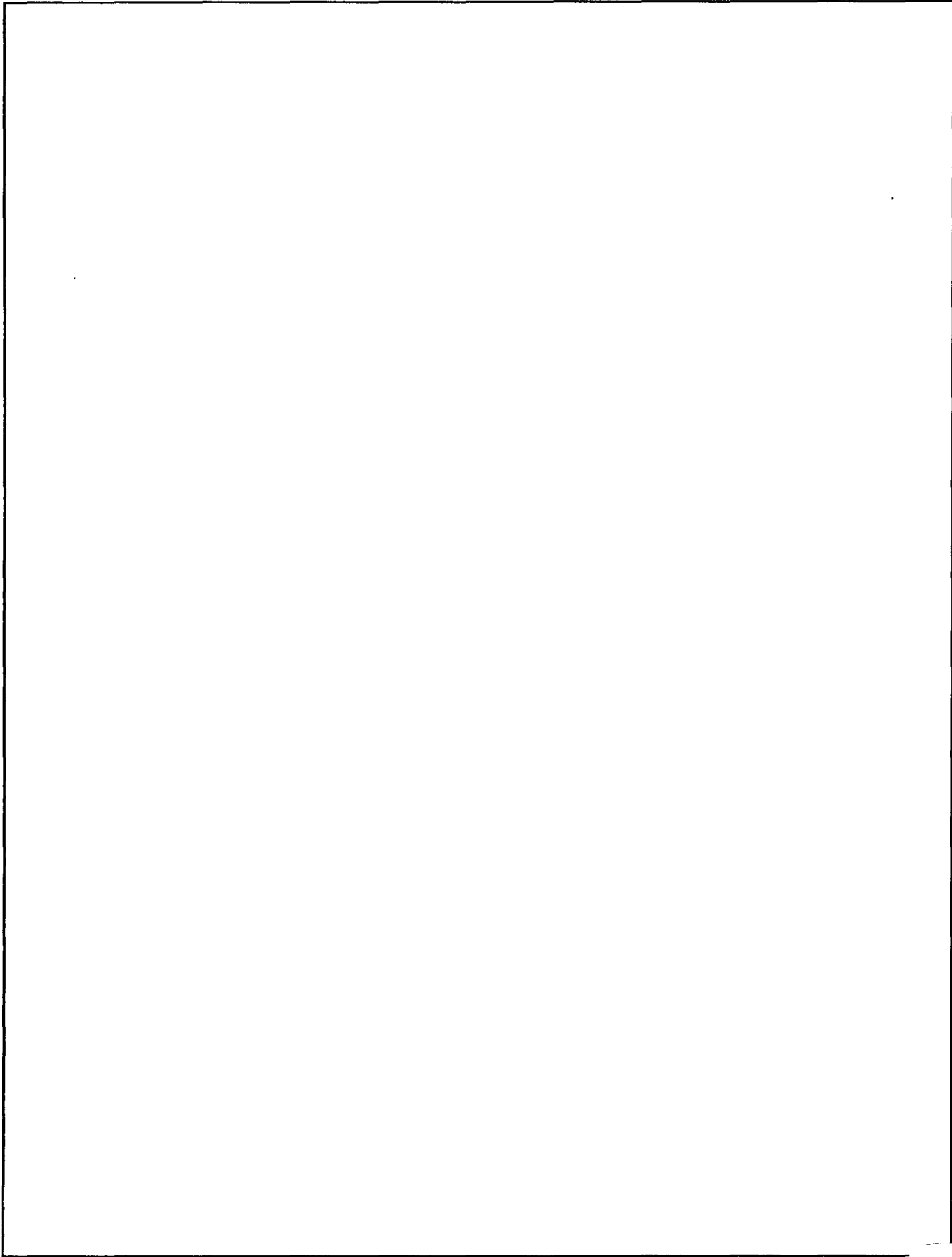


Thessin, James H

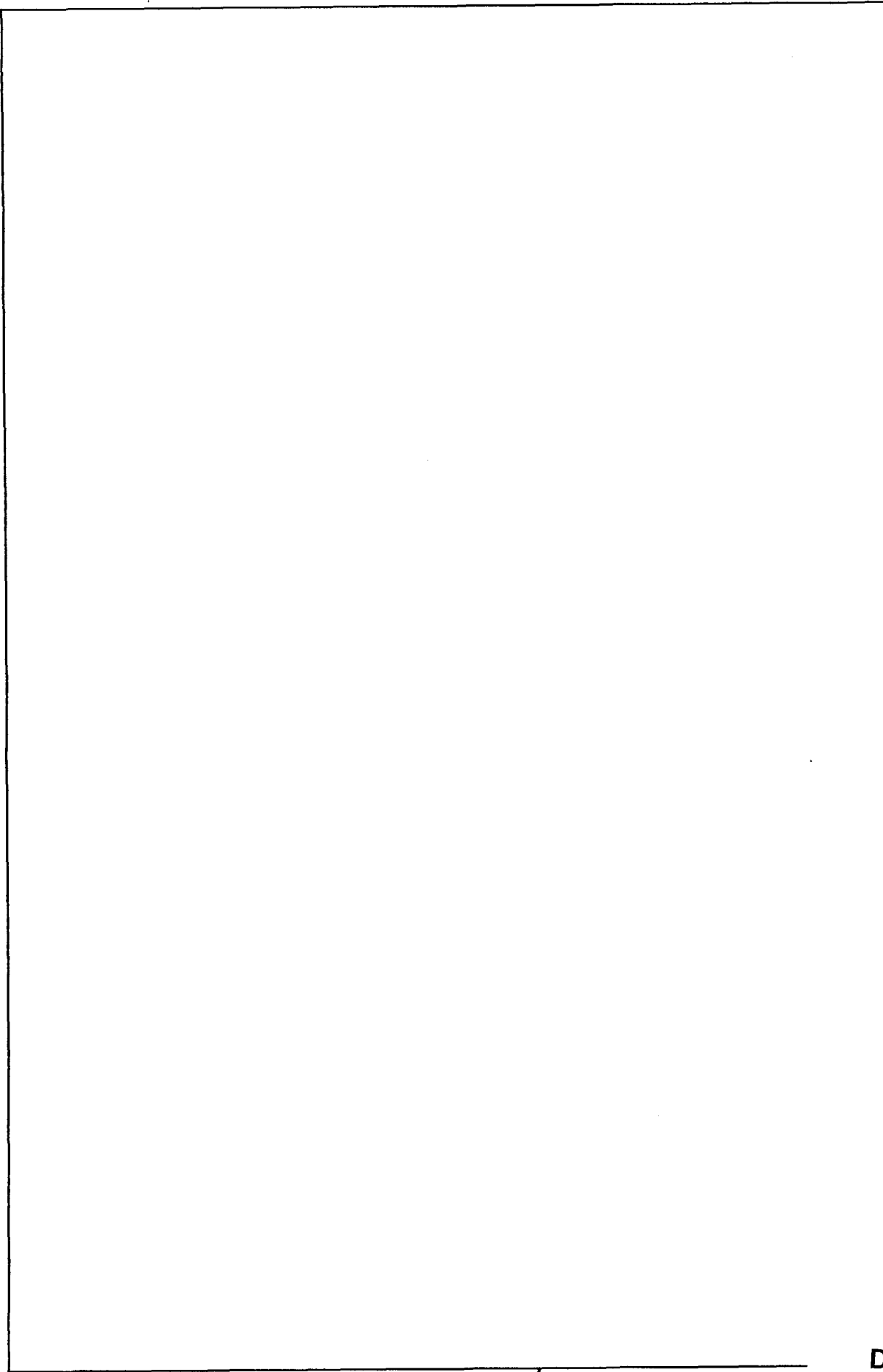
From: Borek, Ted A (L/NEA)
Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2004 2:27 PM
To: 'Stone, Corin R. (CIV)'; Dorosin, Joshua L; Pelofsky, Eric J; 'Tucker, Charles E. (O-6)'
Cc: Thessin, James H; Newman, David S; Dennis, Michael J
Subject: RE: US grants protection for anti-Tehran group in Iraq

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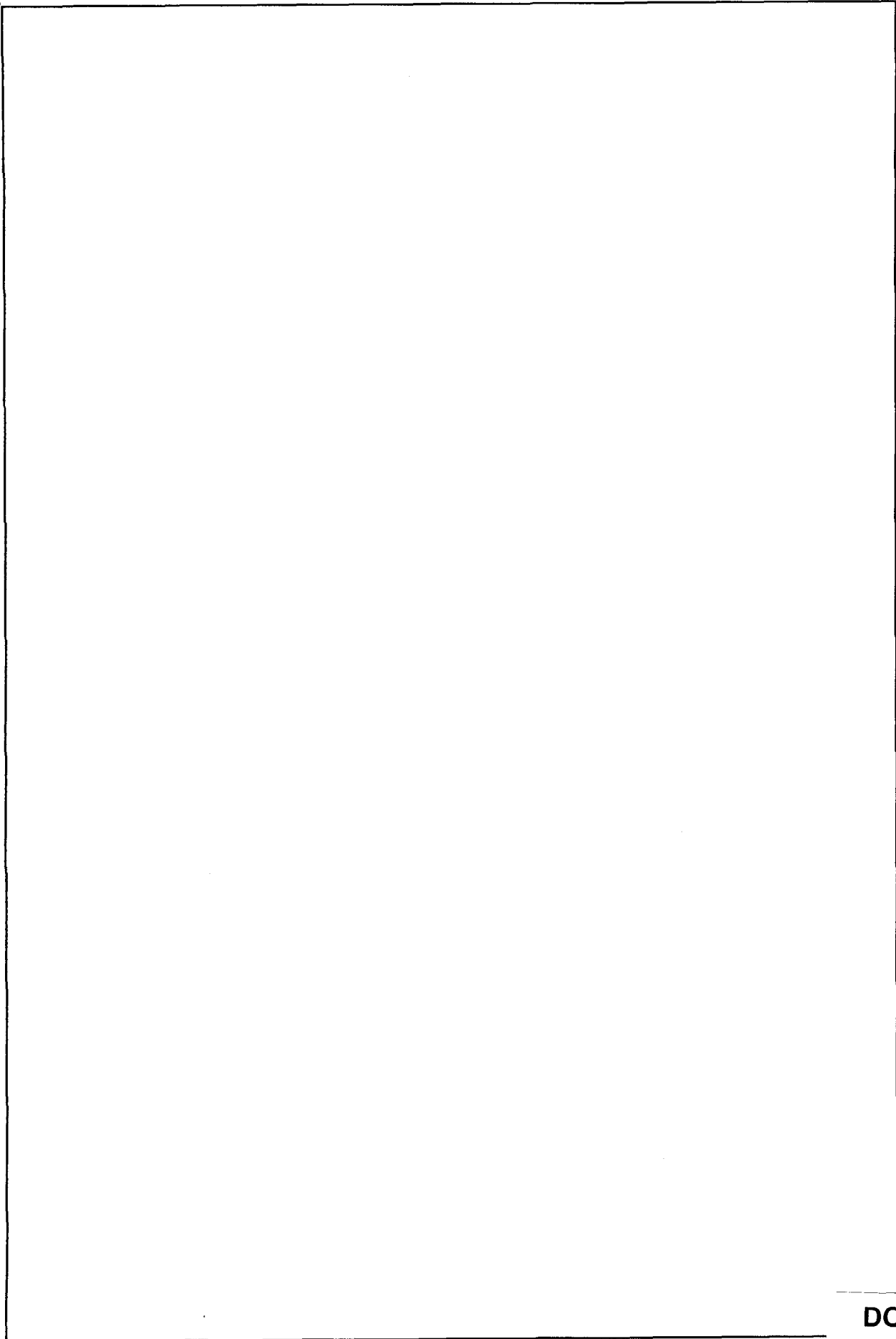


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DOS-001803

-----Original Message-----

From: Jost, Aaron W (NEA/NGA) [mailto:JostAW2@state.sgov.gov]
 Sent: Monday, July 26, 2004 4:47 PM
 To: 'Pilz, Amanda C. (FS-04)'; 'Busby Milton S LTC JIACG'; 'Archin, Ladan, CIV, OSD-POLICY'; 'Woodside Craig M. CDR MNF-I MCCE'; 'Waltemeyer, Robert M, LTC, JCS J5'
 Subject: FW: US grants protection for anti-Tehran group in Iraq
 Importance: Low

FYI that this has been published. I'm expecting State will receive questions about it from the press; we are preparing guidance for our Press people.

-Aaron
 x7-5211

-----Original Message-----

From: Songer, Breeann M (NEA/FO)
 Sent: Monday, July 26, 2004 8:21 AM
 To: NEA-ARP-DL; Berry, John F (NEA/PPD); Carpenter, Jonathan J(P); Casper, Anne S; Chapman, Barbara J; Eklund, Karna A; Fox, Barbara T; Goldrich, Ethan A; Holland, Lavenia Y; Kincannon, John S (NEA/RA); MacInnes, Duncan H; Mann, Hillary P(S/P); Mooney, William F; NEA-I-ASSIST-DL; NEA-I-ECON-DL; NEA-I-IZT-DL; NEA-I-PD-DL; NEA-I-PIL-DL; NEA-I-PM-DL; NEA-I-POL-DL; NEA-RA-DL; NEA-Staff-Assistants-DL; Patterson, Charles N; Quinn, Martin R; Shore, Rhonda H (NEA/PPD); Staples, David A; Sullivan, Gregory W; Walkup, Ruth B
 Subject: FW: US grants protection for anti-Tehran group in Iraq
 Importance: Low

-----Original Message-----

From: Neubert, Brian T
 Sent: Monday, July 26, 2004 8:20 AM
 To: LW-Iraq; LW-Mahogany; LW-NEA; SES-O_Shift-II
 Subject: US grants protection for anti-Tehran group in Iraq

BC-FRANCE-IRAN-MUJAHIDEEN

US grants protection for anti-Tehran group in Iraq
 PARIS, July 26 (Reuters) - The U.S. military has granted "protected status" under the Geneva Convention to members of an exiled Iranian opposition group interned in Iraq, France-based opponents of Tehran said in a statement. The U.S. head of detainee operations in Iraq, Major-General Geoffrey Miller, told the People's Mujahideen Organisation

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(MKO) its members held at a base in eastern Iraq had been recognised as "protected persons under the Fourth Geneva Convention," the statement said. The decision-announced in a letter to the group last week-will allow detainees from the group access to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the U.N. refugee agency, the UNHCR. "(This is a) triumph for the Iranian Resistance and the Iranian people," Maryam Rajavi, head of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), said in a statement. The MKO, which has previously been branded a terrorist group by the United States and Europe, is the military affiliate of the NCRI, whose headquarters are near Paris. Iran regards the roughly 3,800 MKO fighters in Iraq as one of its biggest external threats and wants the group's members to be handed over. Diplomats say Tehran has offered to exchange some al Qaeda prisoners it is holding for MKO leaders. Washington has refused the swap, the diplomats say. Iranian government spokesman Abdollah Ramazanzadeh said the U.S. move to grant the MKO protected status undermined Washington's claims to be fighting terrorist groups. "I hope those who claim they are combating terrorism prove the truth and confront the ones who have committed extensive crimes against the Iranian nation," he told a weekly news conference. In August last year, the United States closed the Washington offices of the NCRI and MKO after determining that they were aliases of the Mujahideen-e-Khalq (MEK), an Iranian group branded by the United States as a foreign terrorist organisation. France too has been suspicious of the organisation. Following the takeover of the Iraq-based Mujahideen's military camps by U.S. forces there, French intelligence suspected the group of planning to make its Paris base a centre from which to launch attacks on Iranian embassies in Europe. The group denies any such ambition. Rajavi spent several weeks in a French prison last summer after being detained under a French terrorism probe. She proclaimed her innocence and was later released on bail pending further investigation.