

**National Security Working Group**  
***Weekly National Security Working Group Update***  
**Congressman Jim Jordan (R-OH), RSC Chairman**  
**Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ), NSWG Chairman**  
**30 March 2011**

The National Security Working Group (NSWG) is comprised of Trent Franks, 2nd, AZ; Connie Mack, 14th, FL; Duncan Hunter, 52nd, CA and Allen West, 22nd, FL. We look forward to providing RSC members updates on national security issues and matters using this forum. We welcome your inputs.

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*Iran-Venezuela Nuclear Cooperation (Rep Franks)*

The threat of an Iranian-Venezuelan nuclear cooperation could be a repeat of the Cuban-missile crisis for the United States' national security. Instead of Cuba providing Russia with a weaponry site, Venezuela is hosting a base for the Iranian regime's hopes of creating a uranium supply site to fuel its nuclear reactors. In a 2009 op-ed in the Wall Street Journal, Bret Stephens listed a number of industrial collaborations between Iran and Venezuela. These included an Iranian tractor factory, dairy plant and even a bicycle manufacturer. According to the article, Iran and Venezuela have signed an agreement to collaborate on a uranium mining project in a remote region of Venezuela called Roraima Basin. Stephens spoke to a mineral resources company which operates a large uranium mine in Canada that said the Roraima is the "geological look-alike" of its Canadian site, suggesting potentially huge amounts of the radioactive material. Stephens also noted that senior officials in Venezuela's state-run oil company, defense contractors, state-owned mining concerns, and the Minister of Interior himself are all ***Venezuelans of Iranian descent***. Stephens also advised the Obama administration to be wary of Iran-Venezuela relations. In a 2010 Newsmax article, journalist Ken Timmerman wrote that Norman Bailey, a senior Latin American intelligence analyst alleged that Iranian-built factories in Venezuela are an example of the two country's nuclear collaboration ambitions. Bailey said, "The tractor factory doesn't make tractors, and the cement factory doesn't make cement. The tractor factory makes weapons, and the cement factory is used for the export of cocaine." Just as recently a March 27, Kara Rowland commented in the Washington Times that in President Obama's five-day tour of Latin America, not once did he mention the threat posed by Chavez's regime. Rowland wrote, "But even amid reports that Iran could be mining for uranium in Venezuela under the guise of a tractor factory, Mr. Obama remained silent on the case of Mr. Chavez and even went out of his way not to mention his name or country when asked about the issue by a Miami Herald columnist last week." Ties between Iran and Venezuela and the existence of the Iranian tractor manufacturing company, VenIran, have spurred a large amount of international disquiet over the years.

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*Libya: Operation Odyssey Dawn Once Again Validates Expediency of Nation's Expeditionary Force in Readiness (Rep Hunter)*

In the last few months, during the FY11 Continuing Appropriations debate and the posture hearings that followed the rollout of the President's FY12 Budget, there has been much talk of cutting funding for Marine Corps STOVL (Short Take-Off/Vertical Landing) aircraft, the MV-22 Osprey and amphibious shipping assets (EFV, LHA, MLP). Yet, when the Administration began to consider options for military action in Libya, the Marine Corps' 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) was the first of our forces to make it to the North African Theater, providing the only Navy ship with a flight deck capable of projecting a significant contingent of fighter jets. There were no aircraft carriers in the theater as they were all gainfully employed elsewhere. Our closest land base that provided fighter jets for the eventual implementation of a No-Fly Zone was in Italy, 500 miles away. When the No-Fly zone was enacted, the current Marine Corps STOVL aircraft, the AV-8B Harrier flew two sorties for every one flown by aircraft making runs across the Mediterranean from Italy and France. And when an Air Force F-15 went down, a Marine Corps TRAP (Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel) Force in two MV-22 Ospreys rescued one of the downed pilots in exactly two hours, accompanied by CH-53(s) and AV-8B Harriers launched from the deck of the USS Kearsarge. And still, this week the U.S. Navy will decommission the USS Nassau, reducing the number of big deck amphibious ships in the inventory to nine, and thirty overall. How many times does the Nation's Expeditionary Force have to prove its utility in providing an expedient off-shore basing option before the Department of Defense gets serious about adequately funding the Marine Corps' amphibious capabilities?

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*Electromagnetic Pulse Caucus Meeting - 7 April 2011 (Rep Franks)*

On 7 April at 1:00pm (location is TBD), the EMP Caucus will hold a meeting. The EMP threat is recognized by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commissions (FERC) and North American Electric Reliability Association (NERC). Regulators and industry are moving forward by conducting research and discussions on the best way to secure our electrical infrastructure. The time for Congress to come together and provide the legal framework for protecting our electric infrastructure is now. We cannot delay this urgent issue any longer.

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*Electric Infrastructure Council (EIS) Summit - 11 April 2011 - Washington DC (Rep Franks)*

The first global Electric Infrastructure Security (EIS) Summit took place in London on September 20, 2010, in the U.K. Parliament, Westminster Hall. As the first world summit on infrastructure security, EISS London founded a new international security framework designed to foster information sharing, discussion, coordination and cooperation in assessing and protecting national infrastructures against physical threats such as EMP and Severe Geomagnetic Storms.

The second global EIS Summit will take place in the Capitol Building, Washington D.C. on April 11, 2011. To apply for registration for EISS Washington D.C., please email [info@eissummit.com](mailto:info@eissummit.com)

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Question or comments regarding RSC National Security Working Group items can also be directed to Bruce F. Miller, [bruce.miller@mail.house.gov](mailto:bruce.miller@mail.house.gov).