



Iran's Nuclear Program
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US-bashing proves popular pastime at UN (Mike Wooldridge, BBC, 22 Sept 2006)

Noam Chomsky's book "Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance" looks like being one of the unexpected enduring symbols of this year's United Nations General Assembly.

Holding it up to show his fellow world leaders during his speech to the assembly, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez briefly took on the guise of book reviewer. He said the book explained everything you needed to know about the world.

President Bush had spoken from the same podium the previous day, laying out once again his "freedom agenda" and denouncing extremism.

"The devil came here yesterday - right here," said Mr Chavez. "It smells of sulphur still."

If such melodramatic remarks have become characteristic of the Venezuelan leader's sparring with the United States government, it has been far from the only display of anti-Americanism during the first week of the Assembly's general debate.

Rhetoric

Bolivia's President, Evo Morales, also had a prop. A former coca grower, he held up a coca leaf during his speech and castigated the United States for what he called its neo-colonialist efforts to eliminate coca production.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran tore into the Americans - and the British, too - for supposedly using their power to manipulate the UN Security Council and protect themselves from accountability.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran

President Ahmadinejad criticised American and Britain

He said some sought to rule the world relying on weapons and threats while others lived in perpetual insecurity and danger.

President Robert Mugabe bracketed Washington and London together in denouncing what he suggested were attempts to promote regime change in his country.

But any General Assembly is about far more than rhetoric from the podium.

Empty seats in the assembly chamber are not necessarily a sign of a deliberate snub or lack of stamina. Much of the real business is done in other more discreet meeting rooms around the United Nations, in the nearby UN missions of individual governments and in delegates' hotels.

Sources: Cartoon: <http://www.intoon.com/cartoons.cfm/action/browse/startdate/08-01-2006/id/22889>

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