

WMD-Armed Terrorists are Top Threat, Clinton Says

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U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said recently that the highest security threat to the United States is that al-Qaeda or an associated terrorist organization might acquire weapons of mass destruction, Bloomberg reported Sunday (see [GSN](#), Feb. 3).

"The biggest nightmare that many of us have is that one of these terrorist member organizations within this syndicate of terror will get their hands on a weapon of mass destruction," Clinton said in a taped interview for CNN.

She said that terrorists are now "more creative, more flexible, more agile" than they were at the time of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. "They are unfortunately a very committed, clever, diabolical group of terrorists who are always looking for weaknesses and openings," according to Clinton.

While Clinton acknowledged the security dangers in either Iran or North Korea developing nuclear weapons, she argued that the "greater threats are the transnational nonstate networks. Primarily the extremists -- the fundamental Islamic extremists who are connected to al-Qaeda in the Arab peninsula."

Clinton said she did not believe Iran has developed a nuclear weapon (see related [GSN](#) story, today).

"We believe that their behavior certainly is evidence of their intentions," she stated. "The failure to disclose the facility at Qum. The failure to accept what was a very reasonable offer to Russia, France, and the U.S. through the [International Atomic Energy Agency] to take their uranium -- their low-enriched uranium -- and return it for their research reactor" (Indira A.R. Lakshmanan, Bloomberg/[BusinessWeek](#), Feb. 7).

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