

# Nuclear Madness: Iran, Kuwait or the IAEA?

By [Felicity Arbuthnot](#)

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.“The Public cannot be too curious concerning the characters of public men.” (Samuel Adams, letter to James Warren, 1775.)

As the sabre rattling against Iran becomes more deafening, week on week, with threats of the nuclear insanity of potentially, deliberately, creating a few Chenobyls or a Fukushima, by bombing working nuclear power plants, another potential nuclear madness is planned, geographically “next door.”

The IAEA appears to be behaving in as partisan, shameless way regarding Iran, as it did with Iraq. Then, accusations, with considerable justification, were that the inspection teams were more about spying than neutral observation. “The way back to (the UN) was via Tel Aviv”, remarked one former inspector, memorably.

Gareth Porter has meticulously, comprehensively trashed (i) the IAEA’s latest Report on Iran, showing disturbing parallels with the tragic Iraq fiasco. Iraq had Ahmed Chalabi, Iyad Allawi and “Curveball”, selling fairy stories. Iran, seemingly, has an expert in nanodiamonds, Vyacheslav Danilenko, apparently doubling as a nuclear weapons expert, and a plethora of unidentified spokespersons for “Member States.” Hardly rigid, verifiable scholarship.

Previous “concerns” expressed, has been that Iran has vast oil reserves, so there must be a weapons related reason to expand nuclear power. However Iran has been under increasingly stringent sanctions since 14th November 1979, ironically, necessitating additional sources of energy – for which it is now being threatened with Iraq’s fate.

Yet headlines in the Middle East, warning: “Most volatile region in the world is going nuclear”, one with a helpful map of “volatile” countries with advanced nuclear ambitions, seem to have escaped IAEA notice. Iran, of course, has no history of belligerence towards its neighbours, for decades. Indeed, in 2003, in spite of the terrible cost of the eight year war after the 1980 (Western driven) invasion by Iraq, told that the country was still a “threat to its neighbours” by Washington, Tehran repeatedly responded that it was not.

Consider then the case of Kuwait: “Blessed with an abundance of natural petroleum resources ...” (Gulf News 25th February 2011) which has advanced plans for up to four nuclear power stations – two apparently to be built on two islands, Warba and Bubiyan, which have been the source of conflict for nearly a century – many scholars contend longer – the dispute over which contributed to the disaster of Iraq’s invasion and that country’s subsequent decimation – of 2nd August 1990.

Theodore Draper outlined the vast complexities in 1993(ii.)

“The suddenness of the [Iraqi] action [invading Kuwait] and the coverage it has received should not disguise the fact that Iraqi claims to Kuwaiti territory have been pursued with remarkable consistency over the last half-century, through Hashemite and revolutionary rule alike.

There is some justification for the argument (which) predates by a considerable length of time, the accession of Saddam Hussain to the Iraqi Presidency.

These claims will not disappear with a settlement of the present Kuwait Crisis, whether or not this involves a change of regime in Baghdad.

“It is necessary to take these historical roots into account because they left such an explosive legacy in the Gulf region—the Iraqi quest for a coastal outlet, the obstruction of the Kuwaiti barrier islands of Warba and Bubiyan, the dispute over Kuwait’s exploitation of the Rumaila oil field, the precarious borders ...” But as Richard Schofield (iii) points out:

“Thus there was more to Saddam Hussein’s attempt to annex Kuwait than one man’s evil character. Whatever may happen to him, the Iraqi grievances will not go away.

“For more than two centuries, Kuwait managed to survive by playing off one major power against another. As a nation, it did not have the ancient roots that Iraq has in Mesopotamia.

“Throughout the 1930s, Iraq refused to agree to a demarcation of the boundary with Kuwait unless the latter was willing to give up control of the islands, Warba and Bubiyan, and thus secure the narrow Iraqi Persian Gulf coastline. Despite its vulnerability, Kuwait refused to make concessions.

By 1935, Iraqi propaganda openly called for the incorporation of Kuwait. Three years later, Iraq made this claim official, with the same justification used by Saddam Hussein five decades later—that Kuwait had once been attached to the Ottoman province of Basra. “ (Emphasis mine.)

Swimming distance from Iraq, which Patrick Markey has described as: “... a flash point, a country still struggling with violence, sectarianism and pressure from neighbours in an unstable region”, \$20 Billion is to be spent on the Warba Island nuclear reactor, just 500 metres from the nearest Iraqi inhabited area, at the port of Umm Qasr. It is 30 miles from Kuwait. (Bubiyan nestles next to Warba..v).

Pointing out that it is on the still disputed border between Iraq and Kuwait arising from further boundary tinkering after 1991’s hostilities, politician Ms. Alya Naseef has demanded of Prime Minister Nuri Maliki strongly represents that the plans be halted.

The main contractors are French giant AREVA, in which in December 2010 the Kuwaiti Investment Authority invested \$794 million and Kuwait acquired a 4.8% stake, making it the third largest investor, the French State being the largest. AREVA has extensive contracts and mutual interests with the United States.(vi)

Further, in September last year, Kuwait signed a: “ ... a bilateral agreement with Japan for cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, covering issues such as expertise

exchange, human resource development, nuclear safety, following similar deals with France and the US earlier this year.”

The five year deal with Japan, includes: “ ... preparation, planning and promotion of nuclear power development ... safety and security.

“The scope of the cooperation includes training, human resources and infrastructure development, and the appropriate application of nuclear power generation and related technology.”

I wonder if Fukushima’s radioactive air borne or sea borne fallout has reached the Gulf yet.

The UK Foreign Office website states of Kuwait: “There is a general threat from terrorism. Attacks cannot be ruled out and could be indiscriminate

“These include references to attacks on Western interests ... military, oil, transport and aviation interests.”

What a prize a nuclear power station would be.

“Many areas of the Gulf are highly sensitive, including near maritime boundaries and the islands of Bubiyan and Warbah ...” Further: “ The area in the northern Gulf, between Iran, Iraq and Kuwait has not been demarcated ...” reminds the Foreign Office.

It would be hard to find a more volatile place to build a nuclear installation. Oh, and the land is low lying and subject to silting and shifting.

With the IAEA berating Iran for its nuclear programme, it is seem bewildering that the very real and present dangers of these terrifying, mad cap projects have passed them by.

Heaven forbid that the fifty years fruitful trade relations, between Japan and Kuwait, celebrated in May this year,(viii) has tempted Japan’s Mr Yukiya Amano, heading the IAEA, to put country before nuclear madness.

And don’t forget the suicide bombers.

Notes

i. <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=27599>

ii.

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1992/jan/16/the-gulf-war-reconsidered-2/?pagination=false>

iii. Islands and Maritime Boundaries in the Gulf 1798-1960, pub: 1990: R Schofield. ISBN: (13) 978-1-85207-275-9

iv.

<http://analysis.nuclearenergyinsider.com/weekly-brief/weekly-intelligence-brief-14-21-july-2011>

v. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ku-map.gif>

vi.

<http://www.constructionweekonline.com/article-13040-iraq-20bn-kuwait-nuclear-plant-will-harm-iraqis/>

vii.

<http://www.arabtimesonline.com/NewsDetails/tabid/96/smId/414/ArticleID/159399/reftab/36/t/Kuwait-Japan-sign-pact-on-nuclear-energy/Default.aspx>

See also:

<http://www.nationalsecuritywatch.com/2011/03/french-nuclear-giant-areva's-multi-billion-dollar-strategic-partner-american-taxpayers/>

viii. [http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle\\_e/kuwait/index.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle_e/kuwait/index.html)

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