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## **Alarm Raised Over Quality of Uranium Found in Iran** By CRAIG S. SMITH

VIENNA, March 10 — United Nations nuclear inspectors have found traces of extremely highly enriched uranium in Iran, of a purity reserved for use in a nuclear bomb, European and American diplomats said Wednesday.

Among traces that inspectors detected last year are some refined to 90 percent of the rare 235 isotope, the diplomats said. While the International Atomic Energy Agency has previously reported finding "weapons grade" traces, it has not revealed that some reached such a high degree of enrichment...

American officials argue that traces of such highly enriched uranium, regardless of their origin, are another disturbing clue to what they believe are Iran's hidden ends. "What it shows is that they have a system that is capable of producing weapons grade uranium," said an American official speaking from Washington. "If it's an assembly that was removed from Pakistan or elsewhere, it's already battle tested," he said.

On Wednesday, Iran's defense minister, Ali Shamkhani, acknowledged for the first time that the Iranian military had produced centrifuges to enrich uranium, the Associated Press reported from Teheran. He said they were manufacturing unsophisticated models for civilian users. The admission came after the I.A.E.A. presented Iran with evidence that some of its nuclear activities were taking place on military bases.

The United States has been lobbying since late last year to threaten Iran with Security Council scrutiny if it continued to withhold information on the scope of its nuclear program. Britain, France and Germany have resisted making an explicit threat for fear that it would anger Iran and hinder future cooperation.

Iran warned Wednesday that American-led criticism could "complicate" its relations with the I.A.E.A. "America is taking advantage of any opportunity to put pressure on Iran," Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said in Teheran, the Associated Press reported. "Unfortunately the I.A.E.A. is sometimes influenced in this regard."

*David E. Sanger contributed reporting from Washington for this article.*