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Congress panel: 'Dirty bomb' attack on U.S. likely by 2013

By **Natasha Mozgovaya**, Haaretz Correspondent

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A United States Congressional report, set to be made public on Wednesday, states that the U.S. will likely face a terrorist attack using nuclear or biological weapons - a so-called "dirty bomb" - by the year 2013.

A draft of the report notes that although terrorists currently lack the knowledge to make "dirty" weapons, which are created with the use of normal explosives and radioactive material and are designed to spread fallout over a large area, they can acquire it in the immediate future.

"The biological threat is greater than the nuclear," the commission said in its draft, adding that the U.S. government "needs to move more aggressively to limit" the spread of biological weapons.

The panel that issued the report also concluded that terrorists will most likely carry out an attack with nuclear, biological or other weapon of mass destruction somewhere in the world in the next five years.

The bi-partisan report was written by the Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism - whose members have also chaired the commission on the September 11 attacks.

The report lists possible threats to the U.S. security, and addresses the potential smuggling of nuclear arms in developing countries.

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While panel completed the report before the [terror attacks in Mumbai](#) transpired, the recent murder spree has raised anxiety levels worldwide, and has shifted attention on to Pakistan as a breeding ground for terrorists and a growing nuclear power.

As a result, the report recommends that the U.S. administration increase cooperation with the Pakistani government, and help forge a viable alternative to the Islamist network that recruits militants.

At the same time, the panel also urges U.S. president-elect Barack Obama to adopt a harsh line in his dealings with Iran and North Korea.

In light of increased terrorist activities, the report calls for the U.S. administration to review international treaties regarding the distribution of unconventional weapons, and to ensure the United Nations nuclear watchdog enforce stricter regulation methods.

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