

DEFEND AMERICA

U.S. Department of Defense News About the War on Terrorism

IRAQ World Views



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Statements of Support

Forty-three countries which have offered various levels of support for Operation Iraqi Freedom are willing to be publicly named as members of the coalition, U.S. defense officials said March 20. Some countries prefer to remain anonymous, but that number becomes smaller every day as more countries publicly join the coalition.

Publicly listed coalition members include: Afghanistan, Albania, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan (post conflict), Kuwait, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan.

"Over 40 nations now support our efforts. We are grateful for their determination, we appreciate their vision, and we welcome their support." U.S. President George W. Bush, March 20, 2003

Afghanistan

Afghanistan March 20 broke its official silence on its support for conflict in Iraq saying the "use of force is justified." (Source: AFP, March 20)

Albania

Albanian Prime Minister Fatos Nano, early March 20 statement through his spokesman Aldrin Dalipi:

As a new democracy, Albania is proud to stand with the United States, the United Kingdom, and others in the coalition of the willing to rid Iraq of the weapons of mass destruction and bring about freedom to the long-suffering Iraqi people.

We Albanians are a nation of freedom fighters who know something about living under oppression. That is why we wholeheartedly support the American-led effort to free the people of Iraq. And though we are a small country with a small military, we are proud to stand side by side with our allies in the fight to end the reign of terror in Baghdad. Now that the fighting has begun, we expect the Albanian commandos we have sent to aid in the fighting will acquit themselves well. Also, we are proud to have pledged our unconditional support in terms of additional troops, ports, bases and air fields.

History is old. The only new thing about history is the United States. America is the only country in the world that exports freedom. When the historical occasion has called for it, the United States of America has been willing to pay the price in order to free the oppressed, even in states that have sought its harm.

It brought freedom and democracy to Japan and Germany after defeating both in World War II. It rebuilt their societies and taught them

World Views



Spanish Prime Minister
Jose Maria Aznar



Polish President
Aleksander Kwasniewski



British Prime Minister
Tony Blair

Netherlands

'We have done everything we can to find a solution via the UN. But after 12 years, that road has come to a dead end,' (interim Prime Minister Jan Peter) Balkenende said in a televised speech. CDA (Christian Democratic) deputy leader Maxime Verhagen, however, said the Netherlands should be prepared to 'fill up any holes' created by the movement of US troops to the Gulf. The Netherlands has already sent patriot missiles to Turkey and has given full support to the US in moving its troops through Holland to the Middle East. And foreign affairs minister Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said yesterday the Netherlands would be prepared to take part in a peace-keeping operation in Iraq after the war was over. (Source: Het Financieele Dagblad (English), March 21)

New Zealand

New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark: "The fact that Iraq failed to take the opportunity provided to it to cooperate fully with the inspection and disarmament process means that the Iraqi people now face the prospect of serious hardship. The Iraqi leadership must take its full share of responsibility for that." (Source: Radio New Zealand via BBC Monitoring, date not certain)

Nicaragua

Nicaraguan President Enrique Nicolas Bolanos Geyer confirmed on March 19 his government's support for a United States-led military attack on Iraq. He said, "Nicaragua is one of the 30 countries making up a coalition supporting the United States to disarm Iraq by force in the coming hours." ... "We've firmly supported the fight against terrorism, against drug trafficking and the illicit trafficking of people and arms, ... We have to be a country of credibility in the world that is among those nations that are against the evils of mankind," he added. ... (Source Xinhua News Agency, March 20)

Philippines

about liberty. It helped bring down the Berlin Wall hastening the process of freedom in Central and Eastern Europe. It rarely asked anything in return.

Now the United States and its Coalition of the Willing will bring liberty to Iraq. And when the coalition of the willing completes its work, it will be time for the coalition of builders to repair, restore and rebuild Iraq under the name of freedom. We are proud to be in the company of the free. (Source: ATA news agency, Tirana, March 20, via BBC Monitoring)

Australia

Australian Prime Minister John Howard

"The coalition nations stand ready to deliver massive humanitarian assistance, food, water and medicines to the Iraqi people in the next few days as the security situation particularly in the south stabilises. . .

"The Americans and the British have large amounts of humanitarian assistance available to be provided to the Iraqi people, subject of course to obtaining access to places such as Basra . . .

"I want to assure the House that we see our role not only in enforcing the disarmament of Saddam Hussein, but also in making a contribution to the alleviation of the suffering of the Iraqi people."

AAP Newsfeed, March 25, 2003

Prime Minister John Howard said he would commit 2,000 military personnel to join in a war against Iraq. "This government has taken a decision which it genuinely believes is in the medium- and longer-term interests of this country," Howard said. (Source: AP, March 18)

Bulgaria

"It is not a war against the Iraqi people but against the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein," said Nikolai Svinarov, the defense minister in Bulgaria, which has offered 150 non-combat troops. "Better an end to horror than an endless horror." (Source: AP Worldstream, March 20)

"Today we must state with regret that, despite the efforts to reach a consensus by diplomatic means, we failed to achieve the result that we all wanted. The peaceful solution to the crisis was entirely up to Saddam Hussein. The conclusion is that Iraq refused to disarm in accordance with the will of the international community and it alone chose 'the serious consequences' resulting from its behavior. The weapons of mass destruction that Baghdad possesses threaten peace and security. The international community should categorically oppose this threat." Excerpt from Bulgarian Prime Minister Saxe-Coburg-Gotha's statement on Khristo Botev Radio, Sofia, as monitored by the BBC, March 19)

Canada

Philippine Foreign Secretary Blas Ople

"Iraq's weapons of mass destruction continue to pose immediate and long-term threat to Filipinos in the Middle East. These weapons could also fall into the hands of terrorists. We continue to give our political and moral support to the efforts of the U.S.-led coalition to disarm Iraq." (Source AP, March 24)

Philippines foreign affairs undersecretary Lauro Baja said Manila was among the 30 countries that have openly backed Washington Baja, who is representing Philippines Foreign Minister Blas Ople, said Manila "perceives there is a failure of the U.N. to act. Our national interest also dictates that we support a method which will really disarm Iraq and perhaps promote a safer and more stable Middle East region where we have 1.5 million workers."

Poland

Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski said late on Monday he had agreed to send up to 200 Polish soldiers to Iraq to join a possible-US-led campaign to disarm Saddam Hussein. "We are prepared to use the Polish military contingent to force Iraq to respect UN Security Council resolution 1441," Kwasniewski told a joint news conference with Prime Minister Leszek Miller. He said the Polish troops would lend logistical support to US forces in Iraq in the region for a period limited from March 19 to September 15, he said. ... Kwasniewski's announcement, which came following a meeting with his prime minister, came shortly before a speech to the nation by US President George W. Bush on Iraq. (Source: AFP, March 18)

Romania

Iliescu pointed out that talks within U.N. Security Council on the crisis on Iraq would be concluded on Monday or Tuesday, waiting for "the moment of truth". Asked whether Romania would still support a military intervention in Iraq in the absence of a second UN resolution, Romanian head of state Ion Iliescu answered that the issue was not about actual support: "It's not about supporting an intervention as we don't even have the means to do it, it's about meeting certain obligations as allies."

To this end, said Iliescu, Romania has opened its airspace to ally planes, provided the ally troops with ground logistics support, and contributed post-conflict and non-combatant military troops for humanitarian missions. (Source: Rompres news agency, Bucharest, in English, March 17, as monitored by the BBC)

Slovakia

Slovak Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda today reiterated Slovakia's support for the U.S. approach towards Iraq and backed U.S. President George Bush's ultimatum given to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. (Source: CTK news agency, Prague, via BBC Monitoring, March 18)

Spain

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar on Thursday reiterated his support for the United States in its war against Iraq and denounced Baghdad for flouting international law by refusing to disarm. "Right up until the end the Iraqi regime defied (international) law by ignoring its obligations to disarm... and it threw away its last chance," Aznar said in an address to the Spanish nation given shortly after the United States launched its war against Iraq. "With a full sense of our responsibilities, the government of this nation supports the re-establishment of international law so that conditions for peace and security prevail," he said. (Source: AFP, March 20)

Canadian Foreign Minister Bill Graham

"We support our American friends and allies on insisting that the Iraqi regime conforms to international law [on treatment of prisoners of war]."

"We very much respect how the United States is conducting itself and we will support it in every way we possibly can to make sure that Iraq observes the rules of war as they should be observed."

Agence France Presse, March 25, 2003

Czech Republic

On March 19 the government sided with the coalition in its efforts to disarm Iraq. "There is no doubt the government is on the side of the international community which seeks to disarm Iraq," Premier Vladimir Spidla said after a government meeting later Wednesday. "The Czech Republic is on the side of the allies, only the coalition operation can solve the Iraqi crisis," Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda told the British Broadcasting Corporation. (Source: AP, March 19)

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Denmark

Denmark's government offered March 18 to send military and medical personnel to help an expected U.S.-led war against Iraq and set aside funds for postwar reconstruction. "The government has decided to propose to the parliament that Denmark take active part in a military action against the Iraqi rule," Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen said after a meeting in the parliament's foreign policy committee. (Source: Reuters, March 18)

El Salvador

El Salvador has offered to send troops to help the United States keep the peace after a possible war with Iraq, officials said Wednesday. "El Salvador is giving two types of support to the United States: political support and post-conflict support," said Cesar Martinez, the spokesman for El Salvador's foreign relations department. He said his country has offered to send Salvadoran military officials with any U.N. troops assigned to maintain peace in Iraq. (Source: AP, March 19)

Estonia

The Estonian government also supported the launch of the US-led war to disarm Iraq, hoping the military conflict would be over shortly. "We realize the need to disarm Iraq," Prime Minister Siim Kallas said in a statement. (Source: AFP, March 20)

Ethiopia

Ethiopia ... said Friday it had granted the United States access to its airspace and air bases. Tekeda Alemu, minister of state for foreign affairs, said he did not know when or whether the United States would use the access. He said the United States, a longtime ally of Ethiopia, had requested the rights. (Source: AP, March 21)

Georgia

Taiwan

Taiwan supports U.S.'s call on Iraq President Saddam Hussein to go into exile within 48 hours to avert a war, but offered its air space to U.S. military planes should war become inevitable, foreign ministry officials said. (Foreign) Ministry spokesman Richard Shih said Taiwan hopes "Iraq would swiftly destroy their weapons of mass destruction in abiding by the United Nations 1441 Resolution, and Saddam would leave his country in 48 hours if he is to avert war." U.S. President George W. Bush has given Saddam 48 hours to flee his country or face a US-led invasion. Taiwan also reiterated its support of US anti-terrorism efforts. "Therefore US military aircraft could fly from Japan through Taiwan's two air routes -- one called A-1 to the west of Taiwan and the other G581 to the east -- en route to Southeast Asia and the Middle East," defense ministry spokesman Huang Suey-sheng told reporters. He said a special defense ministry task force is on stand by in case war should start. (Source: AFX, March 18)

United Kingdom

British Prime Minister Tony Blair

"Saddam will go. This regime will be replaced. The Iraqi people will be helped to a better future. That we will encounter more difficulties and anxious moments in the days ahead is certain. But no less certain - indeed more so - is coalition victory." Evening Standard (London) March 24, 2003

"We want to do this campaign in a way that minimizes the suffering of ordinary Iraqi people brutalized by Saddam, to safeguard the wealth of the country for the future prosperity of the people, and to make this a war not of conquest but of liberation. . . ."Remarks to the British

House of Commons, March 24

British Secretary of State for Defence Geoffrey Hoon

"Achieving our objective of securing the oilfields and infrastructure virtually intact is a significant early success. We are committed to the future of Iraq and to returning its governance and resources to the Iraqi people. That is why we want to avoid any unnecessary loss of life or destruction of infrastructure." Press

conference, London, March 24

"Iraq and its security apparatus exists to support the regime of Saddam Hussein. Nobody should be surprised therefore that there are parts of the Armed Forces determined to fight, for they know that when the regime falls, which it will, they will have nowhere to go. Nor should anyone be surprised that until the Iraqi people know for sure that the regime that they despise is on the way out, they will hold back, a point now being made by Iraqi exiles. They have been let down before, when they thought coalition forces were going to remove Saddam, and my message to them today is that this time we will not let you down. Saddam and his regime will be removed. Iraq will have a better future ahead of it.

"But then there will be resistance all the way to the end of this campaign. It will take time and perseverance and the continuing skill and dedication and professionalism of our Armed Forces to break it down. But nobody, least of all the forces loyal to Saddam, should be in any doubt that the resistance will be broken down and that the goals of the coalition forces will be met.

"I would also like to update you if I may about the humanitarian

Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze said Thursday that his country fully supported the US war in Iraq and was ready to offer the United States use of its air bases. "As long as such a state exists, no country can sleep peacefully," Shevardnadze said in reference to Iraq in a televised address. "Georgia offers the United States political and moral support," he said, adding that it would offer military support, including the use of air bases, if necessary. Before US-led attacks on Iraq began late Wednesday, Shevardnadze said that he understood why US President George W. Bush "does not believe in the UN Security Council, which has shown itself incapable of taking decisions to guarantee peace on the planet." (Source: AFP, March 21)

Germany

Unlike Schröder, Germany's major opposition parties endorsed the course set by Bush. "We regret that the use of military force has become more likely and that the U.N. Security Council was unable to reach a unified position on the question of completely and unconditionally disarming Iraq, even though it unanimously determined that a threat to world peace existed," a statement said. The statement was passed on Tuesday with only four negative votes by the combined parliamentary groups of the Christian Democratic Union and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union. (Source: Deutsche Welle, March 19)

Hungary

Hungary's prime minister, Peter Medgyessy, whose government has opened a military base for the U.S. Army to train Iraqi dissidents for non-combat support roles, said he hoped the conflict would end quickly and with a minimum of casualties. "The use of military force has become unavoidable," he said. "The Iraqi dictatorship's weapons of mass destruction represent a risk to the international community and international security." (Source: AP Worldstream, March 20)

Italy

Foreign Minister Franco Frattini, in a newspaper interview that was to be published March 18, said that the government would ask Parliament to endorse "the minimum base of logistical support, in particular, the use of bases and flying through air space." Frattini, interviewed by the daily Il Riformista, said Italy made it clear early on to the Americans that it would not contribute troops to any armed intervention against Iraq. "Not because we doubted the (Security Council) Resolution 1441 isn't sufficient to provide a legal basis" of forced disarmament of Iraq, Frattini said, according to interview excerpts released late March 17. "But because Italy's commitment toward peace has been traditionally distinguished by its capacity to contribute to peacekeeping operations." (Source: AP, March 17)

Japan

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi

"I understand the start of the use of force by America and support it." Agence France Presse, March 20, 2003

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Japan supports the US position on Iraq and believes the use of force can be justified by existing UN resolutions, although there is still a chance for peace. "President Bush has made various efforts to gain international cooperation," Koizumi told reporters. "Amid such efforts, I believe it was an unavoidable decision," he said, referring to President George W. Bush's ultimatum for Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to flee his country in 48 hours or face an invasion. "I support the U.S. stance," he said. The prime minister said hope of a peaceful end to the crisis is not dead but depends on Saddam Hussein. "Although extremely limited, I believe peaceful solutions can still be found. But it is solely up to the government of Iraq and President Hussein," Koizumi said. (Source: AFX, March 18)

situation. When people ask about the humanitarian rescue operation, something that will be required of course once our forces have secured Iraq, we should be clear that it is not military action that will create humanitarian catastrophe in Iraq. The humanitarian disaster is here and now, it is happening, it has actually been happening for years. . . .

"There are huge stockpiles of humanitarian aid in Kuwait ready to be deployed for the benefit of the Iraqi people. The Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel, Sir Galahad, is loaded with humanitarian aid. It will enter the port of Umm Qasr as soon as it is safe to do so. All that is holding us back at present is the threat of Iraqi mines and it will take some time before we can make the water safe for our ship to come in. It is yet one more example of the actions of the Iraqi regime that is making it more difficult for the Iraqi people." (Remarks from a [press conference](#), March 25, 2003)

"The air campaign has been precisely targeted. Of course there will have been civilian casualties, but we have done all we humanly can to keep them to a minimum. Water and electricity supplies are being spared. The targets are the infrastructure command and control of Saddam's regime, not of the civilian population. And we are making massive efforts to clear lines of supply for humanitarian aid, though the presence of mines is hindering us."

By contrast, the nature of Saddam's regime is all too plainly expressed in its actions. The oil wealth was mined and deep mined, at that. Had we not struck quickly, Iraq's future wealth would even now be burning away. Prisoners have been paraded in defiance of all international conventions. Those who dare speak criticism of the regime are being executed. . . .

An Iraqi nation, degraded and brutalized by decades of barbarous rule, a country that is potentially rich, but whose people go hungry and whose children die needlessly from malnutrition and disease, and a regime to whom repression, torture, the abuse of human rights, and the possession of weapons of mass destruction define their very nature. That is why we must achieve our objectives. Saddam will go. This regime will be replaced. The Iraqi people will be helped to a better future. The weapons of mass destruction, for which a peaceful Iraq has no use, will be eliminated." (Remarks to the British House of Commons, March 24)

British Secretary of State for Defence Geoffrey Hoon

"These are preliminary operations. We've made it clear that these are not the start of a major conflict but certainly our forces are ready, they are prepared and they will take on the tasks that are assigned to them.

"This is simply a warning shot across the bows of the Iraqi leadership. They cannot rest. They cannot hide. We will deal with them.

"The purpose of these initial operations was simply to deal with the leadership, the threat to our safety and security posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction in the hands of an absolutely appalling group of people."

AAP Newsfeed, March 20, 2003

Korea

Seoul's Foreign Ministry said the country supports "U.S.-led international efforts to resolve the Iraqi issue." South Korea, a key U.S. ally in Asia, also reaffirmed its plan to send hundreds of military engineers to help the United States if its ally goes to war with Iraq. It urged Iraq to fulfill its obligation to disarm "promptly and completely." "We know growing voices against war, but we will dispatch some 500 army engineers to support a U.S.-led war on Iraq," a senior ministry official told United Press International on condition of anonymity. (Source: UPI, March 18)

Latvia

Similar pro-US support was voiced in neighboring Latvia, which along with Lithuania and eight other eastern European countries last month signed a declaration lining up behind Washington. "The diplomatic means to reach the disarmament of Iraq are almost exhausted," the Latvian foreign ministry said, adding that Baghdad was only offering some cooperation because of the large military build-up in the Persian Gulf. "Latvia urges the U.N. Security Council and international community to preserve unity and put maximal pressure on Saddam Hussein's regime. It is the only remaining opportunity to disarm Iraq by peaceful means," it said in a statement. (Source: AFP, March 17)

Lithuania

We are for a diplomatic solution of the crisis, but if needed we shall politically support the United States using other means," Lithuanian Defence Minister Linas Linkevicius told reporters after the country's defence council met. "It is clear that the scope for a peaceful dialogue is diminishing," he said, after the meeting of the council, which groups the president, prime minister, parliamentary speaker, defence minister and head of the army. (Source: AFP, March 17)

Prime Minister Blair before the House of Commons: "To retreat now, I believe, would put at hazard all that we hold dearest, turn the United Nations back into a talking shop, stifle the first steps of progress in the Middle East; leave the Iraqi people to the mercy of events on which we would have relinquished all power to influence for the better. Tell our allies that at the very moment of action, at the very moment when they need our determination that Britain faltered? I will not be party to such a course. This is not the time to falter. This is the time for this House, not just this government or indeed this Prime Minister, but for this House to give a lead, to show that we will stand up for what we know to be right, to show that we will confront the tyrannies and dictatorships and terrorists who put our way of life at risk, to show at the moment of decision that we have the courage to do the right thing. I beg to move the motion." (Source: [The Prime Minister's Website](#))

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