

Iran's Nuclear Steps Quicken, Diplomats Say

Sunday, 26 March 2006

Tehran reportedly is gearing up for uranium enrichment. A split in the Security Council may impede efforts to halt the program.

By Alissa J. Rubin and Maggie Farley, Times Staff Writers

The Los Angeles Times - VIENNA — With efforts to halt its nuclear program at an impasse, Iran is moving faster than expected and is just days from making the first steps toward enriching uranium, said diplomats who have been briefed on the program.

If engineers encounter no major technical problems, Iran could manufacture enough highly enriched uranium to build a bomb within three years, much more quickly than the common estimate of five to 10 years, the diplomats said.

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