt in Afghanistan grenade attack
- ▶ 'Radicals' arrested near Paris over poison gas attack plot

### Top Stories

- Social Services 'paralysed' with fear over tortured child
- CJD case teenagers win right to 'unsafe' treatment
- UK task force to head for Iraq in four weeks
- Pensions shake-up offers cash for delaying retirement
- Vodafone's Gent to step down
- Football: Forlan's precision puts paid to Chelsea

Siemens exported machines used to eliminate kidney stones which have a "dual use" high precision switch used to detonate nuclear bombs. Ten French companies were also named along with a number of Swiss and Chinese firms. The newspaper said a number of British companies were cited, but did not name them.

"From about 1975 onwards, these companies are shown to have supplied entire complexes, building elements, basic materials and technical know-how for Saddam Hussein's programme to develop nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction," the newspaper said. "They also supplied rockets and complete conventional weapons systems," it added.

The five permanent members of the Security Council – the United States, Britain, Russia, France and China – have repeatedly opposed revealing the extent of foreign companies' involvement, although a mass of relevant information was collected by UN weapons inspectors who visited the country between 1991 and 1998. The UN claims that publishing the extent of the companies' involvement in Iraq would jeopardise necessary co-operation with such firms.

German involvement outstripped that of all the other countries put together, the paper said. During the period to 1991, the German authorities permitted weapons co-operation with Iraq and in some cases "actively encouraged" it, according to the newspaper which cited German assistance allegedly given to Iraq for the development of poison gas used in the 1988 massacre of Kurds in northern Iraq. It said that after the massacre America reduced its military co-operation with Iraq but German firms continued their activities until the Gulf War.

Die Tageszeitung quoted sources close to the US Vice President, Dick Cheney, as saying the Bush administration was hoping to prove a German company was continuing to co-operate with the Iraqi regime over the supply of equipment allegedly useful in the construction of weapons of mass destruction.

American weapons experts have recently voiced concern that the German Government has permitted Siemens to sell Baghdad at least eight sophisticated medical machines which contain devices that are vital for nuclear weapons. The machines, known as "lithotripters", use ultrasound to destroy kidney stones in patients. However, each machine contains an electronic switch that can be used as a detonator in an atomic bomb, according to US experts. Iraq was reported to have requested an extra 120 switches as "spare parts" during the initial transaction.

The delivery of the machines was approved by the European Commission and the UN because sanctions against Iraq do not apply to medical equipment. Siemens and the German Government have insisted that the machines, which are being used in northern Iraq under a World Health Organisation programme, cannot be used to make nuclear weapons.

### Also from this section

UK task force to head for Iraq in four weeks

The rematch: this time it was personable

Robert Fisk: Why Blair's magic 'fix' is destined to end in failure

Assad: "We have no terrorists in Syria"

Blair and Assad prepare for bruising encounter over divisions on Iraq