



# **PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : IRAQ**

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## **PROFILE SUMMARY**

### **Internal Displacement in Iraq**

#### **Approximately 900,000 people could be displaced in Iraq as a result of military intervention**

As many as 900,000 people could be displaced within Iraq as a result of a military intervention, according to UN estimates (UN OCHA 7 Jan 03, p10). The majority of the displaced would probably flee from the centre and the south of the country to northern Iraq, in the zone controlled by Iraqi Kurdish authorities. Internal displacement could result from fighting, but also from deliberate war strategy. The Iraqi regime could force people living in the South to flee, for instance by spreading the rumor that weapons of mass destruction will be used to generate panic and instigate large scale flight (CHC 23 Dec 02).

Since mid-2002, the humanitarian community has been preparing quietly but with an increasing sense of urgency to respond to the needs of Iraqi civilians, including IDPs and refugees. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq has been designated as IDP focal point and humanitarian organizations are drawing up contingency plans. UNICEF has in its latest donor update declared its plans to assist IDPs and the World Food Program (WFP) has stocked food for 900,000 Iraqis ahead of a possible conflict (AFP 29 Jan 03). The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and several NGOs have also announced they are preparing to respond to civilians' needs in the event of a conflict. Coordinating the response to IDPs will be very challenging, as no single UN agency is in charge of responding to their assistance and protection needs, in the way that UNHCR assists and protects refugees.

#### **War may increase the vulnerability of the up to 1 million people already internally displaced**

In addition to generating new internal displacement, a war may bring additional hardship to the 700,000 to 1 million people currently displaced within Iraq. Ethnic Kurds, Assyrians and Turkmen have suffered several waves of displacement over the past two decades, mainly due to repression by the Iraqi government and to a lesser extent to inter-ethnic Kurdish fighting. Shia Arab populations in the south of Iraq have also been displaced from their homes due to government actions, particularly since 1991.

Internally displaced people may be more prone to infectious diseases and malnutrition as a result of a military intervention. A war will probably cause further destruction of the infrastructure, which was severely damaged during the Gulf War and has not been sufficiently repaired since. The destruction of infrastructure in 1991 led to an overall deterioration in the quality and quantity of drinking water and the rapid spread of infectious diseases such as cholera in government-controlled Iraq (ICRC 14 March 2000). It was reported in 2000 that internally displaced persons camps built in the 1980s, primarily in the south of Iraq, had running streams of raw sewage between housing blocs, and untreated standing sewage water with enormous potential for disease (AFSC, 21 March 2000).

A UN Habitat survey in 2001 found that about 40 percent of internally displaced persons in the Kurdish-administered region lived in settlements with below-average standards of water and electricity supplies, sanitation, drainage and road access. Several thousands people still live in tents. Access to food, education and health care was however found acceptable. (UN SC, 2 March 2001).

The destruction of infrastructure will in turn certainly disrupt the distribution of food rations delivered under the Oil-for-Food Program by the Iraqi government in the Centre and the South, and by WFP in the

North. The situation will be particularly preoccupying in the South, where most urban Iraqis are dependent on government rations and where few international organizations are present. In that region, the internally displaced do not even have the opportunity to access government rations, due to complex registration procedures (Fawcett & Tanner Oct 02).

The population in the North should have better access to food than in the Centre/South if a war occurs (HRW Feb 03). But even in the North, a war could create grave nutrition problems. According to a Save the Children Fund (SCF) study in February 2002, 60 percent of people living in northern Iraq are extremely vulnerable to external shock, including unplanned changes to the food ration system.

### **International response constrained by political obstacles**

International response to internal displacement has been limited due to the fact that the Iraqi government severely restricts access to the UN and international NGOs. Only a handful of international NGOs have permission to operate in government-controlled Iraq. The government also reportedly harasses and intimidates relief workers and UN personnel throughout the country.

As the party responsible for the displacement, the Iraqi government has no interest in having its actions exposed. In February 2002 it finally authorized the visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq, after denying entry to the Mandate since 1992. The Rapporteur was however not able to assess the human rights situation of the displaced. In his report, he deplored that dialogue with Iraqi authorities remained at a far too general level (UN GA 20 Aug 02).

WFP is responsible for food distribution in northern Iraq and for observing the adequacy of rations in government-controlled areas. The system has worked reasonably well but many new IDPs in northern Iraq have complained they do not have a ration card to access the distribution (CHC 15 Nov 02). The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) builds shelters to enable the displaced to resettle in northern Iraq on a permanent basis (UN SC 2 March 2001). Since 2001, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has been providing emergency relief items such as tents, blankets, heaters and stoves to internally displaced persons in the North. NGOs, ICRC and IFRC have been providing assistance to the IDPs in Iraq, such as non-food items, housing, water and sanitation.

### **Internal Displacement is mostly the result of a State policy**

#### ***Displacement of ethnic Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians caused by the Iraqi government***

The Iraqi government caused the massive displacement of Iraqi Kurds from their towns and villages in the 1970s and late 1980s. Since the mid-1970s, Baghdad has also forcibly displaced nearly 200,000 of the ethnically non-Arab citizens from the oil-rich region of Kirkuk. The displacement continued in 2002.

During the mid and late-1970s, the Iraqi regime destroyed Kurdish villages and forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands of ethnic Kurds living close to the borders with Iran and Turkey and relocated them into settlements controlled by the army. At the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, Baghdad forces led the 'Anfal' campaign, destroying thousands of Kurdish villages and towns, killing between 50,000 and 100,000 civilians, and forcibly displacing hundreds of thousands of villagers. According to Human Rights Watch, the campaign of destruction led by the Iraqi government against the Kurdish population can be qualified as genocide (HRW, July 1993).

Since the mid-1970s, the Iraqi government has also expelled thousands of ethnic Kurdish, Assyrian and Turkmen families from the oil-rich Kirkuk area through what is known as the 'Arabization' policy. Kirkuk

has long been claimed by the Kurds as part of Iraqi Kurdistan but lies just south of the 'Kurdistan Autonomous Region' delineated by the Iraqi government in 1974.

Non-ethnic Arab Iraqis have been given the choice of leaving Kirkuk or signing a form 'correcting their nationality' to be considered as ethnic Arabs. Measures used by the government to encourage departures and prevent the return of displaced persons have included setting up military checkpoints around Kirkuk, demolishing Kurdish sites and prohibiting Kurds from constructing or inheriting property in the area (CHR, 26 February 1999). Those refusing to comply have been subjected to intimidation, arrest, revocation of ration cards and, eventually, expulsion. From 1991 to 2000, the Iraqi government has been responsible for the displacement to northern Iraq of over 94,000 persons, from Kirkuk and other cities under government control such as Mosul (UN GA, 14 August 2000, para.50). At the same time, the Iraqi government has encouraged Shia families from central and southern Iraq to resettle in Kirkuk to affirm the 'Arabic' character of the city and to prevent Kurdish claims that Kirkuk is part of its territory. Kurdish sources reported that forced displacement from the Kirkuk area intensified in 2002 (RFE/RL 7 June 2002).

#### ***Displacement of ethnic Kurds due to Kurdish fighting***

Another cause of displacement has been factional Kurdish in-fighting. Two major Kurdish political parties – the KDP (Kurdish Democratic Party) and the PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) – have been fighting over the control of the three governorates of Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, particularly during the period from 1994 to 1997. Forcible exchange of populations took place between the parties, affecting a total of 100,000 to 110,000 people accused of being affiliated with the other party (UNHCR/ACCORD, 14 November 2000). Since 2001, the parties have been implementing provisions of a 1998 peace accord brokered by Washington and several thousand IDPs have returned home. There are still impediments to return due to social and economic factors, as well as to the presence of mines (Fawcett & Tanner Oct 02). Northern Iraq is heavily mined and clearing these minefields would reportedly take between 35 and 75 years (UN SC, 19 November 1998). The region recently experienced new small scale internal displacement due to clashes between the PUK and Islamic opposition.

Internal Kurdish conflict has been exacerbated by the intervention of regional players who have all been opposed to the creation of a Kurdish state. Turkey's raids into Iraqi Kurdistan in search of PKK rebels (Kurdistan Workers' Party), as well as Iranian and Iraqi government interventions and shelling from outside the Kurdish-controlled region have all caused internal displacement.

#### ***Displacement of Shia Arab population from the Mesopotamian marshlands by the Iraqi government***

Displacement within the government-controlled area of Iraq has been caused mainly by the government's destruction of a habitat that provides a haven for an armed opposition (Fawcett & Tanner Oct 02). In the wake of the Iraqi defeat in Kuwait in 1991, Baghdad crushed the revolt of Shia opponents. Many people fled to the predominantly Kurdish North but also to the Mesopotamian marshlands of the Tigris-Euphrates Delta, located in the south of Iraq. The Iraqi government then ordered the burning and shelling of villages in the South, and had dams built to divert water from the marshes. This allowed government forces to penetrate into formerly inaccessible areas where their Shia opponents had found refuge (USCR, 2001).

Drawing on satellite images, a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) study shows that the Mesopotamian marshlands – the largest wetland in the Middle East and one of the most outstanding freshwater ecosystems in the world – has now nearly vanished. Following the destruction of their villages and the building of the dam, most of the Marsh Arabs have had to submit to compulsory resettlement within Iraq, leave the country, or remain in the drained marshlands, deprived of their water-based means of livelihood (AMAR 21 May 2001). According to Human Rights Watch, many of the acts of the Iraqi government's systematic repression of the Marsh Arabs constitute a crime against humanity. It estimates the number of Marsh Arabs at 200,000 in 1993 and at about 20,000 today (HRW Jan 03, p6).

## **Political Background (1991-2002)**

In the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, an uprising against the regime of Saddam Hussein in the north and south of the country was rapidly crushed by government troops.

In April 1991, the UN Security Council (UN SC) adopted Resolution 688, which called on the government to end the repression of its civilian population and to allow international humanitarian agencies immediate access to the country. The same month, the UN established a 'Safe Haven' in the north of the country to protect the Kurdish population from Baghdad's actions. Following the United States' order to end all military activity in the North, the Iraqi government withdrew its troops and administrative personnel from that area. Since then, the northern governorates of Erbil, Suleimaniyeh and Dohuk have been under the control of the two major Kurdish parties and enjoy de facto autonomy.

UN sanctions against the Iraqi regime have been in place since 1991, until the fulfillment by Iraq of relevant UN resolutions. Since 1996 the 'oil-for-food' program has allowed Iraq to import essential goods to alleviate some of the needs of its people and to mitigate the impact of the sanctions. The 'oil-for-food' programme has also been implemented in the region under Kurdish administration. Many international observers have criticized the dire humanitarian impact of the sanctions despite the 'oil-for-food' programme.

In October 1998, Iraq ended all forms of cooperation with the UN Special Commission to Oversee the Destruction of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (UNSCOM).

In May 2002, the sanction regime against Iraq was revised to lessen its humanitarian effects.

In November 2002, the UN SC adopted a new resolution holding Iraq in "material breach" of disarmament obligations (UN SC 1441) and calling for renewed weapons inspections in Iraq.

(Feb 03)

# CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

## Background of the conflict

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### Vulnerable ethnic groups and their relationship to the regime (1998-2002)

- Predominantly Arab Shi'a Muslims constitute a 60-65% majority
- Sunni Muslims (Kurds, Arabs and Turkomans) make up 32-27% of the population
- Christians and Yazidis represent about 3%
- Part of the Shi'a, Kurdish, Christian, Turkoman, "Marsh Arab", Yazidi and "Bidoon" population has had conflicting relations with the Iraqi regime

"While a precise statistical breakdown is impossible because of likely inaccuracies in the latest census (taken in 1997), according to conservative estimates, 97 percent of the population of 22 million persons are Muslim. The (predominantly Arab) Shi'a Muslims constitute a 60 to 65 percent majority, while Sunni Muslims make up 32 to 37 percent (approximately 18 to 20 percent are Sunni Kurds, 12 to 15 percent are Sunni Arabs, and the rest are Sunni Turkomans). The remaining approximately 3 percent consist of Christians (Assyrians, Chaldeans, Roman Catholics, and Armenians), Yazidis, and a small number of Jews.

The Shi'a, though predominantly located in the south, also are present in large numbers in Baghdad and have communities in most parts of the country. Sunnis form the majority in the center of the country and in the north." (US DOS, 5 September 2000, sect.I)

"There is no way to know what portions of Iraq's population is loyal to the present regime or loyal to the concept of Iraq as a state – as distinguished from exhibiting primary loyalty to a religious or ethnic group. It is obvious, however, that many Iraqis resent the fact that the present authoritarian regime is controlled by a small group of extended Sunni families. It is obvious that the regime has had to deal with major Kurdish and Shi'ite uprisings, and faces a continuing problem with a separate Kurdish enclave.

It is equally obvious that Saddam's rule on policies designed to divide and paralyze Iraq's ethnic factions while using Iraqi military forces, overlapping and competing Iraqi intelligence and security services, the Ba'ath Party, and paramilitary forces to ensure that they remain under control. (Cordesman November 1998, p.4)

#### *The Shi'ites*

"Although Shi'a Arabs are the largest religious group, Sunni Arabs traditionally have dominated economic and political life. Sunni Arabs are at a distinct advantage in all areas of secular life. The Government also severely restricts or bans outright many Shi'a religious practices. The Government has for decades conducted a brutal campaign of murder, summary execution, arbitrary arrest, and protracted detention against the religious leaders and followers of the majority Shi'a Muslim population [...]." (US DOS 5 September 2000)

*However*, "The vast majority of Iraq's Shi'ites remained loyal during the Iran-Iraq War, and probably think of themselves primarily as Iraqi and Arab, rather than as Shi'ites. They may want equality or proportionate political power as Iraqis, but it is far from clear that they have any interest in a separate political entity or any ties to Iran." (Cordesman November 1998, p.5)

#### *The Iraqi Kurds*

"Saddam practiced near-genocide against the Kurdish tribes he felt support Iran during the Iran-Iraq War, and has been ruthless in putting down the Kurdish uprisings of 1991 and threatening the Kurdish security zone. Iraq, however, has a total of roughly 3.2 million to 4.3 million Kurds and it is far from clear that a majority of them would choose independence or autonomy [...] if Saddam was no longer in power or if any Iraqi regime made good on a long series of promises to give them more rights and a larger share of Iraq's oil wealth. [...]

Most of Iraq's Kurds remained loyal to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War, and only about half of Iraq's Kurds were involved at even the peak of the uprising in 1997. Iraqi Kurdish separatists represent a major force within Iraq, but they do not speak for the Kurds per se. The separatists are also deeply divided into rival factions that are never quite clear as to whether they are seeking rights and faire treatment, autonomy, or nation-hood. Iraqi Kurds also do not share any broad identify with Kurdish groups outside Iraq, and the Talabani faction seems to be the only separatist group that has shown serious past interest in creating a greater 'Kurdistan' that involves Turkish and/or Iranian Kurds." (Cordesman November 1998, pp.5-6)

### ***Al-Qilaa Kurds***

"This group areis the Kurdish people and their families that fought or supported the Iraqi government during the 1980s destruction of the Kurdish villages and the incarceration of the inhabitants in the collective towns. They left (it's not clear if they fled or were expelled) the North upon the establishment of the Kurdish rule in the North in 1991. To the main population of the Kurds, they are known as the Jash or the Donkeys. Originally from the Aqra area, they fled to the closest city under Baghdad's control, Mosul, where they still reside today. Many of them moved into unoccupied military compounds, (in Arabic al-Qilaa.) Despite having provided such valuable service to the Iraqi authorities in the 1980s, the al-Qilaa Kurds suffer from the same desperate conditions as other displaced in Iraq. They live in overcrowded makeshift accommodations, are discriminated against by official regulations, have little education or health care, and few prospects or hopes for the future. According to Iraqi Red Crescent sources, there are approximately 8,000 displaced families of the al-Qilaa Kurds in Mosul." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p32)

### ***The Faili Kurds***

"Faili Kurds, most of whom are Shi'a, form a distinctive group of displaced people in Iraq, many of them twice displaced and now back in their country of origin. Unlike most Iraqi Kurds, until the early 1970s they lived mainly in central and southern Iraq, many of them in Baghdad. At that time, perhaps 130,000 Failis were deported to Iran by the government of Iraq on the pretext that they were not Iraqi citizens, though it fact it was because their loyalty was considered suspect. Most had lived in Iraq for generations, but in Ottoman times had not registered as citizens in order to avoid conscription. Since the 1970s, most of the Faili Kurds have lived in Iran. However, since 1981, some have returned to Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, where they are not necessarily welcome." (Dammers 1998, p.184)

"Faili is an Arabic term, given to a group of Kurds from a region of the Zagros Mountains straddling the Iran-Iraq border. Due to the geography of their homeland, the Faili Kurds have family members on both sides of the border. Contrary to the majority of their Kurdish brethren, they are Shi'a. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, many Faili Kurds began migrating westwards to Iraqi cities, primarily Baghdad, where they took on key commercial, social, and cultural roles. During the 1970s and 80s the regime in Baghdad expelled large numbers of Faili Kurds. In one instance, in the autumn of 1971, up to 40,000 Failis were expelled. In April 1980, shortly after Saddam Hussein seized full powers and just before his invasion of Iran, the 480 wealthiest Baghdadis were summoned to the Chamber of Commerce building. One third of them, found to be Faili Kurds, were swiftly arrested and deported to Iran, with their families following shortly after. Further deportations continued, and the numbers of Faili Kurd refugees estimated to have gone to Iran range from 100,000 up to 300,000. It is not clear how many Faili Kurds remain in Iraq, but according to one account, as of 1997, the expulsions continued." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, pp14-5)

### ***The Yazidis***

"The Yazidis are a Kurmanji speaking group and are exclusively Kurdish. Yazidi beliefs incorporate aspects of several major religions in the region, including Zoroastrianism, Islam, Nestorian Christianity,

Judaism and Manichaeism. There are figures of the Yazidi population in Iraq ranging from 30,000 to 120,000 and they live predominately in the Mosul region of Iraq." (UNHCR June 2000, p.16)

"The Constitution does not provide for a Yazidi identity. Many Yazidis consider themselves to be ethnically Kurdish, although some would define themselves as both religiously and ethnically distinct from Muslim Kurds. However, the Government, without any historical basis, has defined the Yazidis as Arabs. There is evidence that the Government has compelled this reidentification to encourage Yazidis to join in domestic military action against Iraqi Muslim Kurds. Captured government documents included in the 1998 Human Rights Watch report 'Bureaucracy of Repression: The Iraqi Government in its own words', describe special all-Yazidi military detachments formed during the 1988-89 Anfal campaign to 'pursue and attack' Muslim Kurds. However, the Government does not hesitate to impose the same repressive measures on Yazidis as on other groups. For example, 33 members of the Yazidi community of Mosul, arrested in July 1996, still are unaccounted for. (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for civil liberties, c.")

### ***The 'Marsh Arabs'***

"A crucible of civilization, the marshlands have been home to ancient human communities for more than five millennia. The area's inhabitants are commonly known as the Ma'dan or "Marsh Arabs", whose population is estimated to range from 350,000 to 500,000. [...]Ethnically, the population's composition has been heavily influenced by immigrations and intermarriages with the Persians to the east and Arab Bedouins to the west. The Marsh Arabs are Shi'ite Muslims, and their way of life is largely based on the traditions of the Arab Bedouin.[...]

The Marsh Arabs have evolved a unique subsistence lifestyle that is firmly rooted in their aquatic environment. Most of the Ma'dan are semi-nomadic, but some of them are settled in villages. Their settlements are located on the edges of the marshes, or stand on artificial floating islands that are regularly reinforced with reeds and mud." (Patrow 2001, pp15-16)

"For thousands of years the salt marshes of southern Iraq have been a unique micro-environment. [...] The marshes lie at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. [...] Successive Iraqi governments had already tampered with the marshes in the way that modern governments often do in developing countries, regarding the hunter-gatherer subsistence lifestyle of the tribes there as being primitive and unworthy of a modern state.

But it was with the start of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980 that wholesale disaster set in. By 1982, Iran had reversed Iraq's original conquest of Iranian lands and the front line surged back across the border into Iraq - including the marshlands. The marsh Arabs of the region were driven out as the Iraqi army sent massive electric charges through the marshes - thousands of invading Iranians were electrocuted like this as they advanced.

That war ended in 1988 but the devastation continued. After Saddam's second defeat in the Gulf War of 1991, rebels rose up against him in the south of the country. When they were defeated, many of them hid in the marshes. The government began to drain the marshes systematically in 1992. Three years later, they had almost finished, creating a desert where the marshland had been. Areas where the water was five foot deep are now bone dry with cracked mud. Less than 10,000 marsh Arabs remain, their traditional lifestyle literally drained away. Those who remain barely eke out a living." (Out There News 2000, "Marshes")

### ***The Assyrians and Chaldeans***

"The Assyrian Christian minority of about 250,000 people also lives mainly in Iraqi Kurdistan and has been caught up in the conflict and displacement there, particularly in 1987/8 and 1991." (Dammers 1998, p.181)

"Assyrians and Chaldeans are considered by many to be a distinct ethnic group as well as the descendants of some of the earliest Christian communities. These communities speak a distinct language (Syriac), preserve important traditions of Christianity in the east, and have a rich cultural and historical heritage that they trace back over 2,000 years. Although these groups do not define themselves as Arabs, the

Government, without any historical basis, defines Assyrians and Chaldeans as such, evidently to encourage them to identify with the Sunni-Arab dominated regime." (US DOS 25 February 2000, Section 5)

### ***The Turkomans***

"The Turkomans, who are believed to constitute somewhat less than 2 percent of the population, are village dwellers in the northeast living along the border between the Kurdish and Arab regions. A number of Turkomans live in the city of Irbil. The Turkomans, who speak a Turkish dialect, have preserved their language but are no longer tribally organized. Most are Sunnis who were brought in by the Ottomans to repel tribal raids. These early Turkomans were settled at the entrances of the valleys that gave access to the Kurdish areas. This historic pacification role has led to strained relations with the Kurds. By 1986 the Turkomans numbered somewhere around 222,000 and were being rapidly assimilated into the general population." (Library of Congress 2001, Chapter 2)

### ***The taba`iyya iraniyya***

"Some of the returnees from Iran, expelled just after Iraq's invasion of Iran, are a group of people known as *taba`iyya iraniyya*, or sometimes, just *taba`iyya*. According to the scholar Kanan Makiya, after the collapse of Ottoman rule, the inhabitants of the Iraqi mandate were requested by a census to state their 'belonging' (in Arabic *taba`iyya*) as either Ottoman – *uthmaniyya* – or Iranian – *iraniyya*. Many reportedly chose *iraniyya* as a means to escape military conscription. These two categories made it through to the modern state of Iraq, where they now show up on every Iraqi's citizenship document. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the regime painted those carrying *taba`iyya iraniyya* as Iranian fifth columnists, and used the concept as a legal pretext to summarily deport thousands of families." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p15)

### ***The 'Bidoon'***

"Prior to the Gulf War, the 'Bidoon', most of whom are of Iraqi origin, were stateless residents of Kuwait. Their name is Arabic for 'without' – that is without nationality. They numbered about 250,000 and most had been born in Kuwait, or had lived there for a long time. Since the war around half of them have fled from or been expelled from Kuwait, mostly to Iraq. Though they are refugees, their statelessness, their displacement and their Iraqi connections mean that their status has much in common with that of other 'internally displaced' people. Detailed information on their situation in Iraq is, however unavailable." (Dammers 1998, p.184)

## **Fighting between Kurdish militia and Iraqi government (1960-1975)**

- 1960-1975: fighting between Kurdish militia and Iraqi government, as well as between militia, caused the displacement (internally and abroad) of about 600,000 and the forced relocation of 300,000
- In 1974, the Iraqi government imposed the Kurdistan Autonomous Region which excluded the oil wealth of Kirkuk and Khanaqin
- Following autonomy decree, beginning of Arabization campaign of Kirkuk region and Kurdish revolt in 1974

"In the 1960s, Iraq witnessed several changes of government and fluctuating conflicts in which the Barzani [KDP] and to a lesser extent the Talabani [PUK] militias played a significant role. In 1970, 300,000 people were reported displaced in Kurdistan, the result of fighting between Kurdish militias and the government, as well as between the militias themselves. By 1975, when the government defeated Barzani's KDP, as many as 600,000 were displaced, 250,000 over the border to Iran. The Iraqi government forcibly relocated perhaps 1400 villages and 300,000 people, mainly to 'strategic hamlets' designed to facilitate government containment and control. Along the Iranian border depopulation was almost total, with villages bulldozed to prevent return." (Dammers 1998, p.181)

"In 1970, the Ba'ath Party, anxious to secure its precarious hold on power, did offer the Kurds a considerable measure of self-rule, far greater than that allowed in neighboring Syria, Iran or Turkey. But the regime defined the Kurdistan Autonomous Region in such a way as deliberately to exclude the vast oil wealth that lies beneath the fringes of the Kurdish lands. The Autonomous Region, rejected by the Kurds and imposed unilaterally by Baghdad in 1974, comprised the three northern governorates of Erbil, Suleimaniyeh and Dohuk. Covering some 14,000square miles -- roughly the combined area of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island -- this was only half the territory that the Kurds considered rightfully theirs. Even so, the Autonomous Region had real economic significance, since it accounted for fully half the agricultural output of a largely desert country that is sorely deficient in domestic food production.

In the wake of the autonomy decree, the Ba'ath Party embarked on the "Arabization" of the oil-producing areas of Kirkuk and Khanaqin and other parts of the north, evicting Kurdish farmers and replacing them with poor Arab tribesmen from the south. Northern Iraq did not remain at peace for long. In 1974, the long-simmering Kurdish revolt flared up once more under the leadership of the legendary fighter Mullah Mustafa Barzani, who was supported this time by the governments of Iran, Israel, and the United States. But the revolt collapsed precipitately in 1975, when Iraq and Iran concluded a border agreement and the Shah withdrew his support from Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). After the KDP fled into Iran, tens of thousands of villagers from the Barzani tribe were forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to barren sites in the desert south of Iraq. Here, without any form of assistance, they had to rebuild their lives from scratch.

In the mid and late 1970s, the regime again moved against the Kurds, forcibly evacuating at least a quarter of a million people from Iraq's borders with Iran and Turkey, destroying their villages to create a cordon sanitaire along these sensitive frontiers. Most of the displaced Kurds were relocated into *mujamma'at*, crude new settlements located on the main highways in army -controlled areas of Iraqi Kurdistan. The word literally means "amalgamations" or "collectivities." In their propaganda, the Iraqis commonly refer to them as "modern villages"; in this report, they are generally described as "complexes." Until 1987, villagers relocated to the complexes were generally paid some nominal cash compensation, but were forbidden to move back to their homes." (HRW 1993, "Introduction")

*The Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) is led by Masoud Barzani and is dominant in the north of the country, while the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) is led by Jalal Talabani and is dominant in the northeast. Barzani is the son of the Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani while Talabani was one of his lieutenants who split.*

### **Iran-Iraq War and the Anfal campaign against the Kurds (1980-1988)**

- Eight year war allowed Saddam Hussein to consolidate its rule in Iraq
- With end of the war in 1988, Saddam Hussein began campaign against Kurdish insurgency
- Anfal policy against Iraqi Kurds killed between 50,000 and 200,000 and deporting about 500,000 to new 'collective settlements' and to detention camps

"The present regime in Baghdad came to power through a coup in 1968. The coup gave prominence to a young officer in the Ba'ath Party intelligence apparatus named Saddam Hussein. Ahma Hassan al-Bakr served as president and maintained titular power until Saddam deposed him and declared himself president on July 16, 1979. Just more than a year after seizing uncontested control over Iraq, Saddam declared war on Iran. While the goals of the war -- reclaiming Iraqi territory conceded in 1975 border negotiations, ending Iranian support for Kurdish separatists in the north, and overthrowing a regime in Tehran that was openly calling for an Islamic revolution inside Iraq among others -- can be debated, the gruesomeness of the war

that followed cannot. The war produced about 1.5 million casualties during eight years of hostilities, ending in a cease-fire that essentially left prewar borders unchanged.

The Iran-Iraq war was the first time since the interwar years that chemical weapons were used in combat. Probably beginning in 1984, and almost certainly by 1986, Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons in the battlefield against Iranian troops. Such use drew the condemnation of the United Nations in 1986, although such condemnation was muted by international antipathy toward the regime in Tehran.

The eight-year-long war exhausted both countries, but it allowed Saddam to further consolidate his rule in Iraq. The constant war footing allowed an already paranoid regime to more ruthlessly root out its opponents and more loudly proclaim the glories of its leader." When the war wound down, Saddam turned to damping internal divisions in his country and began a campaign against a Kurdish insurgency in the north. In that campaign, Saddam again turned to chemical weapons, using a combination of mustard gas and nerve gas that killed some 5,000 civilians in the town of Halabja in August 1988. As in his war with Iran, Saddam's use of chemical weapons (this time against civilian targets) failed to raise outrage [at the international level]." (USIP 17 February 1999, "The Problem")

"After 1980, and the beginning of the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, many Iraqi garrisons in Kurdistan were abandoned or reduced in size, and their troops transferred to the front. In the vacuum that was left, the Kurdish *peshmerga*--"those who face death"--once more began to thrive. The KDP, now led by one of Barzani's sons, Mas'oud, had revived its alliance with Teheran, and in 1983 KDP units aided Iranian troops in their capture of the border town of Haj Omran. Retribution was swift: in a lightning operation against the complexes that housed the relocated Barzanis, Iraqi troops abducted between five and eight thousand males aged twelve or over. None of them have ever been seen again, and it is believed that after being held prisoner for several months, they were all killed. In many respects, the 1983 Barzani operation foreshadowed the techniques that would be used on a much larger scale during the Anfal campaign." (HRW 1993, "Introduction")

"The Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) completed the displacement of much of Iraq's Kurdish population. Towards the end of the war, following increasing collaboration between Iran and Kurdish guerrilla forces, the Iraqi regime pursued its genocidal *Anfal* policy, killing between 50,000 and 200,000, and destroying about 3000 Kurdish villages and hamlets. Their inhabitants – over half a million people – were deported to new 'collective settlements' away from border or mountain areas, or to detention camps in south and west Iraq. Others fled to Iran. Many of these people have been displaced more than once since then." (Dammers 1998, p.181)

"Anfal—the Spoils—is the name of the eighth *sura* of the Koran. It is also the name given by the Iraqis to a series of military actions which lasted from February 23 until September 6, 1988. While it is impossible to understand the Anfal campaign without reference to the final phase of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War, Anfal was not merely a function of that war. Rather, the winding-up of the conflict on Iraq's terms was the immediate historical circumstance that gave Baghdad the opportunity to bring to a climax its longstanding efforts to bring the Kurds to heel. For the Iraqi regime's anti-Kurdish drive dated back some fifteen years or more, well before the outbreak of hostilities between Iran and Iraq." (HRW 1993, "Introduction")

***To view official Iraqi documents on the Anfal policy, please visit the site of the Iraqi Research and Documentation Project, launched in June 1993 and sponsored by the Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES)***  
***[[External Link](#)]***

***For key dates of Iraq's history, please see [BBC News Timeline](#) [[External Link](#)]***

## **The invasion of Kuwait had severe consequences for Iraq (1990-1992)**

- Invasion of Kuwait in August 1990
- Coalition of allied forces intervened in Kuwait in January 1991
- Following cease-fire agreement, under UN SC Resolution 687 Iraq was supposed to destroy certain types of weapons and to accept international monitoring
- Northern no-fly zone declared by the U.S., France and Britain in April 1991 to provide safe haven for Kurds
- Southern no-fly zone imposed by U.S., British and French forces in August 1992 in an effort to protect Shi'ite Iraqis

"With Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the perception that Saddam Hussein was a potential ally against an ideologically expansionist Iran – as well as a potential customer for American grain and other products – gave way to a new consensus. Under the revised thinking, Saddam was seen as threat to stability in the Persian Gulf and to steady oil supplies from that region. [...]

When a coalition of allied forces rolled back the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in January and February 1991, the UN-imposed cease fire agreement bound Iraq to declare fully to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the 'locations, amounts, and types' of biological and chemical weapons it possessed, as well as similar information regarding ballistic missiles with a range of more than 150 kilometers. Under the agreement, Iraq agreed to destroy such weapons under international supervision, and to accept ongoing international monitoring to ensure that such weapons programs were not revived in the future. Pursuant to that charge, the United Nations created a 'Special Commission,' or UNSCOM, to carry out on-site inspections of declared Iraqi facilities as well as any other sites UNSCOM designated.

The agreement, articulated in United Nations Security Council Resolution 687, established similar conditions for whatever nuclear program Iraq might possess, to be monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Only after Iraq completed its responsibilities to fully disclose its programs to develop weapons of mass destruction, destroy prohibited materiel under international supervision, and dismantle any programs to develop such weapons in the future, all to the Security Council's satisfaction, would the United Nations lift the sanctions it imposed in Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990." (USIP 17 February 1999, "The Problem")

"In April 1991, the United States, France, and Britain unilaterally declared a 19,000-square-mile area of northern Iraq a safe haven for Kurds and imposed a no-fly zone that prevented Iraqi aircraft from operating above the 36th parallel. U.S. and British warplanes still patrol the skies of northern Iraq, bombing frequently since December 1998. France withdrew from the mission in 1996. No United Nations Resolution supports or calls for a no-fly zone.

A southern no-fly zone was imposed by U.S., British and French forces in August 1992 in an effort to protect Shi'ite Iraqis. President Saddam Hussein's forces had crushed a Shi'ite uprising soon after the end of the Gulf War in February 1991. In 1996, President Clinton extended the zone in response to Iraqi military intervention in northern Iraq in support of one Kurdish faction against another. The zone now covers the southern third of Iraq, reaching the 33rd parallel, and touches the outskirts of Baghdad." (AFSC 2000)

## **Since the Gulf War two Kurdish parties have been controlling northern Iraq (1991-2000)**

- In 1991 the cease-fire between Iraqi and Allied forces which put an end to the Gulf War was immediately followed by uprisings in the Kurdish north

- Since 1991 regions in the north and northeast of the country have been under the control of Kurdish parties
- The Iraqi government ended the internal economic blockade against northern Iraq in 1996
- The two major Kurdish parties of northern Iraq, KDP and PUK fought intermittently since the Gulf War until 1998 when they agreed to a Washington-brokered peace agreement
- Most of the measures described in the 1998 peace agreement were still not implemented in 2000

"The cease-fire between Iraqi and Allied forces [following the Gulf War] was immediately followed by uprisings in the Kurdish north and Shi'a south of Iraq. Kurdish guerrillas briefly occupied the whole of Iraqi Kurdistan, but the reoccupation of most of the region by Iraqi government troops led to as many as two million people fleeing to Iran, Turkey, and those areas still under Kurdish control. These areas soon included the 'safe haven', initially patrolled by Allied troops, comprising those parts of Iraqi Kurdistan adjacent to the Turkish border. Most of the cross-border refugees later returned to areas under Kurdish (and/or Allied) political control, which expanded greatly following the substantial withdrawal of Iraqi troops in October and November 1991." (Dammers 1998, p.182)

*In April 1991, the UN SC Resolution 688 said that the UN SC:*

1. Condemns the repression of the Iraqi civilian population in many parts of Iraq, including most recently in Kurdish populated areas, the consequences of which threaten international peace and security in the region;
2. Demands that Iraq, as a contribution to remove the threat to international peace and security in the region, immediately end this repression and express the hope in the same context that an open dialogue will take place to ensure that the human and political rights of all Iraqi citizens are respected;
5. Requests further the Secretary-General to use all the resources at his disposal, including those of the relevant United Nations agencies, to address urgently the critical needs of the refugees and displaced Iraqi population." (UN SC 5 April 1991)

"The safe haven zone in northern Iraq, created and maintained by the United States, Britain, and France since 1991 through Operation Provide Comfort, showed signs of collapse throughout the year [1996]. As the two sides fought, the governments of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq each appeared ready and willing to intervene overtly or covertly in an attempt to take advantage of the situation. [...]

On August 31 [1996], [Iraqi] government forces entered the city of Erbil, located within the Kurdish safe haven zone, after being invited in by the KDP, which hoped that an alliance with the government would tip the balance of power in the north against the PUK. After surrounding Erbil with tanks, Iraqi troops and government agents entered the town, searching house to house for suspected opponents of President Saddam Hussein, killing some immediately, arresting others and taking them back to Baghdad. Iraqi troops reportedly looted and vandalized the areas they entered, completely looting 500 schools, according to UNICEF, and ransacking hospitals and municipal buildings. [...]

The penetration of the safe zone by Iraqi troops and fighting between the Kurdish factions created widespread hardship and displacement. [...] Ironically, in some respects the collapse of the safe zone had its benefits for many of the other residents of the north. In addition to international sanctions, northern Iraq had been subjected to an internal blockade from Baghdad. Starting in September [1996], that blockade was eased, and Kurds from the north were able to engage in trade with government-controlled Iraq." (USCR 1997, pp.151-152)

"In northern Iraq, all central government functions have been performed by local administrators, mainly Kurds, since the Government withdrew its military forces and civilian administrative personnel from the area after the 1991 uprising. A regional parliament and local government administrators were elected in 1992. This parliament last met in May 1995. The two major Kurdish parties in de facto control of northern Iraq, the KDP and the PUK, battled one another from 1994 through 1997. In September 1998, they agreed

to unify their separate administrations and to hold new elections in July. The cease-fire held throughout the year; however, reunification measures were not implemented and no election was held." (US DOS 25 February 2000, Section 3)

"The areas of the North under the control of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) are the governorates of Dohuk, Erbil, Suleimanyah and a part of the governorate of Kirkuk. As mentioned earlier, the KRG is an uneasy alliance of the two main Iraqi Kurdish parties. Mas'oud Barzani's KDP administers the northwestern half and the Turkish border, while Jalal Talabani's PUK controls the southeastern half and most of the Iranian border." (Fawcett & Victor, Oct 02, p7)

"Despite mediation efforts by U.S. government officials, little progress was made towards the implementation of the provisions of the 1998 Washington Accord. Both sides [KDP and PUK] pledged to normalize relations but continued to maintain separate administrative, legislative and executive structures in areas under their control. On October 22, senior officials from the two parties agreed on a series of measures, including prisoner exchanges, the gradual return of internally displaced people to their homes, and arrangements for the organization of free movement of people and trade between their respective areas. Most of these measures were not implemented." (HRW December 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

### **Improvement of KDP-PUK relations (2001-2002)**

- In 2001, both parties agreed to improve coordination but are disagreeing over the unification of both administrations
- Negotiations between Baghdad and Kurdish political parties reopened in 2001 but quickly failed
- Improvement of KDP-PUK relations following tensions between Kurdish parties and Islamic opposition in 2001-2002
- Normalization of KDP-PUK relations decided in Oct 02
- Largest attack of PUK by Ansar al-Islam in 15 month occurred in Dec 02

*In 2001*, "The 'reconciliation' between the Kurdish parties administering the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is driven by a review of priorities in anticipation of the possible consequences of the failure of the ongoing negotiations between Baghdad and the United Nations on the new sanctions system and in preparation for the expected political changes, according to a commentator from Erbil writing in London's "Al-Hayat" of 29 May.

The rapprochement and coordination between the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has descended to deeper levels than the differences in views over the distribution of customs revenues, unification of the two administrations, and the reactivation of the KRG parliament. (RFE/RL 8 June 2001)

"The two enclaves are not equally strong. Talabani controls an estimated 1.2 million of the roughly 3 million Kurds living in the autonomous region. (There are still parts of Kurdistan under Saddam Hussein's control.) Iran is his main protector. His "state" raises its main revenues from duties on goods smuggled into and out of Iran and Iraqi-controlled Kurdistan, as well as taxes on the population. Unemployment and poverty are widespread in Talabani's region, although the economy remains much healthier than that in government-controlled Iraq.

By contrast, Barzani's region is enjoying the fruits of the burgeoning trade across the Turkish-Iraqi border. At virtually every time of day, hundreds of trucks laden with goods wait to pass from Turkey to Iraq through the Ibrahim al-Khalil crossing. On their way back to Turkey, these trucks are loaded with cheap oil and petroleum products in specially installed tanks. Barzani's customs service reaps tremendous revenues from the duties both ways. But more important are the booming smuggling networks -- many run by

influential personalities -- linking Turkey, Iraq and Syria through Barzani-controlled areas." (al-Khafaji 24 January 2001)

"Current Kurdish moves toward coordination with Baghdad are a result of increased confidence in the Kurdish establishment and the Kurds' success in establishing a solid defense system that can handle any conventional attack by Baghdad on Kurdistan. Over the last two years, Kurdish military leaders both trained a semi-professional military force and exploited the international market to obtain good weapons in the same way as Iraq, namely, by using the smuggling networks. Thus, the defense network resulting from these efforts became an actual deterrent to attacks from the Baghdad-controlled areas.

At the same time, the Kurdish leaders are aware that they cannot rely on firm Western stands toward the Iraq issue. These caused them to turn to Baghdad with specific initiatives. In this context, PUK leader Jalal Talabani made the teaching of Arabic compulsory at the start of the next school year. and promised not to use any regional party for developing oil production from wells in his areas.

The major stumbling block remaining between the KDP and PUK is the question of the unification of the PUK and KDP administrations. Leader of the KDP Mas'ud Barzani said to "Al-Hayah" that "I personally do not see any problem in the presence of the two administrations at the crucial transitional stage." But Talabani disagrees." (RFE/RL 8 June 2001)

"President Hussain proposed the reopening of negotiations between the government and Kurdish political parties on July 15, but in a joint statement on July 27, the KDP and PUK set preconditions: they demanded an end to mass deportations of Kurds and Turkman, clarification of the fate of detainees in Iraqi government custody and missing persons, and acceptance by the Iraqi government of federalism as the basis of future relations between the Kurdish region and Baghdad. The government rejected these demands in August." (HRW 2002)

#### ***Improvement of KDP-PUK relations following tensions between Kurdish parties and Islamic opposition in 2001-2002***

"Tensions are increasing between the secular PUK and militant Kurdish parties following the 2 April [2002] assassination attempt on PUK Prime Minister Salih and a rumored 18 March attempt on the life of KDP President Mas'ud Barzani [...]. The Islamist parties are based near Tawella, in the mountains along the Iran-Iraq border. The Iranian government facilitates transport of men and material to the militant Islamist group, according to the December 2001 'Middle East Intelligence Bulletin.'

The assassination attempt on Salih has furthered reconciliation between the PUK and KDP, according to a 15 April report in the Iraqi Kurdish newspaper "Hawlati." The often-strained relations have warmed steadily since the appointment of Salih to the PUK premiership in January 2001. According to "Hawlati," the KDP and PUK "decided to set up an operations room in order to follow and gather information on people and terrorist groups who may be active in Kurdistan." Also on 15 April, "Hawlati," reported that the previous day, "the Supporters of Islam in Kurdistan" (Peshtiwani Islam le Kurdistan), had unilaterally revoked the cease-fire in place between them and the PUK. Over the past year, the militant Islamist group has had a steady progression of names including the Islamic Unity Movement, Jund al-Islam, and Ansar-i Islam." (RFE/RL 26 April 2002)

"The leaders of the two major factions in northern Iraq, KDP leader Mas'ud Barzani and PUK Secretary-General Jalal Talabani, met in Irbil and agreed to press ahead to normalize ties before the first meeting of the regional parliament this week, AFP reported on 1 October. The two leaders are to meet again on 2 October in Sulaymaniyah, in the PUK-held region.

It will be Barzani's first visit to Sulaymaniyah in several years, and he will be accompanied by a high-level KDP delegation.

During their meetings which precede the reopening of parliament, the two sides agreed that each party could reopen offices in the other's areas within a week of the reconvening of parliament. They also agreed to restore property seized in the fighting between the two factions, facilitate the movement of civilians in the region, and release those still in detention from the civil war between the KDP and PUK.

Plans are still to push for the draft constitution, envisioning a federal Iraq with a Kurdish part mainly centered around the protected enclave in northern Iraq. No mention was made about Kirkuk, which was mentioned in the draft posted on the KDP website (see "RFE/RL Iraq Report," 13 September 2002).

After the parliament is revived, a date for new elections is expected in some five months. What the threatened U.S. military action will have on these plans is unclear." (RFE/RL 4 Oct 02)

For more on the draft constitution, please see RFE/RL 13 Sept 02, Kurds Propose New Iraqi, Kurdish Constitutions, by David Nissman, [[External Link](#)]

"A surprise attack by Ansar al-Islam (Supporters of Islam) forces killed 53 peshmerga of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan's (PUK) forces near Halabcha, close to the Iranian border, according to an ABC News report carried by KurdishMedia.com on 11 December. The Ansar al-Islam has been often linked with Al-Qaeda. The Ansar were attempting to take two heavily fortified PUK fortifications. While they were initially successful, the PUK later retook the positions.

[...]

This was the largest attack in the 15 months that the Ansar guerrillas had situated themselves along the border." (RFE/RL 15 Dec 02)

For more information on Islamic groups in northern Iraq, please see Michael Rubin's article, "The Islamist Threat in Iraqi Kurdistan, Middle East Intelligence Bulletin, Vol.3, No.12, December 2001, [See reference below]

See also Human Rights Watch, 5 Feb 03, Ansar al-Islam in Iraqi Kurdistan [Reference below]

### **Iraqi security forces conducted attacks in southern Iraq and diverted water in the southern marshes to better access the region (1999-2002)**

- Causes for displacing the Marsh Arabs include the will to eliminate a population outside of central governmental control; interest in producing great engineering feat; increase oil production; and the destruction of a habitat that provides a haven for an armed opposition
- Draining of marshes started in 1985
- Shi'a revolt against Iraqi regime erupted following the Iraqi defeat in Kuwait
- In 1994, the Iraqi government intensified a pacification campaign that it had been directing toward the marsh population since 1989
- Diversion of water from the marshes allowed government forces to penetrate into formerly inaccessible areas; UNEP reported in 2001 that about 90% of the marshlands had disappeared by 2000
- Unrest in Southern Iraq sparked off by the killing of prominent Shi'a cleric in February 1999
- Drainage of marshes was largely complete by 1999
- Iraqi armed forces conducted deliberate artillery attacks against Shi'a civilians and large-scale burning operations in the southern marshes in 1999
- Iraqi security forces reportedly attacked villages in the marshes of Southern Iraq in 2001

"The motives behind the Iraqi regime's brutally callous campaign against the Marsh Arabs include the following: the desire to eliminate a population outside of central governmental control; an interest in producing some great engineering feat that is the equivalent of the monumental statues and palaces built to honor Saddam; the aim to generate economic development and increase oil production; and most importantly, the destruction of a habitat that provides a haven for an armed opposition. All these motives, of course, have one underlying objective: to maintain the current regime in power. The regime also guessed correctly that no one would stop it. In 1992, then Parliamentary Speaker Saadi Mehdi Saleh justified the action against the Marsh Arabs: "America wiped the Red Indians off the face of the earth and nobody raised an eyebrow."" (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p32)

"By 1985, visible signs of the draining of the marshes were noted in the area of Qurna, close to the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, where newly discovered oil fields were ripe for exploitation. In the early 1990s the Iraqi government began an all-out push to finish off the marsh-draining project and, as a consequence, to finish off the Marsh Arabs.

Several events seem to have precipitated the Iraqi government's decision to take these measures at that time. The Iraqis had just come out of two wars, the last of which had left the regime of Saddam Hussein barely holding onto power. One of the clearest threats to his survival were the Shi'a of southern Iraq, who rose against him in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War. Baghdad, resorting to full military force (including the use of helicopters permitted under the US-dictated cease-fire conditions) and extraordinary brutality, succeeded in quashing the rebellion. But the marshes, inaccessible to Iraqi armor, became a haven for the remaining rebels on the run. Also during the uprising, some groups had attacked the incipient oil field infrastructure in the West Qurna oil field, attacks which Baghdad blamed on the Marsh Arabs. Finally, during the early 1990s, very few personnel from international organizations or companies were present to witness the marsh destruction, due to the war-time evacuation and the imposition of sanctions. This not only allowed the regime to avoid being seen but also allowed it to requisition, without opposition and by Presidential decree, foreign company resources, such as bulldozers and other earth-moving equipment, termed 'idle assets,' to accomplish the task. Massive canals, up to a hundred meters wide and hundreds of kilometers long, were dug, using virtual slave labor and the aforementioned foreign-owned machinery." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p30)

"Tensions between the secular, Sunni regime of Saddam Hussein and the Shi'ite populace of southern Iraq erupted into civil war in early 1991, when the Shi'ite revolted in the wake of the Iraqi defeat in Kuwait. The revolt was quickly crushed, with heavy casualties, and many displaced Shi'ites and deserters from the Iraqi army fled into the extensive marshlands between the Tigris and Euphrates river.

The Iraqi government had long viewed the inhabitants of this region, the Marsh Arabs, or Maadan, with hostility. In 1994, the Iraqi government intensified a pacification campaign that it had been directing toward the marsh population since 1989, diverting water from the marshes and depriving the Shi'ites of food and cover. This allowed government forces to penetrate into formerly inaccessible areas." (USCR 1995, p.116)

"Throughout the marsh areas, dykes as high as six meters have been built to cut off flood waters from replenishing the old marshlands. Between the ancient Tigris and the Euphrates, a manmade river - the Saddam river - now carries the flood waters down to the Gulf. Marsh Arabs used to live by tending buffalo, fishing and hunting in the marshes. With no reeds, there is nothing to feed the water buffalo. There are hardly any fish left in the rivers either. The government claims to be giving land to the Marsh Arabs to cultivate. There is some farming close to the Euphrates and Tigris but many of those farmers are not Marsh Arabs but have come from the towns. The government also seems intent on preventing any rebels entering from Iraq across the water, as they have traditionally been able to do." (Out There News 2000, "Marshes")

According to a UNEP study carried out in 2001, "[...] about 90% of the marshlands had disappeared by May 2000, with devastating impacts on wildlife and unique human communities that have lived there for millennia." (UNEP May 2001)

"Since the beginning of this year [1999] there have been many clashes between the security forces and armed Islamist opposition groups in the pre-dominantly Shi'a Muslim Southern Iraq, especially in Basra, which have reportedly left dozens dead on both sides and have been followed by arbitrary mass arrests and summary executions. It was not until May that the government acknowledged that unrest had broken out in Basra in mid-March. It accused Iran of instigating the troubles since one of the biggest opposition groups is based in Iran. The unrest was sparked off by the killing in suspicious circumstances of Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq al-Sadr, a prominent Shi'a cleric, in February 1999." (AI 24 November 1999, "Introduction")

"As in previous years, the armed forces conducted deliberate artillery attacks against Shi'a civilians and large-scale burning operations in the southern marshes [in 1999]. In 1991 and 1992, the Gulf War allies imposed 'no-fly zones' over northern and southern Iraq respectively. The no-fly zones continued to deter aerial attacks against the marsh dwellers in southern Iraq and the residents of northern Iraq, limiting the Government to ground-based assaults." (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, g.")

"The Special Rapporteur received information that armed raids are still being carried out by the Iraqi security forces against villages in the south of Iraq. Reportedly some of these raids, which are aimed at the capture of armed guerrillas and army deserters, have resulted in loss of life, damage to property and searches and arrests without warrant." (CHR 16 January 2001, para. 37)

"Iraqi security forces attacked villages in the marshes of southern Iraq on 15 May resulting in many casualties, according to reports received by the INC [Iraqi National Congress]" (INC 20 May 2001)

"To accelerate the process, the military and special police made raids on marsh settlements, ostensibly in pursuit of rebels, criminals and deserters. Iraqi security forces used napalm and other chemical weapons, shelled and burned villages, assassinated local leaders and other prominent community members, and abducted heads of families. Other tactics employed by Iraqi authorities included the deliberate contamination of water supplies, the poisoning of the fishing grounds, commercial blockades, the denial of aid and the refusal of access to aid agencies.

The tactics of earthworks, drainage, and military action worked hand in hand. As one area was drained, new embankments would be built, giving the authorities vantage points to begin actions against the next set of settlements.

By 1999 the drainage of the marshes was largely complete. The only remaining marsh of any size was the al-Hawizeh marsh that straddles the Iraq-Iran border. This marsh is at least partly intact, as the Iraqis do not control all the sources of water, (it also provides a measure of security from a neighbor they do not entirely control). According to the Iraqis, the Iraqi side of the marsh is now under assault. In September 2002 it was alleged that the Iraqis were burning the reeds in a possible attempt to prepare a military assault on the villages." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p31)

### **Difficult relations between the Iraqi regime and the UN following the Gulf War (1991-2003)**

- In Oct 98, Iraq ends all forms of cooperation with the UN Special Commission to Oversee the Destruction of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (Unscm)
- In Nov 02, UN weapons inspectors return to Iraq for the first time since 1998, backed by a tough UN Security Council resolution which is reluctantly accepted by Baghdad. The resolution threatens serious consequences if Iraq is in "material breach" of its terms

*"Ceasefire"*

**1991** 3 March - Iraq accepts the terms of a ceasefire.  
**1991** Mid-March/early April - Iraqi forces suppress rebellions in the south and the north of the country.  
**1991** 8 April - A plan for the establishment of a UN safe-haven in northern Iraq, north of latitude 36 degrees north, for the protection of the Kurds, is approved at a European Union meeting in Luxembourg. On 10 April, the USA orders Iraq to end all military activity in this area.  
**1992** 26 August - A no-fly zone, excluding flights of Iraqi planes, is established in southern Iraq, south of latitude 32 degrees north.  
**1993** 27 June - US forces launch a cruise missile attack on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Al-Mansur district, Baghdad in retaliation for the attempted assassination of US President, George Bush, in Kuwait in April.  
**1994** 29 May - Saddam Hussein becomes prime minister.  
**1994** 10 November - The Iraqi National Assembly recognizes Kuwait's borders and its independence.

### ***Oil-for-food***

**1995** 14 April - UNSC Resolution 986 allows the partial resumption of Iraq's oil exports to buy food and medicine ( the "oil-for-food programme"). It is not accepted by Iraq until May 1996 and is not implemented until December 1996. [...]  
**1995** 15 October - Saddam Hussein wins a referendum allowing him to remain president for another 7 years. [...]  
**1996** 31 August - In response to a call for aid from the KDP, Iraqi forces launch an offensive into the northern no-fly zone and capture of Arbil.  
**1996** 3 September - The US extends the northern limit of the southern no-fly zone to latitude 33 degrees north, just south of Baghdad.  
**1996** 12 December - Saddam Hussein's elder son, Uday, is seriously wounded in an assassination attempt in Baghdad's Al-Mansur district.  
**1998** 31 October - Iraq ends all forms of cooperation with the UN Special Commission to Oversee the Destruction of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (Unscm). [...]

### ***Operation Desert Fox***

**1998** 16-19 December - After UN staff are evacuated from Baghdad, the USA and UK launch a bombing campaign, "Operation Desert Fox", to destroy Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programmes.  
**1999** 4 January - Iraq asks the UN to replace its US and UK staff in Iraq.  
**1999** 19 February - Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, spiritual leader of the Shi'i sect, is assassinated in Najaf.  
**1999** 17 December - UNSC Resolution 1284 creates the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (Unmovic) to replace Unscm. Iraq rejects the resolution.  
**2000** 1 March - Hans Blix becomes executive chairman of Unmovic.  
**2000** August - Reopening of Baghdad airport, followed by a stream of international flights organised by countries and organisations to campaign against sanctions. The flights are labelled humanitarian missions to comply with UN sanctions.  
**2000** October - Iraq resumes domestic passenger flights, the first since the 1991 Gulf War. Commercial air links re-established with Russia, Ireland and Middle East.  
**2001** - Free-trade zone agreements set up with neighbouring countries. Rail link with Turkey re-opened in May for first time since 1981.  
**2001** February - Britain, US carry out bombing raids to try to disable Iraq's air defence network. The bombings have little international support.  
**2001** May - Saddam's son Qusay elected to the leadership of the ruling Ba'th Party, fuelling speculation that he's being groomed to succeed his father.  
**2002** April - Baghdad suspends oil exports to protest against Israeli incursions into Palestinian territories. Despite calls by Saddam Hussein, no other Arab countries follow suit. Exports resume after 30 days.  
**2002** May - UN Security Council agrees to overhaul the sanctions regime, replacing a blanket ban on a range of goods with "smart" sanctions targeted at military and dual-use equipment.

### ***Weapons inspectors return***

**2002** September - US President George Bush tells sceptical world leaders gathered at a UN General Assembly session to confront the "grave and gathering danger" of Iraq - or stand aside as the United States acts. In the same month British Prime Minister Tony Blair publishes a dossier on Iraq's military capability.

**2002** November - UN weapons inspectors return to Iraq for the first time since 1998, backed by a tough UN Security Council resolution which is reluctantly accepted by Baghdad. The resolution threatens serious consequences if Iraq is in "material breach" of its terms.

**2003** January - Chief weapons inspector Dr Hans Blix delivers a harsh report to the UN Security Council, accusing Baghdad of failing to come to a "genuine acceptance" of disarmament." (BBC News 28 Jan 03)

***UNSC 1441 of November 2002, Excerpt:*** "Holding Iraq in "material breach" of its obligations under previous resolutions, the Security Council this morning decided to afford it a "final opportunity to comply" with its disarmament obligations, while setting up an enhanced inspection regime for full and verified completion of the disarmament process established by resolution 687 (1991).

By the unanimous adoption of resolution 1441 (2002), the Council instructed the resumed inspections to begin within 45 days, and also decided it would convene immediately upon the receipt of any reports from inspection authorities that Iraq was interfering with their activities. It recalled, in that context, that the Council had repeatedly warned Iraq that it would face "serious consequences" as a result of continued violations." (UN SC 8 Nov 02)

### **Iraqi political opposition outside of Iraq remains rife with fracture (Aug 02)**

- INC has served as an umbrella group for the opposition movement
- INA is made up of Iraqi exiles and former leaders of the Sunni-dominated military
- Constitutional Monarchy Movement seeks to establish "democratic" monarchy
- KDP and PUK are Kurdish parties controlling the north of Iraq
- SCIRI is a Tehran-base Shi'a group

"[H]istory shows that the Iraqi opposition is rife with fracture. The INC, headed by Chalabi, has served as an umbrella group for the opposition movement. Many U.S. officials, as well as Iraqi opposition leaders have become leery of the INC following rumors of mismanagement in recent years. In addition, Chalabi and Iyad Allawi of the INA have had a tense relationship over the years. The INA is made up of Iraqi exiles and former leaders of the Sunni-dominated military. The INA led the 1996 failed coup attempt against Saddam Husseyn and is thought to still have strong connections to the Iraqi military and Ba'th Party. Sharif Ali bin al-Husseyn's Constitutional Monarchy Movement seeks to re-establish democratic (and, it hopes, monarchical) rule in Iraq. The PUK and KDP have longstanding rivalries, but have worked together in recent years. They formed a provisional parliament at the beginning of August in an attempt to normalize the situation in northern Iraq and prepare for regional elections. The two Kurdish groups combined have approximately 80,000 militiamen. SCIRI is a Tehran-based Shiite group. Its military wing, the Badr Corps, is made up of former Iraqi officers, soldiers, refugees, and defectors. The group claims to have 10,000 armed men inside Iraq." (RFE/RL 16 Aug 02)

For more information on the relations between the various ethnic and political groups which may shape the future of Iraq, please see International Crisis Group (ICG), Oct 02, Iraq Backgrounder: What Lies Beneath [Reference below]

## **Causes of displacement**

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## **Expulsion of people from their homes as State policy (2002)**

- Displacement to punish and subdue recalcitrant populations
- Displacement as strategy to secure valuable economic resources
- Displacement to undermine the growth of political opposition

"In Iraq, the expulsion of people from their homes has long been state policy. Expulsions have been undertaken to punish and subdue recalcitrant populations. To this end, genocidal acts have taken place against the Kurds in the 1980s and against the Marsh Arabs in the 1990s. On other occasions, expulsions have been part of a strategy to secure valuable economic resources, as with the on-going 'Arabization' campaign against the Turkmen, Kurds, and Assyrians. Expulsions have also been used to undermine the growth of political opposition as with the Shi'a in the south, or to forestall a fifth column as with the taba'iyya, those thought to be sympathetic to Iran, at the beginning of the war in 1980. In Iraq, over the last thirty years, there has never been a time when one group or another was not being expelled from their homes.

The tactics used to accomplish the expulsions have included the use of overwhelming force, with the full-fledged deployment of infantry, armor and weapons of mass destruction, backed up by village demolition crews. In cases where the regime wished to retain physical infrastructure and merely change the identity of the inhabitants, more bureaucratic processes were used and continue to be used, such as regulations imposing national or religious restrictions on land ownership, employment, access to health and education, and humanitarian assistance. Carefully planned and executed expulsion operations sometimes occurred virtually overnight, with large numbers of people on the run, with only the clothes on their backs. Another method of expulsion, a slower, albeit surer, one which we will examine more closely below, were large-scale construction projects that radically altered the environment – the draining of the southern marshes is the prime example – in order to accomplish military, political, or even economic goals. Indeed, the expulsion of the Marsh Arabs can be viewed as a form of development-induced displacement – beneath what used to be marshland lie some of the world's largest untapped oil fields." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p1)

## **Turkish, Iraqi and Iranian incursions all caused internal displacement in the north (1998-2002)**

- Turkey incursions against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party, based in Turkey) and fighting between the PKK and the KDP (Kurdish Democratic Party, based in northern Iraq)
- On a smaller scale, guerrillas of the KDPI (Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran) have been bombarded by Iranian troops, generating displacement of both Iranian and Iraqi Kurds
- Iraqi incursions into northern Iraq despite no-fly zone reported in 2000 and 2001

"In northern Iraq the causes of internal displacement are complex: they include Turkish military incursions, PKK activity, internal conflict between Iraqi Kurdish political parties, and deportations of Kurds and Turcomans from government-controlled areas of Iraq." (Graham-Brown April 1998, "Conflicts Intersect")

### ***Turkish incursions against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party)***

"Despite increasing hostility for the KDP [Kurdish Democratic Party], guerrillas of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), which pursues a separatist guerrilla war in Turkey, have established bases in northern Iraq. These have been the target of frequent Turkish bombardments and incursions, with major invasions taking place in October 1992, March 1995, June 1996, May 1997 and September/October 1997. Fighting between the PKK and KDP has continued intermittently since 1995, and was a significant factor in the displacement of late 1997." (Dammers 1998, p.183)

"The Turkish army signed an agreement with the KDP in May 1997, reportedly to use its forces as a border police. The truce of 1998 between the PUK and the KDP further came under strain since several thousand PKK fighters moved back into Northern Iraq in 1999, after withdrawing from South-Eastern Turkey, disestablishing the political and military balance in the area. However, there are no reports of renewed alliance between the PUK and the PKK. A prominent member of the KDP has referred to the PKK as a terrorist organization who is responsible for the massacre of Kurdish villagers along the border with Turkey.

Turkey continues raids into Iraqi Kurdistan in search of Kurdish rebels and this in turn has led to Iran to search for Kurdish organizations in Northern Iraq to use as proxies. Iran, Turkey, Syria and the Government of Iraq are all opposed to the creation of a Kurdish state." (UNHCR June 2000, p.5)

"Further incursions [by Turkey's armed forces into northern Iraq] were carried out in April, May, and August 2000, resulting in one case in the killing of thirty-eight Iraqi Kurdish civilians." (HRW December 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

"The leader of one of the main Kurdish groups in northern Iraq, Massoud Barzani, has pledged [in October 2000] renewed cooperation with the Turkish government. [...] The meeting agreed to continue joint Turkish and KDP action against the rival Kurdish Workers Party PKK which is fighting a guerrilla campaign inside Turkey." (BBC News 5 October 2000)

"Turkey launched a major incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan on 3 December [2000] in order to back the PUK against the PKK, according to the 19 December 'Ozgur Politika', a pro-PKK journal. This outlet also claimed the invasion force involves hundreds of troops as well as heavy weapons and has passed through the Habur Gate." (RFE/RL 22 December 2000, "Turkish Incursion")

"Two PKK members who fled from northern Iraq claim the PKK is prepared to resume its activities in the New Year. They say that nearly 4,500 armed PKK members are in camps in northern Iraq, headed by commanders from Armenia, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. [...]

Kurds claim that more than 400 Turkish troops have crossed into Iraq since the beginning of January and are camped 60 kilometers east of Zakhō. They have also reinforced the military base at Bamarni, a former Iraqi military camp in northern Iraq. Residents of the area say that the Turkish army now has 2,000 troops and 30 tanks in Bamarni." (RFE/RL 11 January 2002)

#### ***Iranian incursions and the KDPI***

"A parallel situation, though on a smaller scale, has existed on the Iranian border, with guerrillas of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) being bombarded by Iranian troops, generating displacement of both Iranian and Iraqi Kurds. Iranian conflict with its own Kurdish separatists has not, however, precluded cooperation between Iran and the PUK, especially when the rival KDP has allied itself with the Iraqi or Turkish governments. Indeed, the events of 1997 generated common interest between the KDP, Iraq and Turkey on the one hand and the PKK, PUK and Iran on the other, which proved quite capable of translating into unlikely alliances on the ground." (Dammers 1998, p.183)

#### ***Iraqi troops incursions into Northern Iraq***

"Iraqi military forces have entered areas lying north of the 36th parallel, a reliable Kurdish source in Irbil has told London's 'Al-Sharq Al-Awsat' on 10 November [2000]. The paper noted that Iraqi forces are forbidden from entering these regions which have been subject to British and American patrols of the no-fly zone for the past nine years. This latest encroachment reportedly took place in a village in the Irbil plain close to the area which separates the governorate of Ninawa from the Kurdish regions outside of Baghdad's control.

The Kurdish source said government forces 'came to the edge of the village where they dug trenches and set up fortifications. The soldiers began intimidating the people of the village to force them to abandon it.' In the preceding year, Iraqi forces had crossed the demarcation line at the village of Unwaynah, between Irbil and Ninawah, and also shelled the villages and areas along the line." (RFE/RL 8 December 2000)

"Iraqi troops were deployed to the northern region on several occasions, apparently with the aim of launching armed attacks on Kurdish-controlled territory. In mid-June, the government deployed tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery and infantry units south of Arbil, coinciding with efforts by the U.K. and the U.S. to restructure the economic embargo imposed on Iraq and to impose "smart sanctions." Government troops clashed with PUK forces in the Kifri region on September 9 [2001], and in early October they reportedly entered and occupied the village of Sadawa, south-west of Arbil. The KDP said that repeated artillery bombardment of some thirty front-line villages by government troops had resulted in the displacement of their inhabitants." (HRW 2002)

### **Kurdish in-fighting has caused internal displacement in the North (1998-2002)**

- Displacement of Kurdish families in northern Iraq due to clashes between PUK and Islamic opposition (2001-2002)

"Since 1994, displacement has most commonly followed conflict between the two main Kurdish parties, the KDP and the PUK, usually along the border between their respective territories: in and around the city of Arbil and along a fluctuating front line from Arbil to the Iranian border. People identified with one party (an identification generally based on clan loyalty rather than ideology) living in territory controlled by the other feel highly vulnerable and have frequently been displaced." (Dammers 1998, p.182)

#### ***Clashes between PUK and Islamic Opposition***

"In the afternoon of April 2, 2002, as Mr. Barham Salih, Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government was leaving his home in Souleymanieh, two gunmen in a taxi machine gunned his home. Although Mr. Barham Salih was not hit, his five body-guards (Amanj Abdul Kadir, Hama Jaza Hama Raza, Shuwan Khidr, Abdullah Ismail Muhammad, Karzan Anwar Ibrahim) and the two assailants were killed. The people behind the attack have yet to be identified.

Over the last few years, the regions run autonomously by the Kurdish administration in Iraq have been the victim of terrorist attacks aimed at political party leaders, the local population and expatriates. Several states or armed groups, backed by these same states, not only threaten the coexistence of multiple political parties in a democratic experience unique in this region of the world, but also threaten the very existence of the Kurdish autonomous region.

Several leaders or members of Kurdish political parties, journalists, or members of humanitarian aid organizations have been victims of these attacks. A few examples are Lucy Schmidt, a German journalist, Vincent Tollet from Handicap International, François Hariri, member of the central committee of the Kurdistan Democratic Party - Iraq (KDP) and former governor of Erbil, more than one hundred members of various political groups of Iranian Kurdistan such as Firouzi Shapour, member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party – Iran.

In early September 2001, the armed group "Jund al-Islam" (soldiers of Islam), result of the fusion of three groups – the Islamic group Tawhid, the Force of Soran-2 and the Hamas, and based in the villages of Biara and Tawela, near the city Halabja on the Iranian border, called for a holy war against the secular Kurdish parties. This group has never declared a holy war against the Iraqi government. Many members of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) were mutilated and executed throughout the month in the village of Kheli Hama. A good deal of "Jund al-Islam" fighters, including "Arab Afghans" were imprisoned in Kurdistan following these acts of violence. Jund al-Islam and other Islamist groups, with suspected links to

Al-Qaeda, are thought to have regrouped in a new organization known as “ the supporters of Islam” and they remain a serious threat for the region." (AIJ 9 April 2002)

### **Iraqi government is displacing Kurds, Assyrian and Turkoman inhabitants from the cities of Kirkuk and Mosul (1998-2002)**

- Thousands of Kurds as well as Turkmen and Assyrians have been expelled from Kirkuk, because of their ethnic origin and because of Kirkuk's strategic location as well as its oil fields and are replaced by Arab families
- The majority of the people expelled were accused of having affiliations with opposition parties
- Other parts of northern Iraq under government control have seen similar displacements, for example of Kurds for the predominantly Arab city of Mosul
- The "Arabization" campaign gained momentum in 2002

"The strategic city of Kirkuk, which is surrounded by oil fields, has traditionally had a mixed Turkoman, Kurdish and Arab population. Although long claimed by Kurds as part of Iraqi Kurdistan, it lies outside the 'Kurdistan Autonomous Region' delineated in 1975. Of the cities captured and then lost by Kurdish forces in the uprising of 1991, only Kirkuk subsequently remained under permanent Iraqi government control.

Most Kurds fled Kirkuk when it was retaken by Iraqi government troops following the Kurdish uprising in 1991; about 140,000 are thought to remain in Kurdish-controlled areas, fearful of returning because of the persecution and displacement of Kurds remaining in the city. Turkomans (Turkish-speaking Iraqis), who number up to a million, live mainly in the lowland and urban areas of northern Iraq, but used to be predominant in Kirkuk. They too have been subject to repression, with many reportedly moving under pressure to Baghdad, though figures are unavailable. Shi'a Turkomans have been particularly vulnerable. Arab families from central and southern Iraq have been settled in Kirkuk, part of government efforts to 'Arabize' the city.

While Kirkuk has been the most seriously affected, other parts of northern Iraq under government control have seen similar displacements, for example of Kurds for the predominantly Arab city of Mosul." (Dammers 1998, p.183)

"A lot of it is about oil. Iraq's northern oil fields are rich, and could produce over a million barrels of oil per day for the foreseeable future (worth about five billion dollars a year at current oil prices). Many of them lie within the Kurdish areas. That's why Iraq has made great efforts to settle Arabs from elsewhere in the country in the oil city of Kirkuk and has never conceded that Kirkuk is part of Kurdish territory." (Out There News 2000, "Kurds")

"[...] [A]n estimated 100,000 people [...] were deported from government-controlled areas, especially from Kirkuk, Khanaqin and Mosul. They were sent to Northern Iraq for several reasons, yet the majority of them were accused of having affiliations with the opposition parties in the north or abroad. Being a Kurd or Turkmen also sufficed as a reason." (UNHCR/ACCORD 14 November 2000, p.57)

"The Iraqi government's ethnic-cleansing campaign in and around Kirkuk is gaining momentum, according to the 1 June "Brayati." (RFE/RL 7 June 2002)

### **Iraqi government is displacing Shi'a inhabitants from the Marsh area (1999-2003)**

- In the Marsh area, government forces have burned and shelled villages, and built dams to divert water from the marshes to depopulate the area

- Population in the Marsh area had to submit to compulsory resettlement within Iraq, leave the country, or remain in the drained marshlands, deprived of their water-based means of livelihood
- Human Rights Watch believes that many of the acts of the Iraqi government's systematic repression of the Marsh Arabs constitute a crime against humanity (2003)

"The Iraqi government has long been openly hostile to the Marsh Arabs, or *Maadan*, people living in the marshlands between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in a triangle-shaped region formed by the cities of Amarah, Basra, and Nasiriyah. Following the suppression of the 1991 Shi'a uprising in southern Iraq, many opponents of the Baghdad regime fled to the marshes, and the Iraqi government intensified a pacification campaign it had been directing toward the *Maadan* since 1989.

Since 1991, government forces have burned and shelled villages, and built dams to divert water from the marshes to depopulate the area. Repressive policies in 1999 included diverting water from the marshes and denying food rations to thousands of people allegedly associated with opposition groups." (USCR 2000, p.188)

"The construction of dams, forcible migration of communities, the draining of the Marshlands that was carried out in the 1990s was an extension of earlier trends. However an obsession for security drove the agenda. By depopulating the Marshlands, by reducing the area to desert, the region was no longer able to provide a sustainable refuge for dissidents. Saddam Hussein was able to impose his own will on the refractory people of the Marshlands. The drainage was carried out with no regard to international obligations concerning water rights or the environment. [...] The Marsh Dwellers had limited options. Like hundreds of thousands of other Iraqis they could submit to compulsory resettlement in an environment not their own. Or they could leave the country as refugees, as about 200,000 did. Or they could remain in the drained Marshlands, deprived of their inherited water-based means of livelihood." (AMAR 21 May 2001, p.6)

"Human Rights Watch believes that many of the acts of the Iraqi government's systematic repression of the Marsh Arabs constitute a crime against humanity. The crimes were committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of the Marsh Arabs during the decade of the 1990s. The attack involved the multiple commissions of acts in furtherance of state policy. The underlying crimes include:

- Murder of thousands of unarmed civilians following the abortive March 1991 uprising, through summary execution and the indiscriminate bombardment and shelling of residential areas in towns and villages in the vicinity of Basra, al-Nasiriyya, al-'Amara and across the marshes region;
- Forcible population transfer—coercive expulsion of part of the Marsh Arab population from their native villages to settlements on dry land on the outskirts of the marshes and along major highways to facilitate government control over them;
- Arbitrary and prolonged imprisonment of thousands who had been arrested during and in the aftermath of military bombardment of residential areas in the marshes, including civilians and others suspected of anti-government activities;
- Torture of Marsh Arab detainees held in government custody, in order to extract information from them, as punishment, and as a means to spread fear among the local population;
- Enforced disappearances of many of the Marsh Arabs arrested during the 1990s, whose fate and whereabouts remain unresolved to date;
- Persecution of the Marsh Arabs through the intentional and severe deprivation of their fundamental rights on the basis of their religious and political identity as a group." (HRW Jan 03, p2)

### **Difficult to assess extent of internal displacement caused by U.S. and British bombing raids (2000)**

- Since the end of 1998 US and UK forces have been carrying out regular strikes on Iraqi targets inside the no-fly zones
- The extent of internal displacement caused by U.S. and British bombing raids could not be determined

Since the end of December 1998 US and UK forces have been carrying out regular strikes on Iraqi targets inside the two air exclusion zones in northern and southern Iraq. These zones, north of the 36th parallel and south of the 33rd parallel, were imposed by allied forces at the end of the Gulf War in 1991 and were intended to protect Iraq's Kurdish and Shi'a Muslim population. These strikes have reportedly resulted in the deaths of dozens of civilians and the destruction of civilian property and left many more injured." (AI 24 November 1999, "Background")

"The United States and Britain said the attacks were launched after Baghdad refused to cooperate with the inspectors, who are charged with ridding Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction." (Reuters 17 December 1998)

"The extent of internal displacement caused by U.S. and British bombing raids could not be determined, but such raids continued in the skies over southern Iraq throughout 1999. By mid-August, 134 Iraqis had reportedly been killed by bombing raids. Press reports indicated that this figure includes civilians, such as 11 members of one family who were killed in Jassan, 125 miles southeast of Baghdad on August 17." (USCR 2000, "Southern Iraq")

# POPULATION PROFILE AND FIGURES

## Global figures

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### **About 700,000 to 1 million internally displaced persons in 2001 (2001-2002)**

- Estimated number of internally displaced persons is very difficult to assess because of lack of reliable sources
- A survey by UN Habitat estimated the number of IDPs in northern Iraq at 805,000 in Oct 2000
- PUK and KDP officials reported that 119,000 IDPs in the North were expelled from government-controlled to Kurdish controlled areas
- USCR estimated the total number of displaced at 700,000 for 2001

#### *UN-Habitat survey (Oct 2000)*

"A preliminary survey carried out in northern Iraq by the U.N. Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) estimated the number of internally displaced persons at 805,000 by the end of October 2000, comprising 23 percent of the population. [...]"

A major factor in the rising number of internally displaced persons was the government's continued expulsion of Kurds and Turkmen from their homes in Kirkuk, Tuz Khormatu, Khaniqin, and other districts as part of its "Arabization" program. Most were expelled to areas controlled by Kurdish opposition forces and a smaller number to central and southern Iraq. According to PUK officials, those expelled between January 1991 and December 2000 and resettled in areas under its control totaled 93,888, while some 25,000 others expelled during the same period were resettled in KDP-controlled areas. Scores more were reportedly expelled between January and March, particularly from the Tuz Khormatu area. In August and September, Kurdish opposition sources said the government was intensifying the rate of resettlement of Arab families in areas from which Kurds and Turkmen had been expelled, including the Lailan, Shwan, and Qara Hanjir districts of Kirkuk." (HRW Dec 1999)

*The UN-Habitat Survey can be obtained from the UN-Habitat office (Hilda.Rajab@unhabitat.org)*

#### *USCR estimate: 700,000 as of End of 2001*

"The estimated 600,000 internally displaced persons in the three northern governorates of Dohuk, Erbil, and Suleymaniyah included not only long-term internally displaced persons and persons displaced by Kurdish factional infighting, but also more than 100,000 persons, mostly Kurds, Assyrians, and Turkomans, more recently expelled from central-government-controlled Kirkuk and surrounding districts in the oil-rich region bordering the Kurdish-controlled north. At least another 100,000 persons were internally displaced elsewhere in Iraq, mostly in the southeastern marshlands." (USCR 2002)

#### *UNEP estimate of IDPs in Southern Iraq in 2001*

According to the UN Environment Program, "Of the 95,000 southern Iraqis who sought refuge in Iran since the end of the Gulf War in 1991, an estimated 40,000 are Marsh Arabs. The fate of those who stayed inside Iraq remains poorly documented, but an estimated 200,000-250,000 are considered to be internally displaced." (Patrow 2001, pp33-34)

**USCR reported a great increase of IDPs from 640,000 in 1994 to 1 million in 1995 to then decrease the following years (1994-2002)**

End of Year	Conservative estimated number of IDPs	Source
2001	700,000	USCR 2002
2000	700,000	USCR 2001, p.6
1999	900,000	USCR 2000, p.6
1998	1,000,000	USCR 1999, p.6
1997	900,000	USCR 1998, p.6
1996	900,000	USCR 1997, p.6
1995	1,000,000	USCR 1996, p.112
1994	640,000	USCR 1995, pp.115-116

## **Geographical distribution**

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### **UN-Habitat survey reported highest concentration of IDPs in Sulaimaniyah (2001)**

"The IDP population of North Iraq assessed by the Site survey on October 2000 comprises 805,505 individuals, or 22.91% of the 3,515,921 inhabitants of the same region (total population figures are based on WFP food ration database). With comparison to North Iraqi population distributed by Governorate (in this case Darbandikhan population added to Sulaimaniyah) the highest concentration of IDPs occurs in Sulaimaniyah (48.23%), whereas the lowest is in Duhok Governorate." (UN-Habitat Jan 2001, p5)

### **Evolution of number of displaced persons in northern Iraq (1994-2002)**

- Although accurate figures are not available, estimates fluctuated between 600,000 for 1994 to 800,000 for 1999
- USCR estimates that the number of persons still displaced in northern Iraq is about 600,000
- Current estimates include short and long-term displacement within northern Iraq, but also about 100,000 persons expelled from the government-controlled area to northern Iraq

#### ***Northern Iraq (including people displaced from Kirkuk)***

End of year	Estimated number of IDPs in Northern Iraq	Source
2001	600,000	USCR 2002
2000	600,000	USCR 2001, p.180
1999	800,000	USCR 2000, p.185
1998	800,000	USCR 1999, p.150
1997	At least 500,000	USCR 1998, p.144
1996	At least 666,000	USCR 1997, p.152
1995	No figure for the North	USCR 1996, p.112
1994	600,000	USCR 1995, p.115

### **1988-1995**

"In the 1980's, the Iraqi government launched a punitive campaign known as Anfal, which destroyed up to 4,000 Kurdish villages. In 1988, tens of thousands fled into Iran and Turkey.

Following a failed Kurdish uprising in early 1991, some 1.5 million sought temporary refuge in Iran and along the Turkish border. By the end of 1991, most Kurdish refugees had returned, but some 700,000 remained displaced within northern Iraq. Many of these had been displaced two or more times, as fighting continued between Kurdish and Iraqi government forces. [...]

During 1992 and 1993, more Kurds were displaced by skirmishing and shelling along the confrontation line dividing the Kurdish zone from government-controlled Iraq, and government forces expelled many Kurds into the Kurdish zones. [...]

During 1994, about 100,000 previously displaced persons were able to return to their home villages, many of which had been destroyed during the Anfal, but were being rebuilt with UN and NGO assistance. However, an estimated 600,000 persons remained displaced within northern Iraq. Of those, about 400,000 were not able to return to their places of origin in government-controlled Iraq or along border areas due to fears for their safety. The remainder were displaced from one area of northern Iraq to another. For example, about 100,000 persons in Aqra, Shekan, and surrounding areas – dependent on the government-controlled energy grid – had to abandon their homes for lack of electricity, water, and sanitation. Others fled areas subjected to shelling either from Iraqi government forces or from Turkey." (USCR 1995, pp.115-116)

### **1996**

"It was almost impossible to calculate the number of internally displaced people in northern Iraq. Many people had been displaced multiple times, many also for brief interludes during sporadic fighting. Persons also fled or continued to be displaced as result of various conflicts and threats, including displacement in some cases from government-controlled Iraq into the north as well as displacement within the north. During the year, displaced persons fled incursions by Turkish and Iranian military forces. [...] Although the incursion of government forces into Erbil caused additional displacement, the most significant cause of internal displacement in 1996 was fighting between the KDP and PUK, as well as fighting between the KDP and the PKK. WFP was targeting assistance to 666,000 persons in the north, although this number was based on an assessment of need, not displacement per se." (USCR 1997, p.152)

"Kurdish nationalist aspirations have experienced rivalry between the main parties, reaching a peak in September 1996 when the KDP briefly allied with the Government of Iraq regime to oust the PUK from its main bases. The crisis of September 1996 caused the largest population displacement since 1991 (approximately 200,000 persons), as the population feared the Iraqi army and its security services as well as the rivalry between the Kurdish factions. In the North-East, when the PUK announced an imminent Iraqi attack on Suleymaniya, it contributed to an exodus of 40,000 people towards the Iranian border, while another 40,000 were displaced in Suleymaniya itself." (UNHCR June 2000, p.3)

"UN figures for those displaced by the fighting in 1996 and the first half of 1997 were: Dohuk governorate 13,281; Arbil governorate 67,283; and Suleimaniyeh governorate 38,453 (total 119,017)." (Dammers 1998, p.182)

### **1997**

"Factional fighting among the Kurds in the north, particularly in the last three months of the year, and Turkish incursions into northern Iraq in May and September [1997], internally displaced, at least temporarily, 30,000 to 100,000 people. Another 500,000 long-term internally displaced people remained in the three northern governorates of Dohuk, Erbil and Suleymaniya. [...]

The UN secretary general reported in 1997 that about half of the 500,000 people displaced in northern Iraq left their homes before 1991, that 150,000 became displaced between 1991 and 1995, and that 100,000 were displaced in 1996. [...]

In 1997, Baghdad intensified its systematic efforts to 'Arabize' the predominantly Kurdish cities of Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Douz at the edge of government-controlled Iraq near the Kurdish-controlled zone. To solidify control of this strategically and economically vital oil-rich region, the government expelled Kurds, Assyrians, and Turkomans – at times, entire communities – from these cities and surrounding areas. [...] Although it was difficult to find a credible estimate of the number of internal expulsions in 1997, reports indicated that large numbers were involved." (USCR 1997, pp.143-144)

"A WFP survey conducted in August 1997 reported 1291 people still displaced from the border regions of northern Iraq affected by the Turkish incursions. In November, a UN security report revised this to '600 families'." (Dammers 1998, p.183)

**1998-1999**

In 1998 "The Special Rapporteur [of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq] [...] cited the more than 150,000 persons of Kurdish origin who had been evicted from the oil-rich regions, where the policy of 'Arabization' continued. That number did not include the problem of more than 200,000 internally persons in the rest of the country, mainly in the southern regions of Iraq." (UN GA 4 November 1998)

"[T]he following figures were provided in respect of the number of families forced to leave the area: 13,367 families from 1991 to 1993; 112 in 1994; 395 in 1995; 282 in 1996; 710 in 1997; 394 in 1998; 449 in 1999; and 155 in 2000 (as of 4 June). The total number of individuals who were forced to leave Kirkuk since 1991 reportedly amounts to 94,026. (UN GA 14 August 2000)

*USCR mentioned the number of 800,000 internally displaced persons in the north for 1998 and 1999, but 600,000 in 2000 and 2001.* (USCR 1999, p.150 & USCR 2000, p.185 & USCR 2001 p.180; USCR 2002)

**Evolution of the number of displaced in Southern Iraq (1994-2002)**

- Because of lack of access to the government-controlled part of Iraq, estimates of the number of internally displaced in the South varied from 40,000 to 1 million between 1994 and 1997
- In 1999, USCR adopted the conservative estimate of 100,000 internally displaced persons and confirmed this estimate for 2000 and 2001
- According to Brookings Institution report, there are at least currently 300,000 IDPs in government-controlled Iraq

**Southern Iraq**

End of year	Estimated number of IDPs in Southern Iraq	Source
2001	100,000	USCR 2002
2000	100,000	USCR 2001, p.180
1999	100,000	USCR 2000, p.188
1998	No figure for the South	USCR 1999, p.153
1997	40,000-1,000,000	USCR 1998, p.145
1996	40,000-1,000,000	USCR 1997, p.152
1995	40,000-1,000,000	USCR 1996, p.113
1994	40,000-1,000,000	USCR 1995, p.116

"The number of persons displaced in the south, including to, from, and within the marshlands, is nearly impossible to determine with any degree of certainty because the Iraqi regime denies the UN and other relief agencies access to the area. Estimates of the number of displaced and at risk Maaden (i.e. Marsh Arabs) range from 40,000 to 1,000,000." (USCR 1995, p.116)

*USCR quoted the same estimate (40,000 to 1,000,000) for 1995, 1996 and 1997 (USCR 1996, p.113, USCR 1997, p.152, USCR 1998, p.145). It renounced to provide any estimate for 1998 because of lack of access for independent sources to the area. (USCR 1999, p.153). It stated for 1999 and 2000 that "[a]lthough there are no reliable sources on the number of displaced people in southern Iraq, the U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR) conservatively estimates that about 100,000 are internally displaced from and within the southern region." (USCR 2000, p.188 & 2000 p.180)*

***According to report by Brookings Institution***

"The best estimate on numbers comes from a paper given at the AMAR conference in May 2001. At the start of the 1990s, prior to the initiation of the large scale marsh-draining program, an estimated original population of 400,000 Marsh Arabs had dwindled to about 250,000 people still living in the marshes and its vicinity. The reason for this reduction in numbers was essentially economic migration. Of this remaining number, 40,000 made it into Iran as refugees, and another estimated 20-40,000 remained in their homes. This leaves 170,000 to 190,000 people who are either dead or displaced. Although there have been anecdotal reports of massacres by Iraqi forces, no reliable figures exist.

Numbers for other Shi'i Arabs expelled either because of political activity or for living in the wrong place are equally hard to determine. While there have been anecdotal accounts of entire villages being destroyed and hundreds of people expelled, the only firm numbers are the 4,000 families (25,000 people) that the government itself has admitted to expelling from a Baghdad neighborhood in 1998.

The only figures we have on the al-Qilaa or Jash Kurds come from the Iraqi Red Crescent, which puts the figure at 8,000 families. Using the UN-Habitat average of 5.7 persons per family, this population is over 45,000. Finally, there are reports of some non-Arabs who, forced out of Kirkuk, have moved south instead of north and into the Kurdish areas. This may be because they are joining family members in the South, or because they are at odds with authorities in the North, or, perhaps because of some governmental measures not yet known or understood, or simply because of the vagaries of violence and expulsion.

All told, if one systematically takes the low estimates and the confirmed numbers – 80,000 from the Iraq/Iran war now living in Basra, 170,000 for the Marsh Arabs in the 1990s, 25,000 for expellees from Baghdad, 45,000 of the al-Qilaa Kurds, and an unknown number from the Arabization campaign – it is hard to see how there could be any fewer than 300,000 IDPs in South/Central Iraq." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p33)

# PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

## General

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### Internal displacement forecasts in case of war (2002-2003)

- In Jan 2002, the UN estimated that an additional 900,000 people could be internally displaced in case of a war
- Rumor of the use of WMD might generate panic to instigate large scale flight
- Iraqi regime could force people in the South to flee as part of its war strategy
- Massive displacement to and from Kirkuk and Mossul is expected

"Up to 900,000 people may be displaced in addition to the 900,000-1,000,000 existing IDPs." (UN OCHA Jan 03, p10)

*U.N. agencies predicted in December 2002 that war could displace an additional 1.1 million people inside Iraq and 900,000 would become refugees outside the country.*

To view the UN confidential report mentioning this information, please see: UN 10 Dec 2002, Likely Humanitarian Scenarios [reference and link below]

#### "Scenarios for large-scale population displacement:

1) Refugee flow from northern Iraq to neighbor states. Despite the past history (1988 and 1991) and the publicly and forcefully articulated fears of Turkey and Iran, this is an unlikely scenario. The reasons for this are the following:

? The Kurds are far better organized than in the 1980s or 1991. Administrative structures that can channel assistance and defuse popular panic exist both at the government and at local levels.

? Most Kurdish households, from prime minister to taxi-driver, have several weeks / months worth of food stocks in the house.

? Since 1991, circa 3000 villages have been at least partially rebuilt. They will provide a protective buffer between the towns and the mountainous borders, with access to food and water. (In 1991 there was nothing between the towns and the mountains.)

? Indications are that a key trigger to large-scale displacement – a prolonged Iraqi military attack -- will be met with an overwhelming US-led military response.

2) Flight from the northern cities to surrounding areas. As noted above, any large-scale Iraqi military action against cities such as Erbil, Sulaimaniah, or Dohuk is expected to be met with a prompt coalition response. Therefore it is only the use of or rumor of the use of WMD that might generate sufficient panic to instigate large scale flight.

3) New IDPs coming into northern Iraq from the South. This could be any of a number of populations including non-Arabs expelled from Kirkuk, Mosul or even Baghdad, as well as the general population of the first two cities. These are likely to be people that are expelled by the Iraqi regime, as part of its strategy of fighting the war with 'population bombs.'<sup>1</sup> Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) may be used to instigate large-scale displacement.

4) Rapid population movements from and to Mosul and Kirkuk. Upon the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from the northern cities, which could happen even prior to the outbreak of hostilities, there are likely to be two types of population movements: Arab populations will flee south, and the former non-Arab residents will flood home. These movements will happen spontaneously and will be largely uncontrollable." (CHC 23 Dec 02)

"An attack on Iraq, starting with an air assault against Baghdad and other strategic targets, would generate huge flows of refugees and a serious nutritional and public health crisis. More than a million people fled Iraq during and after the 1990–1991 Gulf crisis, when Saddam Hussein crushed ethnic rebellions that the United States refused to support. Surrounding countries, the United Nations, and relief agencies are bracing for flows at least as great this time. There could also be massive internal movement, with people fleeing cities for the country. Many of the roads that U.S. and allied troops would need to bring troops and equipment into Iraq could be clogged with people fleeing for their lives.

Most of Iraq's 24 million people depend on food rations provided under the U.N. Oil for Food Program. Any break in the food pipeline would create a nutritional crisis, forcing hungry Iraqis to besiege invading troops for food.

Relief agencies have been working for years in Afghanistan, but there is little infrastructure to deal with a humanitarian disaster in Iraq. Stockpiling food, assembling supplies and medicine, and building relief teams will take time and money—mainly from the United States. During and immediately after a conflict, occupying forces are often the only source of food and medical care.

If Saddam Hussein were to use chemical or biological weapons to blunt an attack, the humanitarian crisis could be far worse. Thousands of people would be killed or incapacitated, but relief workers—the world's first responders to complex emergencies—would find it difficult to provide aid. Humanitarian workers are completely unprepared to work in the toxic conditions they could encounter in the country." (Bacon Jan 03)

### **Eviction of Kurds but also of Turkmen and Assyrians from the Kirkuk area (1997-2002)**

- Since 1997, Iraqi government forced Kurds, as well as a number of Turkmen and Assyrians to leave the Kirkuk area as part of its policy of "arabization" or "nationalization" of this oil-rich region
- Most of the people expelled from Kirkuk decided to go north, despite government decree that doing so would cause them to lose their property and food rationing cards
- 5-6 families are deported every day to northern Iraq
- Families perceived to be opposed to the regime, families who have relatives outside Iraq or in southern Iraq and those who have relatives in detention or executed are said to be the first targeted in the process of forced displacement
- Baath Party members are responsible for ordering the eviction of families viewed as opponents of the Iraqi regime
- Kurdish sources reported acceleration of forced displacement of non-Arabs citizens in 2001 and 2002

"Since mid-1997 thousands of Kurds and a number of other non-Arabs, including Turkmen and Assyrians, who have lived all their lives in the Kirkuk region, which is about 260 kilometers north of Baghdad, have been expelled to the Kurdish provinces in the north controlled by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) because of their ethnic origin and because of Kirkuk's strategic location as well as its oil fields. The authorities have given Kurdish families targeted the choice of either going to Southern Iraq or to the Kurdish provinces. If the families choose Southern Iraq then they are allowed to take some of their possessions with them. However, if they choose to go to the north their

properties, as well as their food rationing cards are confiscated by the authorities. The majority of the families have reportedly chosen to go north. [...]"

Once in Northern Iraq some of the families expelled tried to live with relatives. The majority, however, have been resettled in camps such as the al-Salam camp near Chamchamal and Benislawa camp near Erbil. The KDP, PUK and UN agencies have provided them with basic food, tents, blankets and other items. Their empty properties in the Kirkuk region and in Khanaqeen are given by the authorities to pro-government Arabs brought from other regions in Iraq. Thus far thousands of Arabs from other regions in Iraq have been resettled in the Kirkuk governorate." (AI 24 November 2000, "Forcible expulsion")

"The policy of the Iraqi government is very systematically implemented in and around Kirkuk. Everyday 5-6 families are deported to Northern Iraq." (UNHCR/ACCORD 14 November 2000, p.57)

"Kurds and Turkomans who settled in these places after the 1950s are the principal victims of this policy. Kurdish and Turkoman families are required to move either to the southern part of the country, often to the city of al-Ramadi, or to the three northern governorates. At the same time, Arabs are reportedly encouraged to settle in Kirkuk; their proportion is increasing. According to the interviewees, Arabs are given incentives of money and apartments to settle in Kirkuk. As such, the Government's policy of Arabization, as reported by the Special Rapporteur [of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq] in the past, is continuing. [...]"

Families who are perceived to be opposed to the regime, families who have relatives outside Iraq or in southern Iraq and those who have relatives in detention or executed are said to be the first targeted in the process of forced displacement." (CHR 10 March 1998, "Forced displacement")

"Forced displacement of the Turkomen was reported to have resumed in the last months of 1998, particularly in the Kirkuk area. The head of the coalition of the Turkoman parties stated that about 5,000 evicted Turkomans were living in 'sub-human conditions in Northern Iraq.'" (UNHCR June 2000, p.12)

*In 2000* "The government continued its forced expulsion of Kurds and Turkmen from Kirkuk, Khaniqin, Makhmour, Sinjar, Tuz Khormatu, and other districts as part of its 'Arabization' program.[...] Over 800 people were reportedly expelled between January and June, bringing the total number of those expelled since 1991 to over 94,000, according to Kurdish opposition sources." (HRW December 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

*In 2001* "Iraqi authorities have forcefully deported five Kurdish families in Tuze Khurmatoo south of Kirkuk city. Their documents were ceased and their houses were expropriated and given to Arab families. The families were asked to register as Arabs or face deportation to the areas controlled by the Kurdish authorities. The deportees who arrived in Kurdistan asked UN to pressure Iraqi government to allow them back to their land and to halt further deportation activities. The deportees numbered 33 persons, all from the farm lands near Tuze Khurmatoo." (Kurdistan Observer 26 March 2001)

"Emanuel Khoshaba, an official with the Assyrian Democratic Movement, said that '10 Assyrian families have been forced to move to...Baghdad since the beginning of the year,' according to 'Zinda' on 12 February. The deportation of these families is part of the arabization campaign spearheaded by the ruling Iraqi Ba'th Party." (RFE/RL 15 February 2002)

"The Iraqi government's ethnic-cleansing campaign against the country's non-Arab citizens has accelerated, according to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Kurdish-language daily "Kurdistan Nuwe" on 17 April [2002]. "Daily, the Iraqi government further intensifies the policy of ethnic cleansing and deportation of Kurds in the regions under its own control," reported "Kurdistan Nuwe." The article continues, "Whenever the global problems become more intricate and more threatening, the Iraqi government finds it an opportune time to further implement its schemes against the Iraqi people in general and the Kurdish people in particular.[...]"

'On 5 January 2002, [Saddam Hussein's] Presidency Council issued a directive through the Interior Ministry, to the Kirkuk Governorate in which it called for probing into the causes of death of all the Kurdish citizens from 1991 to 1996 in Kirkuk, for the purpose of expelling...the families and relatives of the Kurds who were martyred in the battles for liberating Kirkuk..., the report said. The battles for liberating Kirkuk refer to the brief seizure of Kirkuk by Iraqi Kurdish forces during the abortive March 1991 Kurdish uprising." (RFE/RL 26 April 2002)

For more information on forced displacement from Kirkuk, please see **Zanger, Maggy**, April 2002, Refugees in Their Own Country, War Without Borders, Middle East Report 222, Spring 2002, [\[External Link\]](#)

### **Multiple displacements in northern Iraq (1998-2001)**

- In 1998 UN-Habitat estimated that out of 3 million people in northern Iraq, 1 million had been internally displaced at one time or another
- The displaced in the north include victim of the Anfal campaign, people expelled from government-controlled regions, people displaced by factional Kurdish in-fighting, or people living close to the border who had to flee foreign incursions and shelling

"Many residents of northern Iraq have been displaced multiple times. In 1998, the UN Center for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat) estimated that more than 1 million people (out of a population of 3 million) were internally displaced in the three northern governorates at one time or another. At least 100,000 of the displaced in the north are people from the government-controlled regions of Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Sinjar bordering the north who have been expelled into the north in recent years, including 1999.

Those displaced in northern Iraq also include people previously displaced from government-controlled Iraq; about half of the displaced were forced out before 1991, many during the 'Anfal' campaign in the late 1980s when Baghdad forces wiped out about 4,500 Kurdish villages, including virtually all villages near the borders of Turkey and Iran. The rest of the displaced have been uprooted from one part of northern Iraq to another by factional Kurdish in-fighting or, for people living in border areas, by incursions or shelling from outside the Kurdish-controlled region by Turkish, Iranian, or Iraqi government forces." (USCR 2000, "Northern Iraq")

"At 1999 Sulaimaniyah Conference the following category definition was produced:  
Those from Kirkuk (old and new caseload). Khanaqin, Kifri, Makhmour, Sinjar, Tala'far, Mosul and other areas.

Those displaced as a result of conflict between the two major factions in Iraqi Kurdistan.

People affected by conflict involving the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).[...]

Others in collective towns including widows and children, who would like to return to places of origin if given the opportunity to do so.

All other citizens of Iraq displaced/expelled for political reasons." (Habitat Jan 2001, p1)

"The composition of the displaced population now includes: (a) those in collective towns who are unable to return; (b) those who do not wish to return; and (c) those displaced persons who have taken refuge in urban and semi-urban areas and who, because of their vulnerable position, require water and sewage and other infrastructure services. [...] These two groups [(a) and (c)] make up 0.8 million persons." (UN SC 19 November 1998, Sect. IV)

"About 900,000 internal refugees – as much as a third of the region's population – are scattered across Iraqi Kurdistan. Some of them have been displaced several times in the last twenty years by violence between the Kurds here and Turkey. Some are unable to return home because the soil is still strewn with landmines.

About 200 people each month are killed or maimed by mines, according to the UN de-miners." (Aquila Lawrence Summer 2000)

"The other kind of displacement happened in Northern Iraq after the conflict between the PUK and the KDP, especially after the KDP gained the control over Arbil City, which had been in the hands of the PUK since 1995. A forcible exchange of population took place from Arbil City to Sulaymaniyah City and vice versa, affecting around 50,000-55,000 people respectively (100,000-110,000 all in all). These people were sent to the other town just because they were accused of being affiliated with the other party. They lost their social status and support as well as their property: houses, cars, land." (UNHCR/ACCORD 14 November 2000)

### **Local officials in Kirkuk area are granted impunity to carry out expulsion process described in government decree (1998-2000)**

- Procedure to follow during the expulsion process includes confiscation of property, of ration cards and of membership cards to government agencies
- One member of each Kurdish family expelled to the northern provinces was often detained and had to sign note acknowledging to move voluntarily
- Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq observes that the Baath Party and its members are effectively granted impunity in carrying out forced displacement policy
- Measures used by the government to encourage departures and prevent the return of displaced persons include the mining of the area, the setting-up of military checkpoints and the demolition of Kurdish sites
- Other measures include sealing off entire districts and taking hostage children from families of minority groups to intimidate their families into leaving their home regions

"The Kirkuk Governorate was renamed 'Al-Ta'mim' which means in arabic 'nationalization'. On 12 January 1998 a decree was issued by the Governorate of al-Ta'mim ordering the expulsion of 1468 families from the governorate because of its 'very important security status and geographical location'. The decree was based on directives issued by the office of the President of Iraq. It sets a date, between 15 April 1998 and 15 June 1998, for the deportation of the 1468 families. The decree gives details of the number of families to be expelled from different neighbourhoods in the Kirkuk governorate. It also includes details of the procedure to be followed by the security forces, it states:

1. One member of each Kurdish family expelled to the northern provinces should be detained;
2. Confiscation of property belonging to the expelled;
3. Confiscation of ration cards;
4. Confiscation of membership cards to government agencies;
5. Notification of the decree to: the head of security of each district; the Ba'ath party official of each district, the chief of each village. [...]

The expulsion of Kurdish families and other non-Arabs continued throughout 1998 and 1999. The same procedure described above is followed on each occasion. (AI 24 November 1999, "Forcible expulsion")

"According to several persons interviewed, Baath Party members from the local offices of the Baath Party in the city of Kirkuk are responsible for implementing the decision to forcibly remove the targeted families. They are in possession of lists of people living in the neighbourhood under their 'jurisdiction'. These lists contain information on each household of the neighbourhood. Baath Party members are responsible for implementation of the decisions. Aside from the various human rights which are violated in the process of forced displacement (e.g. the rights to privacy, property, movement and personal integrity), the Special Rapporteur [of the Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq] observes that

the practice of forced displacement as carried out by the Baath Party is an extralegal use of self-ascribed authority; to the extent that the ostensible authorities permit the practice to occur, the Baath Party and its members are effectively granted impunity.

According to testimony received, the following is the typical experience of those families subjected to forced displacement. Once the decision is taken to expel a family, Baath Party members present themselves at the residence of that particular family and order them to leave the area within 24 to 48 hours. In order to ensure that the family will effectively move, Baath Party members usually withhold the identification cards of the members of the family. In some cases a member of the family is put in detention in order to accelerate the process. Once the family is ready to leave their home, they need to pass by the local police station and fill in a form stating that they are voluntarily changing their residence. Their identification cards are only then returned to them and if a member of the family was detained, only then is he or she released.

[...]

Iraqi authorities used to issue a 'displacement order' to families who were required to leave. However, it was reported that the Government of Iraq stopped this practice when they learned that the document was being used by asylum seekers outside Iraq as proof of their claims." (CHR 10 March 1998, "Forced displacement")

"In Kirkuk the regime periodically sealed off entire districts and conducted day-long, house-to-house searches, evidently as part of its 'Arabization' campaign to harass, and expel ethnic Kurds and Turkomen from the region. Government officials also take hostage children from families of minority groups to intimidate their families into leaving their home regions. [...] As part of its policy, the authorities demolished the houses and detained and executed family members of Shi'a who protested government actions." (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, f.")

"The Government of Iraq has reportedly been using other measures aimed at encouraging departures and preventing displaced persons from returning. The Government has reportedly declared the area around Kirkuk, including the oil-fields and production facilities, a military and security zone and has mined the area to impede transit. The roads into the area have been heavily fortified with military checkpoints. The regime has also changed the administrative composition of Kirkuk governorate, eliminating four predominantly Kurdish districts and effectively reducing the Kurdish population to minority status. Most recently, the Iraqi Government has reportedly evicted the residents of Kirkuk's citadel and begun the demolition of this ancient Kurdish site, claiming that the envisioned new construction will generate considerable tourist revenue." (CHR 26 February 1999, para.24-28)

### **Most Marsh Arabs have been displaced or had to give up their traditional way of living (1998-2002)**

- To escape government repression aimed at Shi'a uprising in 1991, many insurgents fled to the marsh areas in central and southern Iraq
- Government drained the marshes to regain control of the region and most of an estimated 200,000 'Marsh Arabs' (1993 estimate) have been displaced, or have had to abandon their traditional livelihoods
- Iraqi government adopted a compulsory resettlement program for the Marsh Arabs in 1992
- The Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights Iraq has received lists of allegedly destroyed villages and houses, located in the marsh area and in Baghdad
- The government has also reportedly forced the Shi'a population from the marshlands to relocate in the Kirkuk area

"As to where the Marsh Arabs went, little is known. The British NGO AMAR says some 40,000 people made it into refugee camps in Iran. Some tens of thousands may still be trying to scratch a living out of

whatever remains of the marshes. Some were certainly killed by the Iraqi security forces during the 'drainage' operations. But upwards of 100,000 (see numbers section below) must be displaced. Neighboring urban centers such as an-Nasiriyah and al-Amara are thought to hold some people. Larger centers like Baghdad and Basra may provide havens as family members had been migrating there for decades. Finally, it is thought that some Marsh Arabs may be part of the people being sent north to inhabit former Kurd and Turkmen properties, under the Arabization campaign, although it is unclear how the necessary selection process unfolds." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p31)

"In 1993, Human Rights Watch estimated the rural population of the marshlands to be around 200,000, which took into account the huge amount of army deserters and political opponents seeking shelter in the region after 1991. Today, there may be as few as 20,000 of the original inhabitants remaining, the rest having fled or migrated to Iran and elsewhere, while an estimated minimum of 100,000 have become internally displaced in Iraq." (HRW Jan 03, p6)

"In April 1992 (as part of the plan to "regroup the marsh villages on dry land" [...]), the Iraqi National Assembly approved a new housing program for the Ma'dan. According to then speaker of the Iraqi parliament, Sa'di Mahdi Saleh, the government's intention was to relocate some 3,000-4,000 inhabitants of the marshes to houses constructed along the highway between Basra and al-Qurna, to "provide them with electricity, clean water, schools and medical care," and to "make them good citizens." Saleh told the media that the plan approved by parliament "does not specify [whether the families to be relocated] will be given a choice to move or stay ... whether we say it is compulsory or optional is of no significance to them". The initiative was widely understood as a means through which the government could force political and military fugitives out of hiding, enable its program of drainage of the marshes to proceed without hindrance, and subjugate the local population once and for all.

Moreover, the forced relocation served as a means of depriving the marsh villagers of all sources of economic livelihood—mirroring precisely what had happened to the Kurds when they were forcibly relocated to resettlement camps in the 1980s as a prelude to the Anfal campaign.

The parallel between the Kurds and the Ma'dan was not lost on the speaker of the parliament. Referring to the Kurds, Saleh told the Reuters news agency: 'At the time we evacuated those people and put them in complexes and provided them with amenities, [but] for political reasons there was a row against us in the West. Concerning the marsh people the West should help us to move their homes, build schools for them, improve their health conditions, instead of criticizing. America wiped the Red Indians off the face of the earth and nobody raised an eyebrow.'

The forced resettlement program in the marshes was accompanied by a counterinsurgency campaign that included indiscriminate attacks by artillery, helicopter gunships and fixed-wing aircraft on villages. The attacks were reportedly accompanied by the arrest and execution of civilians, including tribal leaders, the destruction of property and livestock, and the razing of entire villages. Those targeted included whole families that had refused to vacate their homes. The waves of arrests were soon followed by reports of mass summary executions. Among the reports received by Human Rights Watch at the time was one incident involving the execution of some 2,500 villagers in August 1992. The victims, among them women and children, were rounded up in the marshes of al-Chibayish (west of al-Qurna) together with captured fighters of the opposition SCIRI. According to testimony obtained by Human Rights Watch, including that of a survivor, they were taken to an army camp in northern Iraq, where they were executed over a period of about two weeks. The UN special rapporteur on Iraq detailed similar reports he had received." (HRW Jan 03)

"Reports of the destruction of civilian settlements have been received by the Special Rapporteur on an intermittent basis since 1991. The Special Rapporteur [of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq] has received lists of allegedly destroyed villages and houses, located in many parts of the vast marsh area (now mainly drained), as well as in Baghdad.

It was reported that, in late March 1999, Armoured Division Six carried out operations surrounding and bombarding a number of residential areas of some of the tribes living in the Governorate of Basra. Such operations reportedly took place in the areas of Al-Ghameigh, Bait Wafi and Bait Sayed Noor.

Since the beginning of 1999, the Special Rapporteur has regularly received reports indicating that the Government of Iraq has been destroying the houses of opponents with bulldozers, operating during the daytime in full view of the occupants. [...]

The Special Rapporteur has received a list of names of hundreds of people so affected, indicating their addresses, the date of destruction of their homes and the action taken against the families (arrests, executions, expulsions etc.)." (UN GA 14 October 1999, para.15-19)

"The practice of the security services to force large numbers of Shi'a inhabitants of the southern marshes to relocate to major southern cities and to areas along the Iranian border probably is connected to the destruction of villages. Special Rapporteur van der Stoep described this practice in his February report, and added that many other persons were transferred to detention centers and prisons in central Iraq, primarily in Baghdad." (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, g.")

Security forces also have forced Shi'a inhabitants of the southern marshes to relocate to major southern cities and to areas along the Iranian border. [...] The Government reportedly also continued to move forcibly Shi'a populations from the south to the north to replace Kurds, Turkomen, and Assyrians, who had been expelled forcibly from major cities. (US DOS 5 September 2000, Sect.I)

### **Other displacements include flight of political opponents and forced relocation of people who had found refuge in Baghdad (1998-2000)**

"Thousands of non-Kurdish opponents of the Saddam Hussein regime have also sought refuge, or a base for continuing their opposition, in the Kurdish-controlled regions of Iraq, particularly since the Gulf War. The entry of Iraqi government troops and agents into these regions in 1996 left them particularly vulnerable - many were captured or killed, particularly in Arbil. In late 1997, the Iraqi National Congress reported that around 2000 non-Kurdish political displaced were still sheltering in PUK-controlled regions, mainly in Suleimaniyeh. Many reportedly had difficulty finding work, and were often regarded with suspicion (as potential government agents) by the PUK authorities." (Dammers 1998, p.184)

"Thousands of Gulf War refugees who sought haven in Baghdad were relocated forcibly to their home provinces." (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, d.")

## PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

### Right to life and personal security

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#### Reports of gross human rights violations committed by government, despite obstacles to assess abuses (1999-2003)

- Government does not allow human rights experts outside Baghdad nor in the 3 Northern governorates
- Opposition groups based outside of Iraq relay information on human rights abuses from inside government-controlled Iraq
- Human Rights organizations report gross human rights violations in Iraq, ranging arbitrary arrest and detention, to torture, extrajudicial and judicial executions after unfair summary trials, 'disappearances', and forcible expulsions on the basis of ethnic origin
- Presence of Iraqi government intelligence operatives in autonomous northern Iraq and refusal of neighboring countries to allow passage to the north of Iraq complicate the task of human rights organizations
- UN Special Rapporteur on the situation in Iraq continued to report human rights violations in 2002

"The Government does not permit the establishment of independent human rights organizations. Citizens have established several human rights groups abroad and in northern areas not under government control. Monitors from foreign and international human rights groups are not allowed in the country.

The Government operates an official human rights group that routinely denies allegations of abuses." (US DOS 25 February 2000, Section 4)

"The government allowed no independent human rights organizations to operate in the governorates under its control and prevented foreign journalists or diplomats and persons working with humanitarian relief programs from traveling outside of Baghdad without escort or reporting on human rights abuses.

The Centre for Human Rights, affiliated with the Iraqi Communist Party, relayed information from inside government-controlled Iraq through its office in Shaqlawa in the autonomous region and its headquarters in London. Other Iraqi opposition groups such as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the Iraq National Accord, and the Iraq National Congress also provided information about human rights abuses by the government in Baghdad. The border between the government-controlled and autonomous regions remained relatively porous, and many Iraqis reportedly traveled to the north and back with little hindrance. However, the presence of government intelligence operatives in the north and the refusal of neighboring countries to allow passage to the north of Iraq made it difficult for international human rights organizations to investigate abuses or to verify the information provided by opposition groups." (HRW December 1999, Human Rights Developments")

"The Iraqi government of President Saddam Hussain perpetrated widespread and gross human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests of suspected political opponents and their relatives, routine torture and ill-treatment of detainees, summary execution of military personnel and political detainees as part of a

'prison cleansing' campaign, and forced expulsions of Kurds and Turkmen from Kirkuk and other regions." (HRW 2002, "Human Rights Developments")

*In 2001, Amnesty International still reported the execution of hundreds of people, including possible prisoners of conscience, the arrest of hundreds of suspected political opponents, widespread torture and forcible expulsions from Kirkuk (AI 2001)*

"Victims of torture have included suspected government opponents who range from army, security and intelligence officers suspected of having contacts with the Iraqi opposition abroad or accused of plotting against the government, to followers of leading Shi'a Muslim religious personalities. Torture has also been used against women suspected of having links with Shi'a Islamist groups in the country or simply because of family links. In many cases relatives of those active in the Iraqi opposition abroad have been tortured or ill-treated as a way of putting pressure on those opposition leaders to cease their activities." (AI 15 August 2001)

"The Iraqi government continued to commit widespread and gross human rights violations, including the extensive use of the death penalty and the extrajudicial execution of prisoners, the forced expulsion of ethnic minorities from government-controlled areas in the oil-rich region of Kirkuk and elsewhere, the arbitrary arrest of suspected political opponents and members of their families, and the torture and ill-treatment of detainees." (HRW 2003)

"The Iraqi government executed 15 Kurdish oppositionists in Kirkuk last week. They were arrested last month by the Iraqi security apparatus, according to the Radio of the Iraqi Kurdistan Conservatives, cited by KurdishMedia.com of 19 November. The victims were buried in a mass grave near a military barrack north of Kirkuk.

It is also reported that Saddam's security apparatus has increased its activities in recent months. Some 40 percent of Kurdistan (south of the no-fly zone which demarcates the Kurdistan Regional Government [KRG]) is under Baghdad control. UN Security Council Resolution 688 is supposed to protect the Kurds and Shi'a population but no steps have been taken by the international community to implement it. Kirkuk also contains a significant population of Iraqi Turkmen who are equally unprotected." (RFE/RL 23 Nov 2001)

" During the reporting period, the Special Rapporteur continued to receive allegations of human rights violations committed by the Government of Iraq from various sources. These allegations relate to extrajudicial killings, torture, cruel, degrading and inhuman treatment and punishment, forced displacement (the policy of "Arabization"), the lack of fair trial, freedom of expression and association, religious freedom and other rights. This information has provided some of the background material which the Special Rapporteur draws on in his discussions with the Government of Iraq." (UN GA 20 Aug 02, para.16)

### **Military training of Iraqi children in preparation of war (Aug 2002)**

"Thousands of Iraqi teenagers are attending training camps this summer to prepare to defend Iraq, according to a 12 August report by the Associated Press. "Firing pistols and AK-47s while studying Islam and history, 1,800 boys aged between 13 and 16 are getting three weeks of training at 'Saddam's Cubs Training Camp' in a southern Baghdad suburb, one of about 30 such camps scattered across the country," AP reported. The Iraqi government established "Saddam's Cubs" camps in 1996. Similar training camps have long been employed by other Middle Eastern regimes, such as Libya. The camps typically mix weapons training and physical education with a healthy dose of socialization in an effort to elicit loyalty to the regime." (RFE/RL 16 Aug 2002)

*More more information on child soldiers in Iraq, please see CSUCS 7 Nov 02 Child Soldiers 1379 Country Reports: Iraq, pp50-52 [Link below]*

### **Human rights situation in northern Iraq has improved over recent years (2000-2003)**

- Since September 2001, deterioration of security climate due to clashes between Islamic groups and Kurdish political parties
- Villagers displaced by Ansar al-Islam complain of harsh Taliban-like restrictions placed on the population and damage done to local shrines and institutions

"Since 1997 the human rights situation in Iraqi Kurdistan had gradually improved. A cease-fire declared in 1997 brought an end to large-scale abuses by the ruling parties, their militias and security forces. However, isolated cases of human rights abuses continued to be reported in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1999. These included arbitrary arrests and political killings. The fate of scores of political prisoners and people who had 'disappeared' in previous years remained unknown." (AI 2000)

"Other bomb blasts in KDP-held territory, including one in Arbil on April 23 and another in Zakho on October 15, were reportedly attributed to Islamist groups based in the region, notably *Harakat al-Tawhid al-Islami* (Islamic Unity Movement, IUM). The IUM, one of three Islamist groups which broke away at different times from the mainstream Islamic Unity Movement in Kurdistan (IUMK) and in September merged to form *Jund al-Islam* (Soldiers of God), was also held responsible by the KDP for the assassination on February 18 of Francois Hariri, governor of Arbil and member of the KDP's Central Committee. He was shot dead by unidentified assailants as he drove to work in the city. His bodyguard was also killed and his driver wounded. The KDP announced in late March that it had identified several IUM members as being responsible for the assassination, one of whom was apprehended.

Clashes between PUK forces and Jund al-Islam began in September, shortly after the group's leader, Abu 'Ubaidullah al-Shafi'i, declared *Jihad* (Holy War) against secular and other political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan deemed to have deviated from the "true path of Islam." After the September 11 attacks in the U.S., the PUK accused the group of links with Osama bin Laden's *al-Qaeda* (The Base) network and said its members included Arabs of various nationalities who had received military training in Afghanistan. The PUK also accused the group of imposing an extreme form of Islam in their strongholds of Biyara and Tawela, including barring women from employment and education, and of preventing the Naqshabandi Sufis based in the area from practicing their religious rites.

On September 22, Jund al-Islam abducted a doctor, Rebwar Sayyid 'Umar, from his surgery in Halabja and detained him for twenty days in Biyara near the border with Iran. On September 23, thirty-seven PUK fighters were killed by Jund al-Islam in the village of Kheli Hama on the Sulaimaniya-Halabja road. Several died in an ambush, but the majority was reportedly killed after surrender. Photographs of the victims made available by the PUK showed that some of the prisoners' throats had been slit and some of the dead had been beheaded or mutilated, including by having their sexual organs severed. During the ensuing clashes, an estimated one hundred PUK fighters and some forty Jund al-Islam fighters were killed. The PUK regained control of Halabja and its vicinity by September 26, arresting suspected supporters or members of Jund al-Islam, and during October the fighting extended to Sharazur, Hawraman, and elsewhere. At least thirty-eight Jund al-Islam fighters were reportedly killed in these clashes, while some twenty-four others were captured or surrendered. Other Kurdish political parties, including the KDP, offered military assistance to the PUK. On October 11, the PUK declared a ceasefire and on October 25, it issued a thirty-day amnesty for Jund al-Islam fighters. The amnesty did not cover those responsible for the assassination of Francois Hariri, or those involved in the killing of the thirty-seven PUK fighters on September 23. The PUK also said that foreign nationals among them would not be permitted to remain in Iraqi Kurdistan." (HRW 2002)

"During a mission to Iraqi Kurdistan in September [2002], Human Rights Watch found that the overall human rights situation in the region had markedly improved relative to previous years. Both the KDP and PUK administrations promulgated laws and adopted decisions aimed at the protection of fundamental civil and political rights, including freedom of expression and of association. However, representatives of several Islamist and Turkman political parties told Human Rights Watch that political activity by their members and supporters remained curtailed. Perceived sympathizers of Islamist groups, in particular, were said to be liable to arbitrary arrest and detention without trial." (HRW 20 Feb 03)

"Villagers displaced by the group [Ansar al-Islam] complain of harsh Taliban-like restrictions placed on the population and damage done to local shrines and institutions." (ICG 7 Feb 03)

## **SUBSISTENCE NEEDS (HEALTH NUTRITION AND SHELTER)**

### **General**

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#### **A war will bring additional hardship to current IDPs and new ones (2003)**

- Population in the North should have better access to food than in the Centre/South if a war occurs
- A war situation, which may also involve the destruction of transportation facilities, ports, bridges and warehouses would likely lead to rapidly increasing food prices in the markets
- Most urban Iraqi are dependent on government rations and would be unlikely to cope with food shortages without immediate and massive emergency assistance

"A war will bring new hardship to existing civilian and displaced populations within Iraq; produce new refugee outflows to neighboring countries; strain the resources of and possibly prompt a backlash within neighboring countries against Iraqi refugees; and place new demands on donor states to provide increased assistance inside Iraq and to Iraq's neighbors, as well as to open their own doors to a significantly larger number of Iraqi refugees.

In the event of war in Iraq, a mostly urban civilian population already dependent on centralized food, water, and sanitation distribution systems, will be at risk from the disruption of those systems. Depending on the evolution of a potential conflict, internal displacement and refugee flight are likely to result from a humanitarian crisis as well as from the direct effects of war, ethnic or other conflict, or human rights abuse.

Should the United States go to war with Iraq and establish military control and authority over Iraqi territory, it will have responsibilities under international law to meet the humanitarian needs of the inhabitants, including people displaced by the fighting. Human Rights Watch is particularly concerned that Iraqi civilians be protected from forced displacement inconsistent with international humanitarian law, but be allowed to flee voluntarily to safety should conditions so dictate. An occupying power must ensure the security of the civilian population or allow civilians to voluntarily move out of harm's way, both within and outside the state's borders.

Human Rights Watch fears that Iraqis who attempt to seek greater safety across international borders may be prevented from doing so. Turkey has announced plans in the event of war to establish camps for Iraqis inside Iraq. If such "safe areas" are created, Turkey or any other government in control will have the burden of ensuring that such camps are secure and must make arrangements to provide all necessary humanitarian assistance. Past international experience has shown that "safe areas" often do not remain safe. If "safe areas" become insecure, or whenever individuals arrive at borders seeking protection, Turkey and all other neighboring states will be obliged to allow Iraqi refugees to enter, at least on a temporary basis, and the international community will have an obligation to help such host governments cope with the refugee influx. [...]

In the north, a good harvest in 2002 has allowed most Iraqis (particularly Kurds, Assyrians, and Turkmen) to build up a reserve of food sufficient to last them from three weeks to three months should war occur in 2003. Families in the northern zone also receive their rations from the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) in accordance with the Oil for Food program (which allows the Iraqi government to trade oil for food and other commodities).

In the central and southern regions of Iraq, where the population is made up of Shi'a Muslims, Sunni Muslims, and Turkmen, the potential for humanitarian crisis is much more acute. There are few NGOs operating and they will have difficulty responding if the current governmental food distribution is disrupted for any reason. Nearly twenty million people in these regions receive rations on a monthly basis from the government. Possibly tens of thousands of people who are critically dependent on rations will be facing serious food shortages from the very first day a potential conflict interrupts government distributions in central and southern Iraq. Over the last two months, the Iraqi government has provided the populace with double rations in anticipation of war. However, information from inside Iraq indicates that these rations will, at best, suffice for a brief time.

There are also reports that poorer Iraqis have sold their rations to raise capital for important other needs, including medicine and the cost of possible flight from their cities." (HRW, Feb 02, pp2-4)

"UNICEF estimates that over 18 million people out of an estimated population of 26 million are food insecure in Iraq and "even a short-term interruption in basic services that would follow a conflict in Iraq" would have very negative effects on their lives [...].

A war situation, which may also involve the destruction of transportation facilities, ports, bridges and warehouses would likely lead to rapidly increasing food prices in the markets. That situation, coupled with the fact that most of the urban Iraqi population are dependent on government rations and would be unlikely to cope with food shortages without immediate and massive emergency assistance, means that war would most certainly have a massive negative impact on the civilian population." (IST 30 Jan 03, p8)

See also **International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)**, 8 October 2002, A New Refugee Crisis in Iraq? Uncertain Risks, Inadequate Preparation, [[External Link](#)]

### **Internally displaced persons' living conditions in northern Iraq are lower than the ones of the rest of the population in the North (2001-2002)**

"The initial report of the [UN Habitat] survey of internally displaced persons has been finalized, and work is about to begin on a second stage, consisting of more in-depth interviews. The preliminary findings are that, while conditions vary considerably, about 40 per cent of internally displaced persons live in settlements with standards of water and electricity supplies, sanitation, drainage and road access that are below average for the area. Most internally displaced persons have, on the other hand, acceptable access to the food basket, education and, in most cases, health care." (UN SC 2 March 2001, para. 135)

"On December 4 [2000], the executive director of the U.N. Office of the Iraq Program (OIP) told the Security Council he was "greatly concerned with the increasing number of internally displaced persons, 'whose living conditions in some cases were 'abominable.'" (HRW 2002)

The Iraq Foundation reported that the displaced have been stripped of their possessions and papers, and have no access to shelter, food or work "The deportation of Kurds and Turkoman from areas under government control, and particularly from the Kirkuk governorate, has left over 100,000 people from northern areas homeless and destitute. The deportees have been stripped of their possession and papers, and have no access to shelter, food or work. The Kurdish regional administrations in Erbil and Suleimaniya are having difficulty sheltering and feeding such large numbers of people. The situation of those deported to areas under government control, such as Al-Anbar, are in even worse shape, as they are still under government surveillance and victims of both deprivation and persecution." (The Iraq Foundation 26 January 2001)

According to UN-Habitat survey in January 2001, "There is only 47.85% of the sites [ie collective towns, self-built houses and tent camps] that are provided with the entire range of needed facilities, that can be

considered as the minimum standard. 32.43% are lacking in one, 12.39% in two, etc. 1212 individuals live in sites with no services at all. These sites are mainly concentrated in Duhok and Erbil regions, on the contrary in Sulaimaniyah and Darbandikhan areas IDP sites are provided with better services.[...]

Finally the levels of settlement services (water, electricity, sanitation, drainage and road) range from 1 to 10 (where 10 is given the highest possible level of services available in an IDP settlement). Some 38.8% of IDP population is located in settlements, whose index is less than 6. The worst settlement conditions occur in Erbil area." (UN-Habitat Jan 2002, p6)

## **Health & Nutrition**

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### **Difficult to assess adequacy of health services for IDPs in northern Iraq (2002)**

"The adequacy of health services for the displaced people is difficult to judge. UN-Habitat mentions in their survey that 12,000 displaced families, about eight percent of the total, have no access to health centers (It is not clear from where Habitat got this number). In the survey, access to health centers, primary, secondary, and intermediate schools, a market place, and public transportation are combined to form a "site service index." Nearly half of all people had access to all of these services, 80 percent access to five of the six and only 7 percent had access to fewer than four of these services. However as there is no breakdown as to which services were lacking, the information is of less use than it might have been." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p21)

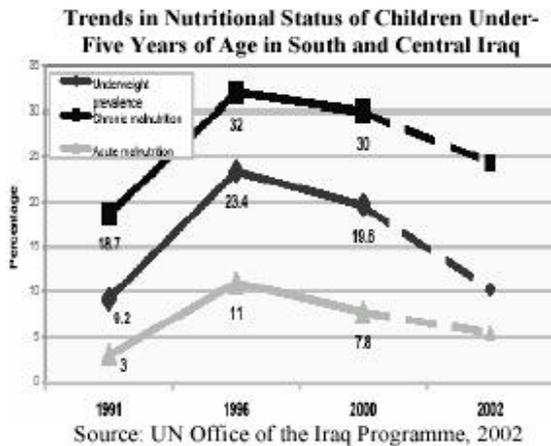
### **Close to one million children are chronically malnourished in Iraq (2002-2003)**

- Acute and general malnutrition are now less than half the levels of 1996, while chronic malnutrition has fallen by nearly 30% during the same period
- While results are encouraging, Iraqi children are by no means in a stable or appropriate nutritional state

"Following the 1991 Gulf War and twelve years of sanctions, Iraqi families do not yet possess food security. Agricultural production has been hampered by economic sanctions, while imports under the Oil-for-Food Program have increased household dependency on government distributed food rations. Many families' food intake remains nutritionally poor, with inadequate caloric, protein and micronutrient value.

Entitlement and access to food has been hindered by the fact that the majority of Iraqi families are now very poor. Most have long since exhausted household financial resources, and are now living day-to-day under conditions of extreme poverty.

Importantly, existing social, economic, and nutritional data indicate that Iraqi children are now more vulnerable to malnutrition than they were before the 1991 Gulf War." (IST 30 Jan 03, p6)



(in IST 30 Jan 02, p12)

"[P]reliminary figures from a UNICEF-supported survey carried out in February 2002 show that acute and general malnutrition are now less than half the levels of 1996, while chronic malnutrition has fallen by nearly 30% during the same period. This decline should be seen in the context of the overall humanitarian programme in Iraq, including the UNICEF-supported Targeted Nutrition Programme (TNP). Despite gains, the present level of child malnutrition remains high compared to 1991 levels, which were already elevated after one year of sanctions." (UNICEF 21 Nov 2002, "Overview")

"UNICEF attributes the improvements to:

- The continuing expenditure by Iraq of the majority of oil-for-food money on food
- The UN lifting of a cap on oil sales
- The success of nutrition screening in Community Child Care Units
- Two good years of rainfall and bumper crops" (UNICEF 21 Nov 02, "Malnutrition")

"The decline in malnutrition rates over the past five years is due to multiple factors, including an increase in the caloric content of the government ration; gradually decreasing rates of diarrheal disease; modest improvements to the health sector; implementation of the Targeted Nutrition Program (supplementary and therapeutic feeding); breastfeeding promotion, and improved immunization coverage (according to UNICEF).

While these results are encouraging, and there is no question that some improvement in nutritional status has taken place, Iraqi children are by no means in a stable or appropriate nutritional state. One quarter of Iraqi children under-five years of age (close to one million children) are chronically malnourished." (IST 30 Jan 02, pp12-13)

"Surveys carried out by UNICEF during 2001 show that almost one-third of children in the south and centre of Iraq suffer from chronic malnutrition. Other issues of concern in the health sector include low exclusive breast feeding rates, high bottle feeding rates, and high prevalence of anaemia among women, high incidence of low birth weight contribute to Iraq's very high child mortality rates - 131 per 1000 live births in the south and centre of Iraq (1999) - a rate comparable to that of Pakistan or Haiti. Diarrhoea leading to death from dehydration and acute respiratory infection (ARI), together account for 70 per cent of child deaths." (UNICEF 29 May 2002, 1)

"Moreover, many diseases which are locally endemic, such as malaria, cholera, visceral leishmaniasis, intestinal parasitic infestations and hepatitis have been reported to be re-emerging." (UNICEF Feb 02)

**UNICEF survey found that child mortality increased in government-controlled Iraq while decreasing slightly in northern Iraq (1999)**

- In government-controlled Iraq infant mortality increased from 47 to 108 deaths per 1000 live births, while child mortality (under five years of age) increased from 56 to 131 deaths per 1,000 live births between the 1984-89 and 1994-1999 periods
- In autonomous northern Iraq, infant mortality decreased from 64 to 59 deaths per 1000 live births, while child mortality decreased from 80 to 72 deaths per 1,000 live births between the same periods
- The presence of humanitarian organizations in the north as well as the policies of the Iraq government are elements to explain discrepancy between north and south

"UNICEF, comparing the 1984-89 and 1994-99 periods in the government-controlled center and south of the country, found that infant mortality had increased from 47 to 108 deaths per 1000 live births, while child mortality (under five years of age) had increased from 56 to 131 deaths per 1,000 live births—a rapid and sustained increase in infant and child mortality rates that was virtually unprecedented. UNICEF reported, by contrast, declining mortality rates in the northern autonomous governorates." (HRW December 1999, "Human Rights Developments")

*Survey in the 15 southern governorates*

**Infant mortality rate**

the probability of dying between birth and exact age one year

**Under-five mortality rate**

the probability of dying between birth and exact age five

**Table 3: Infant and under-five mortality rates per 1000 live births, by five-year period preceding the survey, Iraq\* 1999**

Period preceding survey (in years)	Infant mortality rate (‰)	Under-five mortality rate (‰)
0-4 (1994-1999)	107.9	130.6
5-9 (1989-1994)	78.9	91.5
<b>10-14 (1984-1989)</b>	<b>47.1</b>	<b>56.0</b>
15-19 (1979-1984)	54.1	67.1

\* Excluding the autonomous region of Dulssak, Erbil and Al-Najaf governorates.  
(Five year periods are from March to March, e.g. March 1994 to March 1999)

(UNICEF 27 August 1999, "Survey in the 15 southern governorates," p.9)

**Table 3: Infant and under-five mortality rates per 1000 live births, by five-year period preceding the survey, Dohuk, Erbil and Al-Sulaymaniyah governorates, 1999**

Period preceding survey (in years)		Infant mortality rate (‰)	Under-five mortality rate (‰)
0-4	(1994-1999)	58.7	71.8
5-9	(1989-1994)	71.5	89.5
<b>10-14</b>	<b>(1984-1989)</b>	<b>63.9</b>	<b>80.2</b>
15-19	(1979-1984)	73.8	104.4

(UNICEF 27 August 1999, "3 autonomous northern governorates, p.9)

#### ***How to explain discrepancy between North and South?***

"The UN has reported that, despite Iraqi claims of infant malnutrition, the government of Iraq has ordered only a fraction of the nutrition supplies for vulnerable children and pregnant and nursing mothers recommended by the UN and for which money has been set aside under the oil-for-food program. Only \$1.7 million of \$25 million set aside for nutritional supplements has been spent by Iraq. In the past eighteen months, Iraq has ordered no nutritional supplements. The United Nations has reported that \$200 million worth of medicines and medical supplies sit undistributed in Iraqi warehouses." (US DOS 13 September 1999, "Iraqi Obstruction")

"Although food availability has increased since 1997 following SCR 986, nutritional problems continue to exist. Reasons for this include prolonged reliance of the population on a nutritionally inadequate and unvaried diet, the inability of the agricultural sector to make up this shortfall, particularly in view of the current drought, the dilapidation of the economy, underemployment and low incomes, poor quality of essential service delivery, unhealthy lifestyles and practices, and infection and disease." (FAO September 2000, p.36)

"In the north of the country, where the Oil-for-Food Programme is implemented by the UN-Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme on behalf of the Government of Iraq with the participation of FAO and WFP, there have been 'significant improvements in the nutritional situation.' Acute malnutrition has almost been eliminated and infant and child mortality rates have fallen, largely because the region is more self-sufficient in food and receives far greater assistance per person. Additionally, focus here is given to targeted nutrition programmes, food production, growth promotion and the early detection of malnutrition among children under five." (FAO 13 September 2000)

"In short, nutrition and health care were declining in government-controlled Iraq, but improving in the northern autonomous zone. The presence of international humanitarian organizations in the north accounted, in part, for the better health of the Kurdish population there. Even so, UNICEF noted that 'chronic malnutrition has remained at about 24 percent over the past six months [in the north], which is comparatively high for the region'." (USCR 2000)

***For a broader discussion on disparities in Northern Iraq and Government-controlled Iraq, please see [Internal link], "UNICEF and other UN officials highlight reasons for North-South economic disparities (2000)"***

#### **Spread of infectious disease due to lack of drinking water and adequate sewage systems in government-controlled Iraq (1999-2003)**

- UNICEF reported in 2002 continued lack of essential public services, poor water supplies and resulting diarrhoeal infections
- Over half of the rural population did not have adequate access to clean drinking water according to UNICEF/government survey conducted in 1997 which had led to the rapid spread of infectious diseases, such as cholera
- Hospitals and health centers have been without repairs since 1991
- Internally displaced persons camps in southern Iraq have open sewage, which has an important potential for disease

"The Gulf War and twelve years of economic sanctions have had a devastating effect on Iraq's health infrastructure, resulting in a significant decline in the health and well being of Iraqi children [...]. Death rates of children under five have more than doubled over the past decade, with 70 percent of deaths attributed to diarrheal disease and respiratory tract infections [according to UNICEF]. Marginal gains in health services under the Oil-for-Food Program (OFFP) are having a limited impact on child morbidity and mortality in south/central Iraq due in part to persistent deficiencies in the water and sanitation sectors. In addition, inefficiencies and delays in the procurement of essential medicines and medical equipment under the OFFP are resulting in frequent shortages and reduced capacity within hospitals and health clinics. While there have been improvements in immunization coverage and malnutrition rates in the past several years, overall Iraqi children are much more vulnerable to starvation, death and disease than they were in 1990." (IST 30 Jan 03, p11)

"Essential public services have continued to suffer from a lack of maintenance and resulting in decreasing capacity and efficiency, and rapidly increasing demand through population growth. (Some 16 million in 1990 compared to 22 million in 2000). Poor water supplies both in terms of quality and quantity and inadequate sanitation services contribute to frequent and repeated diarrhoeal infections. Environmental pollution further compounds the problem. Additionally, 500,000MT of raw sewerage is discharged directly into fresh water each day; 300,000MT of this discharged into rivers in Baghdad. Access to safe water in rural areas has dropped to just 41%. Per capita share of safe clean water has also decreased from 330 to 218 litres per day in Baghdad, while in rural areas, the capita share to those who have access dropped from 91 to less than 18 litres per day. It is therefore not surprising that each Iraqi child under 5 years of age suffers an average of 14 diarrhoeal episodes per year - a five-fold increase from pre-1990 figures." (UNICEF 29 May 2002)

"Another major threat to the health of the population is the quality of the drinking water. The Gulf war severely damaged Iraq's infrastructure, interrupting the power supply and consequently the operation of pumping and treatment facilities. Since then, money and spare parts have not been available to repair sewage works and purification plants, which are often working at reduced capacity, or not at all. This has led to an overall deterioration in the quality and quantity of drinking water and the rapid spread of infectious diseases, such as cholera.

A UNICEF/government of Iraq survey in 1997 on the availability of water and sewage systems reported that more than half of the rural population did not have adequate access to clean drinking water, while for sewage disposal some 30% of the total population, predominantly in rural areas, were without adequate services. Much of the waste is discharged directly into rivers and streams, so that much of the water supplied is contaminated or below acceptable standards.

The low availability of power, averaging 50% in rural areas, frequent cuts and unstable supply place an additional strain on the installed electrical equipment. This, added to the fact that the chemicals used to purify the water contain around 30 times more impurities than before the embargo, leads to premature deterioration of the equipment, which subsequently requires more maintenance. [...]

For the first time in decades, diarrhoea has reappeared as the major killer of children. The highly specialized Iraqi doctors are now faced with third-world health problems – malnutrition, diphtheria, cholera – which they were not trained to handle." (ICRC 14 March 2000, II)

"According to the report [of the humanitarian panel established on 30 January 1999 by the UN Security Council], hospitals and health centers have remained without repairs and maintenance since 1991 and the 'functional capacity of the health care system has degraded further by shortages of water and power supply, lack of transportation and the collapse of the telecommunications system.'" (AI 24 November 1999, "Background")

"In areas where the Iraqi government had not installed or not improved functioning water and sewage treatment facilities in the past, the current sanctions-era impoverishment has prevented current improvements. Thus the 1980s-built internally displaced persons camps, primarily in the south of Iraq, have running streams of raw sewage between housing blocs, and pond-size pools of untreated standing sewage water with enormous potential for disease." (AFSC 21 March 2000 "Humanitarian Effect of Economic Sanctions")

### **In the South, government limited access to food, medicine, drinking water and transportation for Shi'a Arabs (1999-2000)**

- Iraqi government burned hundreds of square miles and drained the marshes in the south, supposedly to increase agricultural production
- Thousands of persons were denied rations supposed to be supplied under the U.N. oil-for-food program and had limited access to food, medicine, drinking water and transportation.
- As a result the humanitarian condition of Shi'a in the south continued to suffer despite the expansion of the oil-for-food program

The military also continued its water-diversion and other projects in the south. Observers gave little credence to the Government's claim that the drainage is part of a land reclamation plan to increase the acreage of arable land and spur agricultural production. Hundreds of square miles have been burned in military operations. The U.N. Special Rapporteur has noted the serious detrimental impact that draining the marshes has had on the culture of the Shi'a marsh Arabs. The SCIRI [Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq] claims to have captured government documents that detail the destructive intent of the water-diversion program and its connection to 'strategic security operations,' economic blockade, and 'withdrawal of food supply agencies.'

In addition the regime's diversion of supplies in the south limited the Shi'a population's access to food, medicine, drinking water, and transportation. According to the U.N. Special Rapporteur and opposition sources, thousands of persons in Nasiriyah and Basra provinces were denied rations that should have been supplied under the U.N. oil-for-food program. In these provinces and in Amarah province, access to food allegedly is used to reward regime supporters and silence opponents. Shi'a groups report that, due to this policy, the humanitarian condition of Shi'a in the south continued to suffer despite a significant expansion of the oil-for-food program." (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, g.")

## **Shelter**

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## **Deterioration of shelter conditions for the internally displaced in northern Iraq (2000-2002)**

- According UN Habitat 2001, in the 805,505 people accounted for in the UN-Habitat survey, the majority, 446,000 people, live in 'collective towns'
- Thousands of people expelled from Kirkuk live in tent or abandoned military facilities (2002)
- Internally displaced persons in northern Iraq live in tents or in open, unheated public buildings
- Head of UN Programs in Iraq concerned about the increasing number of internally displaced and the lack of housing possibilities for the new comers

"Of the 805,505 people accounted for in the UN-Habitat survey, the majority, 446,000 people, live in 'collective towns.' These are purpose-built settlements that the regime constructed in the lowlands during the 1970s and 1980s to accommodate and control the people expelled from the 4,000 or so villages it had destroyed. Many of these settlements are in an advanced state of decay, and many have insufficient infrastructure. Others, however, are on the outskirts of cities and towns and have started to blend into them; the displaced population in these settlements has come to rely on the services and infrastructure of the existing urban centers.

Another 301,000 people live in homes and apartments both in villages and cities. As of October 2000, this left about 57,000 people living in barracks or other buildings not constructed for permanent family accommodation. Of this 57,000 people, 6,366 were living in tents.

The international aid community has assisted approximately 35,000 people with their shelter needs. In order to provide everyone with decent housing, UN-Habitat estimated that 26,290 new housing units needed to be built. Nearly 10,000 of these would be for the aforementioned 57,000 people living in tents and inadequate buildings. The other housing units would be built to relieve overcrowding of displaced persons in the collective towns, villages and cities.[...]

Of the 6,366 living in tents, the majority, 4,069, were returnees from Iran, 1,950 were victims of Arabization, and 347 had fled or been expelled from their homes as a result of Kurdish infighting. Nevertheless they have attracted considerable local and international media attention. New expellees from the Center/South are directed to these tent camps, run by the KRG, as their first place of refuge and by some accounts remain there for up to two years.

It is not clear why people must live in tented camps for such extended periods of time.[...]

The reasons why these people are spending inordinate amounts of time in what are ostensibly reception camps may be:

Foot-dragging or incompetence within the UN agencies, as suggested in USG Sevan's report;

The governing authorities of the KRG are trying to maintain visible and demonstrable examples of the expulsions resulting from the government of Iraq's Arabization campaign.

Two-thirdsAccording to the Habitat survey, two-thirds of the people are returnees from Iran, and their original home is in other areas of Iraq. They have no local affinitysupport network to draw upon, and no aid agency takes them on.

Over the past six months living conditions in most of these camps have improved. Sanitation and water supply show marked improvement. Electrification projects are in process, and education and health care plans are underway. All of this is due to the activities of the recently established IDP unit in UNOPS." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 2002, pp19-21)

"According to Kurdish sources, "Thousands of Kurdish and some Turkoman Iraqis expelled from Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Sinjar live in tent cities near Chamchamal, or in temporary housing in Kifri and Kalar, as well as in abandoned Iraqi military facilities in Irbil and Sulaymaniyah." (RFE/RL 26 April 2002)

"Shelter and infrastructure conditions in rural and urban settlements of northern Iraq have deteriorated to critical levels in the aftermath of the Gulf Crisis. This situation has been compounded by problems arising from previous population movements in the north and the return of families to rural villages; the increase of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in recent months; the sheltering of large numbers of IDPs in inadequate buildings without a minimum of services and facilities; the continuous deterioration of urban and semi-urban areas due to lack of supplies for essential operation and maintenance; and the inability of families settled or returning to rural centres to support themselves.

As a result, there is a clear need to undertake humanitarian rehabilitation activities which enable the sustainability of resettled centres, focusing on access roads, essential infrastructure to support productive activities, water supply and sanitation and the construction of community facilities such as health centres and schools. The experience gained in the implementation of previous programmes also points to the need for a greater emphasis on establishing community-based methods for project implementation.

The population increase and limited land available in rural areas also restricts the number of people that can return to rural villages in the medium-term. This creates a humanitarian need for maintaining selected basic services and infrastructure in certain collective towns to serve those families that do not have resettlement alternatives as well as to accommodate new IDPs. A case by case approach is applied to define the humanitarian rehabilitation actions to be carried out in these settlements.

Cities and towns in the northern Governorates are home to near 2 million people. Approximately 1.1 million people inhabit the three capital cities, Suleimaniyeh (480,000), Erbil (440,000) and Dohouk (190,000). Urban settlements with previously satisfactory coverage of infrastructure and services have witnessed a dramatic decline in their quality and coverage in recent years.

The situation of IDPs is of great concern in northern Iraq. Most of them, including widows and children, live under precarious conditions in public buildings and provisional shelter." (UNCHS December 2000)

"Just a few miles outside Sulaymaniyya [...] [i]n makeshift tents, with open pits for waste disposal, displaced Kurdish families, or fractions of families, survive on UN rations. This particular camp is called New Kirkuk, because people thrown out of Kirkuk by the Iraqi army arrive by the dozens almost every day." (Aquilla Lawrence Summer 2000)

"In a briefing to the Security Council last Monday, Benon Sevan, who directs all of the United Nations programs in Iraq that are not related to weapons, said he was 'greatly concerned with the increasing numbers of internally displaced person.' He said conditions at refugee centers were 'abominable.' [...]

At refugee camp at Kani Shaitan, east of Kirkuk in Kurdish territory, 1,375 people, 994 of them children, have been crowded into a settlement built for 550 people. People continue to arrive at the camp, officials say, sometimes in groups that appear to have been driven out of government-controlled regions en masse.

'Unfortunately, the number of families at the Kani Shaitan camp appear to be increasing,' Mr. Sevan said. Arrivals are getting ahead of efforts to build homes for newcomers. At another nearby camp, Chamchamal, plans to build nearly 500 houses in time for the harsh winter of mountainous northern Iraq have been held up by a dearth of materials. In other settlements the United Nations has been putting up tents and supplying them with heaters. The latest report of the United Nations program under which Iraq exports unlimited quantities of oil to buy civilian goods says the presence of so many refugees is taxing the ability of the United Nations housing agency, Habitat. Housing experts are looking for ways to encourage local builders to provide labor and material for crash programs." (Crossette 11 December 2000)

## **ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

### **General**

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#### **A quarter of Iraqi children are no longer attending school (May 2002)**

"The Government of Iraq now acknowledges that at least 23 per cent of all school-aged children (6-15 years of age) are no longer attending school; many are working to supplement family incomes. Schools are not being maintained and repaired, and experience severe shortages of basic school supplies, classroom furniture, textbooks and teaching aids. Lack of adequate investment in teacher training, and in teaching and learning materials has seriously affected the overall quality of education. Teachers' salaries are grossly inadequate. This grim situation has prompted an increasing number of qualified teachers to leave the sector in search of better-paid jobs. This has also been reflected in school entry rates: only 66.8 per cent of male and 66.6 per cent of female students at the age of six were enrolled in 2000 against 88 per cent and 87 per cent respectively in 1991." (UNICEF 29 May 2002)

## ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Self-reliance

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#### **SCF-Survey: 60% of the population of Northern Iraq is poor, and 20 percent are totally reliant on the WFP food rations (2002)**

##### **"20% live in extreme poverty, defined as under \$150 per household per annum**

20% of the total population of Northern Iraq is living in extreme poverty, bordering on destitution, with incomes of US \$120 to \$200 per household per annum (phpa). Most of the very poor live in the households of widows, the disabled and the elderly, living in towns and collectives. They are entirely reliant on the WFP food ration and have virtually no other access to income, with the exception of casual labour and internal gifts from their respective communities.

##### **40% live in poverty, defined as under \$300 phpa.**

In addition to the 20% in extreme poverty, 40% of the total population of Northern Iraq is living in poverty. There is a slight increase in income of US \$250 to \$300 phpa. Income is generated from agricultural production, agricultural and casual labour, regular low-paid employment and access to small amounts of often rented land (1 to 4 donums).

##### **Many middle income groups have incomes under \$400 phpa, and may be at risk**

There is a further 25% of the urban population which was defined as having medium wealth. Significant income is gained through regular employment as civil servants, teachers, drivers, etc. A large amount of income is gained through taking loans and using past savings. For the 36% of villagers in this medium group, the main income sources come from crop and livestock production. However a proportion of the middle groups are also at risk (half the communities visited had average incomes of less than \$400 phpa.) [...]

##### **Most households are extremely vulnerable to external shocks, including unplanned changes in the sanctions system**

The poorest population makes up 60% of the total population of Northern Iraq. It is extremely vulnerable to external 'shocks'. These shocks include droughts, price increases, external or internal conflict, and natural disasters. They also include any unplanned changes to the ration system created by UN Security Council Resolution 986. They have little (if any) capacity to expand to other coping strategies and economic activities." (SCF 2002, pp39-40)

### Public Participation

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#### **IDPs living under Iraqi government control demonstrated at UN headquarters in northern Iraq (January 2002)**

- IDPs asked the UN to urgently provide aid and relief services and to pressure the Iraqi government to halt expulsion from Kurdish areas under government control

"Scores of IDPs (internally displaced persons) protesting the Iraqi policy of displacing Kurds and other non-Arab communities in Kurdish areas which are under the control of Baghdad, held a demonstration

outside UN headquarters in Sulaymaniyah on 30 December, reported the "Iraqi Kurdistan Dispatch" on 10 January.

The demonstrators, mostly from the Bardaqaram camp for displaced people, demanded that the UN take urgent action to provide aid and relief services and called on the UN secretary-general to pressure 'the Iraqi government to halt the ethnic-cleansing campaign against citizens of the Kurdistan region which is still under its control.'

Iraqi authorities have intensified the policy of displacement with the aim of arabizing Kurdish regions under their control, particularly in the Kirkuk region. Arab families from southern Iraq are settled in the place of Kurds who are expelled either to the KRG-controlled region or to the south of Iraq.

UN agencies are acting in Kurdish-held areas on behalf of the Iraqi authorities as stipulated by the memorandum of understanding signed between Iraq and the UN. The head of the PUK-led KRG government directed Minister for Human Rights Salah Rashid to raise the urgent needs of the victims with UN agencies' representatives in the region.

The Kurdish daily 'Kurdistan Nuwe' of 7 January reported that Baghdad authorities have informed the Kirkuk Governor's Office to be prepared for the displacement of another 575 Kurdish families who will be forcibly removed from the city. According to unofficial estimates, more than 200,000 Kurds have been expelled from the Baghdad-held Kurdish areas in the region in the past 10 years to the KRG. There are no data available on the number of Kurds expelled to southern Iraq.

Nor are the Kurds the only ones to protest Baghdad's arabization policy. The bimonthly Iraqi Turkmen newspaper 'Qardashlyq Yolu' of 8 December published by the Turkmen Brotherhood Party, complained of another displacement in Kirkuk, saying that 'the displacement cycle will continue until the end of all national existence of the peoples of Iraqi Kurdistan. This policy does not reflect anything but a hostile racist policy with illusionary success for its oppression and inhumanity.'

'Qardashlyq Yolu' reports that Baghdad has resettled more than 20 Chechen families near Kirkuk. The newspaper claims this is part of the regime's plan of 'deforming the demographic characteristics of the regions of Kurdistan.' " (RFE/RL 18 Jan 2002)

## DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

### General

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#### **Iraqi government is destroying evidence that Kurdish families were expelled from Kirkuk (August 2001)**

"[...] in August 2001, the Ministry of the Interior sent a document to the Department of Statistics demanding that during the expulsion of any family from Kirkuk, false names and numbers should be written on the documents that are usually issued for them by the governorate office to the checkpoints, and that the documents should not be registered in their records.

[The Sulaymaniyah Kurdish newspaper] 'Kurdistani Nuwe' believes that the intention behind these measures is to destroy any evidence that the Iraqi government has expelled Kurdish families from Kirkuk in case of accountability by official sides, particularly the United Nations. In this way, Iraq could easily deny the allegation." (RFE/RL 14 September 2001)

#### **Ethnic minority members forced to choose between signing a form correcting their nationality or being expelled (2000-2002)**

- Many Kurds and Turkoman families in Mosul and Kirkuk expelled to northern Iraq for failing to sign form
- In Sept 2001 the Iraqi government passed Resolution No. 199 giving all non-Arab Iraqis over 18 the right to change their ethnic identity to that of Arab

"In 1999, Baghdad continued its systematic efforts to 'Arabize' the predominantly Kurdish districts of Kirkuk, Khanaqin, and Sinjar at the edge of government-controlled Iraq near the Kurdish-controlled zone. To solidify control of this strategically and economically vital oil-rich region, the government expelled Kurds, Assyrians, and Turkomans—at times, entire communities—from these cities and surrounding areas. At the same time, the government offered financial and housing incentives to Sunni Arabs to persuade them to move to Kirkuk and other cities targeted for Arabization. New Arab settlements were constructed on expropriated Kurdish land holdings.

In 1999, Baghdad gave a name to its Arabization program: 'nationality correction.' The government began requiring ethnic minority civil servants to sign a form correcting their nationality. Persons refusing to sign the forms—for example, a Kurd refusing to 'correct' his nationality and list himself as an Arab rather than a Kurd—would be subject to expulsion to northern Iraq or the no-fly zone in the south. During the year, Kurds and Turkoman families in Mosul and Kirkuk were reportedly expelled to northern Iraq for failure to sign the forms. Although the Arabization campaign was not publicized, sources in northern Iraq reported that more than 2,000 people were expelled to the northern region between January and November." (USCR 2000)

"On the 6th September 2001, in an unprecedented move, the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council – which ranks higher than the so-called Iraqi Parliament – passed Resolution No. 199 giving all non-Arab Iraqis over 18 the right to change their ethnic identity to that of Arab. Such a decision is contrary to all the principles of human rights and is politically motivated. Its purpose is to compel all non-Arabs in Iraq to

adopt an Arab ethnic identity. This law legalizes the regime's policy of ethnic cleansing directed against all Kurds, Turkmans and Assyro-Chaldeans.

For decades, the Iraqi regime has continued to deport tens of thousands of Kurdish families from that part of Kurdistan still under its control to either the Kurdish controlled area of Kurdistan or to southern Iraq and has confiscated their properties and belongings, including their identity cards. The choice facing these people was deportation or the enforced change of ethnic identity. This law, which legalizes such acts, is in direct violation even of the Iraqi Provisional Constitution of 1970, Article 19/A of which states that all Iraqis are equal, regardless of ethnic language, religion or social class.

Furthermore, Article 5/B of that Constitution states that the people of Iraq is composed of two main ethnic groups, Arabs and Kurds, and recognizes the rights of the Kurds and other minorities. This decision of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council effectively divides the population according to ethnicity. It favours one group over the other and gives a higher status to Arabs.

It should also be remembered that this Resolution is in direct contravention of Article 18 of the International Charter of Civil and Political Rights adopted by the UN in February 1966. Just as everyone has the right to their place in a family line, so every person has an inalienable right to his claim of ethnic identity, but Resolution No.199 makes no distinction between ethnic identity and nationality." (KTRS 27 Jan 2002)

*For more information on the "Arabization policy", please see [\[Internal link\]](#), "Eviction of Kurds but also of Turkmens and Assyrians from the Kirkuk area (1997-2001)"*

## ISSUES OF FAMILY UNITY, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

### General

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#### **Kurds displaced to northern Iraq are less and less welcome by tribe members and local authorities (2000)**

- Sharing the tribe, the culture, the past, the displaced were welcome in the beginning
- As numbers continually rose, people coming from government-controlled areas were not very much tolerated by both the locals and the authorities
- Due to the hard living conditions of the displaced, splitting of families is quite common

"The displacement had of course serious effects not only on the individuals, but also on social relations. Those who left Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah and Arbil found themselves in new places and in a new atmosphere. People residing in those places were confronted with a challenge for accommodation, food and jobs. While their future had not been secure before, they suddenly found a new neighbours that maybe they never would have liked to have. Sharing the tribe, the culture, the past, these people were welcome in the beginning. However, as numbers continually rose, people coming from the government-controlled areas around Kirkuk to Arbil were not very much tolerated by both the locals and the authorities. The locals started to keep distance from the newcomers. The IDP situation is more or less at the limit. The KDP immediately took measures, requiring the IDPs to abide by given conditions, if they wanted to stay. Therefore the Arabs as well as those Kurds and Turkmen who were obliged to leave government-controlled areas preferred to go to Sulaymaniyah where they could find better social conditions. Displacement is defecting individuals very much since they are losing all or most of their social connections. This, however, does not imply the total destruction of the tribal or ethnic identity in their families. In the KDP-controlled area the IDPs are mainly living in residential centers provided by the Kurdish authorities. The conditions there force them to find jobs of whatever kind. Unlike in the past, the splitting of families is quite common." (UNHCR/ACCORD 14 November 2000, p.58)

## PROPERTY ISSUES

### General

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#### **Ethnic Kurds who changed their identity to Arab received plots of land in certain areas only (September 2001)**

"In the beginning of August 2001 the Ba'th Party sent a document to branches within the Baghdad-controlled north demanding that Kurdish members of the Ba'th Party at the rank of 'party comrade' and who have changed their identity into Arab are included by the measures of the allocations of plots of land and party donations, but they should receive plots of land in the center or southern cities, but these should be outside the cities of Kirkuk, Mosul, Diyala, Tikrit and Baghdad.

However, all Kurdish Ba'th Party members who left the region controlled by the Kurdistan Regional Government after 1992, and who have changed their identities to Arab are deprived of all privileges, like allocation of rent and financial aid. "Kurdistani Nuwe" thinks this is because of their participation in the 1991 uprising. They are blamed for staying in Kurdistan after the uprising." (RFE/RL 14 Sept 2001)

#### **Kurdish party denounces Iraqi authorities' new decree on land compensation in Kirkuk (2001)**

According to the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan]: "The official newspaper of the Iraqi Governorate of Taameem [new name of Kirkuk province, which means "Nationalization"] published a new decree (AL TAAMEEM, June 25, 2001 edition) [...]: 'It has been decreed that all jurisdiction has been withdrawn from the courts relating to litigation cases seeking compensation for agricultural lands covered by the Development Plan in the Governorate of Taameem, including lands covered by the security of the Ministries of Defense and Oil. This decree makes null and void all claims of compensation for the relevant lands. It further voids all judicial decisions pertaining to those cases and cancels all the consequent remedies provided by the verdicts.'

A legal expert confirmed to Kurdistan Newline that the purpose of this decree is to deprive the Kurdish farmers from their lands which have been in their heritage for hundreds of years and preventing them from even leasing them for cultivation. Thus, the regime is confiscating Kurdish lands without compensation and distributes them free to Arabs, transplanted from South and Middle Iraq." (Kurdistan Newline 26 June 2001)

#### **Kurds are forced to sell homes to Arabs in Kirkuk (1999-2002)**

- Kurds are prevented from constructing, renovating, registering or inheriting property in Kirkuk (1999-2000)
- The Iraqi government will provide new housing and employment to more than 300,000 Arab residents resettled in Kirkuk (1999)
- Kurdish sources reported in 2002 that the Iraqi government has decided to allocate vast areas of land to Arabs exclusively and to auction government property in Kirkuk to ethnic Arabs only

- Kurdish sources also reported in 2002 that Arab families got piece of land for each dead member of family transported to Kirkuk

"Kurds [in Kirkuk] are reportedly not permitted to sell their homes to anyone other than Arabs. New construction or renovation of Kurdish property is said to be forbidden and Kurds are prevented from registering or inheriting properties. At the same time, Arab settlement is favoured. The Revolution Command Council has mandated that the State must provide new housing and employment to more than 300,000 Arab residents resettled in Kirkuk. In the past several months, at least seven new Arab settlements have been built in Kurdish areas on properties confiscated mainly from ethnic Kurds. The new settlements are given Arab names and local merchants are instructed to give their companies Arab names. Finally, the governorate's administrative offices are being moved to the Arabized side of the city, as are the headquarters of major professional and political organizations." (CHR 26 February 1999, para.26)

"Sulaymaniyah's 'Kurdistani Nuwe' on 30 November [2000] reported that Baghdad's Arabization program has intensified via the distribution of land to 80 Iraqi Arabs who will thus displace the local Turkmen and Kurdish population. The paper cited a report in the 27 November 'Sawt al-Ta'mim,' a newspaper which is under the control of the Iraqi government.

Lieutenant-General Sabah Nuri Alwan, the governor of Kirkuk (Al-Ta'mim), distributed the land deeds to 'those whose incomes are limited.' At the celebration accompanying the deed distribution, the recipients 'expressed their love and admiration to the leader, 'the Mujahid, Saddam Husseyn.'" (RFE/RL 15 December 2000, "Arabization in Kirkuk")

*According to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Kurdish-language daily "Kurdistan Nuwe", "the Iraqi government had recently begun construction of 200 houses to be reserved for Arab families transported from southern Iraq.[...]*

Since the beginning of this year, "Kurdistan Nuwe" reported, the Iraqi government has "decided to allocate vast areas of land" to Arabs exclusively. This land includes plots in between the Zewiya and Azadi districts, around the football stadium in Azadi, and between the Iskan and Karama districts. Land behind the Pepsi Cola plant in Rahim Awa is now allocated only "to the Arab [Ba'th] party comrades." Numerous Arab families have been relocated to the surrounding villages of Hafta Chashma, Omara Gada, and Qara Ways, the report said. The Regional Secretariat of the Ba'th Party has further ordered that ethnic Kurds may not purchase contracts for shops and businesses.

There are also reports in the Kurdistan Democratic Party's (KDP) press concerning the Iraqi government's continuing ethnic-cleansing campaign. The 19 April issue of the KDP Arabic-language daily "Khabat" reported: "Within the framework of the continuing Arabization policies implemented by the central [Iraqi] authorities in Kirkuk...the authorities decided to auction some of the government-owned houses in Kirkuk. Instructions allow only Arabs to buy these houses, preventing the indigenous Kurdish, Turkoman, and Assyrian inhabitants from doing so." The article continued, "Observers say that the city's Kurdish, Turkoman and Assyrian inhabitants are considered second-class citizens and are deprived of any legal or constitutional rights." (RFE/RL 26 April 2002)

"Citing an article in the KDP daily "Brayati," kurdishmedia.com reported on 2 April from Irbil that the Iraqi government has stepped up its "Arabization" campaign in Kirkuk, displacing increasing numbers of Kurdish, Turkoman, and Assyrian Iraqis, and confiscating their property. The measures include asking Arab settlers to move their dead relatives from the place where they came from, to Kirkuk. "The government has ordered each family of Arab settlers to move at least one of their dead relatives from the graveyards of their original place to a graveyard in Kirkuk," according to the "Brayati" report.

The report continues: "Each family gets a piece of land, as a present from the president, per each dead relative moved to Kirkuk. The Iraqi government has taken this extraordinary course because its policy of

ethnic cleansing doesn't work as it [is] supposed to.... As most Arab settlers leave to their original place after a while. It has been reported that many Arab settlers have sent apologies to people, who [were]cleansed from Kirkuk, for being forced to settle on their properties and offered to share the revenues of these properties with them." (RFE/RL 12 April 2002)

### **Iraqi Government's financial compensation to people displaced in the late 1980's denounced by Kurdish official (1999)**

"In a letter to the President of the UN Security Council, Dr. Barham Salih, Director of PUK's Bureau for International Relations, called on the international community to intercede with the Government of Iraq to end its ethnic cleansing campaign against the Kurdish inhabitants of Kirkuk, Khanaqin and other districts of Iraqi Kurdistan.

The letter cited a recent announcement by the Iraqi Governor of Kirkuk which was published in the ruling Ba'ath Party's daily newspaper, *al-Thawara*, in its issue number 9833 on August 25, 1999, calling on deportees from 89 villages and districts to meet with GOI authorities to receive 'financial compensation' for their confiscated land. The villages were destroyed by the GOI in the late 1980s and their inhabitants, overwhelmingly Kurdish, were forcibly deported and their land distributed to Arab settlers brought from southern and central Iraq.

Dr. Salih said 'the Iraqi announcement is an effort to finalize the dispossession of the Kurdish landowners by giving a semblance of legal authority to the Arabization campaign which is aimed at changing the demographic characteristics of these districts of Iraqi Kurdistan.'" (Kurdistan Newslines 13 September 1999, "PUK Urges U.N. to End Iraq's Ethnic Cleansing Campaign")

## **PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT**

### **Northern Iraq**

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#### **Return of IDPs to their homes is common in the North (2002)**

"Returns of displaced people to their homes are a common feature of life in the North. A majority of the people living in the North have been displaced at some point over the past 30 years, many more than once. Returns are on-going from the population displaced during the 1980s, by the Anfal campaign and the 1991 uprising. All the returns, however, are to homes and lands that are under the control of the KRG. Kurdistan Regional Government. For this population, the impediments to return are not of a security nature, aside from landmine pollution. Failure to return is more of an economic and social nature." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p23)

#### **Kurdish parties start to implement agreement of the return of internally displaced within northern Iraq (2001-2002)**

- Kurdish parties agreed in 1998 and again in 1999 to return people expelled from their home in northern Iraq but with no tangible result
- As of July 2001, following a new agreement between the Kurdish parties, over 120 displaced families had gone back home
- In Oct 2001, close to 600 families displaced within northern Iraq returned home
- According to USCR, some 1,300 families returned home between June and October 2001

"The KDP and PUK reiterated [in 1999] their September 1998 agreement to begin returning to their rightful homes the many thousands of persons that each had expelled as a result of intra-Kurdish fighting in the three northern provinces; however, no effort to implement the agreement was begun during the year. (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for civil liberties, c.")

"According to the agreement of the Higher Peace Committee between Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), yesterday 40 families from Arbil went back to Suleymania and 35 families from Suleymania went back to Arbil. More will follow soon.

Both parties have signed an agreement in Arbil, South Kurdistan capital, on 16th of this month, regarding the return of the displaced people between Arbil and Suleymania because of the exceptional circumstances."

The first returnees are those who do not have the problem of housing and property. They were all received at both sides by the concerned authorities and taken to their places with respect and dignity. [...]

Task forces have been established to ensure the returnees settle smoothly. (KurdishMedia.com 25 June 2001)

"Tomorrow on 8th of this month [July 2001], more displaced people are going back to their homes on their free choice. 52 families are coming back from Suleymania to Arbil and 55 families are going back from Arbil to Suleymania and its surroundings." (KurdishMedia.com 7 July 2001)

"Before similar number of displaced families returned home on both sides at the same time. But now, because of the strengthening of the peace, the Higher Coordinating Committee has decided to let this to take its natural course and neither side has to allocate a date to return any groups of displaced families. This is why yesterday for the first time the biggest number of families (279 of them) came back from Suleymania to Arbil. (200) more families will return home from Arbil to Suleymania this week.

Out of the 279 displaced families came back from Suleymania, 223 of them went to Arbil, 39 of them went to Shaqlawa, Soran, Harir and the surroundings and 6 families went to Akry and Dihoke. 118 Of these families in Arbil went back straight to their houses. In Suleymania and its surroundings, 83 houses of the displaced family have already been vacated to be given back to their owners this week.

According to a source from Joint Committee of displaced families, all farmlands, on both sides, have been freed for their owners and all returned families have gone back to their farm. The few, left, will soon receive back their property and farms." (KurdishMedia.com 21 Oct 2001)

"The PUK and KDP also began implementation of an October 1999 agreement that called for the return of displaced people within northern Iraq to their places of origin; between June and October [2001], some 1,300 families reportedly returned to their homes in Erbil, Dohuk, and Suleymaniyah." (USCR 2002)

### **In northern Iraq landmines prevent return (1998-2002)**

- Population of Northern Iraq has one of the more extensive landmine/unexploded ordnance problems in the world
- Northern Iraq was heavily mined during the Iran-Iraq war to protect the country from invasion
- The UN Office for Project Services said that many IDPs cannot return home because villages remain infested with mines
- Additional landmines were laid during the Kurdish uprising
- According to the UN Secretary General, landmines impede displaced persons from returning to their homes in northern Iraq but clearing these minefields would take between 35 and 75 years
- Return movements were however observed in 2000
- The Iraqi government has also mined the area around Kirkuk to prevent return of displaced families

"The population of the three northern governorates of Iraq faces one of the more extensive landmine/unexploded ordnance (UXO) problems in the world. Even though the exact number of mines is unknown, the national survey conducted by UNOPS up to September 2001 has identified 3,400 mined areas covering some 900 square kilometers of land required for reconstruction, resettlement, agricultural purposes and the rehabilitation of basic services such as electricity and water, affecting approximately 1100 communities.

In addition to medical and social consequences resulting from mine accidents and casualties, mines and unexploded ordnance have had a significant impact on socio-economic factors. Many displaced people now wish to return to their villages of origin and resume their normal life, farming their land, but entire villages are still infested with mines making it unsafe. In addition, the mine problem is having long-term negative repercussions on economic development making reconstruction of road networks, power lines and waterways more protracted, dangerous and costly. Lastly, mines impede the mobility of teachers, technicians, doctors and healthcare workers, undermining the rehabilitation process. Even where mines do not prevent food and medical aid from reaching people in need, they make already difficult operations even

more hazardous, and the associated security measures increase the cost of humanitarian relief." (UNOPS 2002)

"Northern Iraq (Kurdistan) is severely mine-affected. The region was heavily mined during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war as the conflict waged throughout the region. Prior to the Gulf War, Iraqi military resources were concentrated in the south, and the northern borders were mined to protect the country from invasion. During the post-war Kurdish uprising, additional landmines were laid in the northern region.

[...] The UN estimates that there are more than 10 million landmines and a large quantity of UXO [Unexploded Ordnance] in Iraqi Kurdistan. Of these landmines, 8 million are estimated to be antipersonnel and 2 million antitank. [...] Some minefields were mapped, but the army has since destroyed those records. [...] Landmines and UXO are concentrated in the northern Kurdish region, southern Iraq, and the area along the Iran and Kuwait borders, and are commonly found near water sources and in rural farmland. Mining was not restricted to borders; mines are known to be located throughout the northern region in such areas as Penjwin. In addition, the region near Basra in the southeast is heavily mined.

[...] Following the Gulf War, IDPs and refugees returned to the Kurdish region and settled in the mountainous, heavily mined area. Landmines continue to be the primary obstacle to economic productivity; their clearance and the restoration of the land are essential to the long-term economic self-sufficiency of the region. The presence of landmines has allowed only 50 percent of agricultural land to be cultivated in the region, and in the governorate of Sulaimania alone only 40 percent of the land is usable. Simple chores such as herding animals and collecting firewood have become life-endangering activities. [...]

The Iraqi government has no known program for demining. The demining activities that have been conducted in Iraq have been in the autonomous Kurdish region in the north." (U.S. DOS 1998)

"Landmines continued to make northern Iraq dangerous and impeded displaced persons from returning to their homes." (USCR 1999, p.152)

"The greatest concentration of mines in northern Iraq is located along the Iran-Iraq border, specifically in the districts of Penjwin, Sharbazher, and Qaladiza. A recently completed Landmine Impact Survey confirmed that all twenty-five districts in the three provinces (governorates) comprising northern Iraq are mine-affected, and 3,444 distinct areas suspected of mine and/or UXO contamination affect over 148,000 families (more than one in five) living in 1,096 mine-affected communities." (HRW Dec 02)

"Studies indicate that there are approximately 210 million square metres of minefields, disregarding minefields that continue to be added and new discoveries. These include 4.5 million square metres of minefields in Dohuk, 55.7 million square metres in Erbil and 149 square metres in Sulaymaniya. It is estimated that it will take between 35 and 75 years to clear those minefields. (UN SC 19 November 1998, Sect. IV)

*However, in 2000:* "It was [...] clear [...] that return movement within northern Iraq was occurring, and that some of the 4,500 Kurdish villages destroyed by Baghdad forces during the 'Anfal' campaign of the late 1980s were being rebuilt and reoccupied." (USCR 2001, p.180)

"Those expelled [from Kirkuk] are not permitted to return. The Special Rapporteur reported that citizens who provide employment, food or shelter to returning or newly arriving Kurds are subject to arrest. In order to encourage departure and prevent displaced persons from returning, the Government reportedly has mined the area around Kirkuk, and has declared it a military and security zone. Roads into the area are fortified with military checkpoints. " (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for civil liberties, c.")

## **Government-controlled Iraq**

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### **Forced return of families originally from the Provinces and living in Baghdad (1999)**

- Residents of the Kurdish provinces in the north and Shiite Muslims provinces of the south sought refuge in Baghdad after the 1991 Gulf War
- Iraqi government forced 4,000 families to return to their province of origin in 1999
- Opposition sources said that most of the people expelled were opponents to the regime

"More than 4,000 families from northern and southern Iraq who sought refuge in Baghdad after the 1991 Gulf War have been expelled to their provinces, Interior Minister Mohammed Zamam Abdel Razzak said.

'The interior ministry decided to move the families who poured into Baghdad since 1991 and took them back to their provinces of origin,' he was quoted by the weekly Al-Iilam as saying. Since the end of the Gulf War in 1991, 'thousands of families have left the northern and southern provinces, affecting the economic and social situation in Baghdad,' he told the Iraqi parliament.

'The interior ministry has set up a committee to criss-cross Baghdad to make a list of the families and sent them back to their original provinces,' he said. So far, the authorities have expelled 4,099 families from Baghdad, he said, without providing the total number of people moved.

Baghdad has a population of about five million. Residents of the Kurdish provinces in the north and Shiite Muslim provinces of the south flooded into Baghdad after the war because of instability in those regions." (AFP 27 November 1999)

"Opposition sources, however, contended that most of the expelled families were Kurds and Shi'a, many from the Al-Thawra neighborhood, the scene of an anti-regime riot in February. They said that the expulsions were aimed at preventing political unrest in the capital. They noted that persons displaced from President Hussein's hometown of Tikrit were not included in the expulsion order." (USCR 2000)

### **Return of Shi'a displaced could contribute to improve Shi'a and Sunni relations in Iraq (2002)**

- Return for Marsh Arabs may prove difficult due to the destruction of their natural habitat

"As a group, this is the smallest number of all the categories of displaced people in Iraq. Yet, in terms of political impact, the return of Shi'i displaced to their homes would be disproportionately large. The expulsions were an attempt to undermine Shi'i political opposition. This has fed into the history of modern relations between Shi'a and Sunni in Iraq, where the latter smaller group has ruled the former larger one. A publicized return of people to their homes and an acknowledgement of the injustice they suffered would not only defuse a grievance between the communities but would contribute to an atmosphere conducive to peaceful political action." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, pp41-42)

#### ***Return for Marsh Arabs may prove difficult due to the destruction of their natural habitat***

"Although it would be difficult to recreate the marshes, consultations should be held with the former inhabitants and a feasibility study done to see whether at least some of the marshes could be reflooded. For those who cannot return, compensation should be paid from oil revenues." (Cohen & Fawcett, 28 Dec 02)

## Disputes over property rights are likely to complicate return to Kirkuk (2002)

- Even if there is a new regime allowing return, return will be complicated by the deliberate destruction of documentation, as well as the potential Kurdish-Turkmen rivalry over Kirkuk

"When return to Kirkuk becomes possible, the length of time over which expulsions have occurred – some three decades and counting – will give rise to a set of painful, possibly intractable, complications over who should return where. Disputes over property rights – over land, over buildings – will be complicated by the deliberate destruction of deeds, cadasters and other documentation. Added tensions will stem from the use of economic assets, access to oil field employment and infrastructure management.

A specific concern is the potential Kurdish-Turkmen rivalry for political and economic control of Kirkuk. As noted above, in 1957, the date of the last reliable national census in Iraq, the Turkmen were a plurality of the population in Kirkuk City and the Kurds a plurality in the governorate as a whole. Aside from a politically manipulated riot in 1959 (it was in fact a Ba`thi-Communist clash Samir Al-Khalil (K. Makiya), *Republic of Fear*, pp. 237-238.), there does not seem to be any historical evidence of Kurdish-Turkmen violent conflict in the history of Kirkuk. Talabany, *The Arabization of the Kirkuk Region*, p. 114. Nevertheless, despite their having suffered similar repression and displacement by a common enemy, the regime of Saddam Hussein, the Kurds and Turkmen have, over the past decade, found little common ground in building governing structures in the North." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p24)

"Kirkuk looms large for US strategic planners because Kurds like the Karems claim the city - and its wealth - as their historical heritage. But Turkey warns that any attempt by Iraqi Kurds to seize control of Kirkuk - as they did briefly during a 1991 uprising - will spark a Turkish military reaction.

Turkey announced last week that it has boosted its military strength inside northern Iraq to 12,000 troops, with armor. It is concerned that any increase of Kurdish sovereignty in northern Iraq will prompt unrest among Turkish Kurds.

But it's the determination of Kurdish families - some 100,000 ethnic Kurds and Turkmen were expelled from Kirkuk during the past three decades - that is expected to present a key challenge to any American occupation of Iraq.

"In the night I can't sleep, because I worry about my children," says mother Hamdiya Abdulrahman Karem, standing outside her tent home just inside the border of the Kurdish-controlled territory of northern Iraq. Kirkuk is the likely fulcrum of US military plans for deployment in northern Iraq. The area is one of two leading Iraqi oil sites with more than 10 billion barrels of proven reserves, analysts say. But competing claims to the city by Kurds, Turkmen, and Turkey - complicated further by decades of enforced demographic change by Iraqi governments - promise to entangle US forces." (Peterson 13 Jan 03)

# HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

## General

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### **The Iraqi government severely restricts access to international NGOs and to the UN (2000-2002)**

- Access to IDPs easier in the North under Kurdish administration than in the Center/South
- Only seven international NGOs have permission to operate in government-controlled Iraq
- Government reportedly harassed and intimidated relief workers and U.N. personnel throughout the country
- U.N. Special Rapporteur has been repeatedly denied to visit Iraq since 1992
- In June 2000, two staff members of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) were shot dead in Baghdad and seven others wounded
- Baghdad refused to issue over 270 visas to experts for the 'oil-for-food' program and the program to remove land mines in the Kurdish north in 2001
- Iraqi government continued campaign of intimidation against UN and NGO personnel as of end 2001

"As the three governorates of the North, Erbil, Dohuk and Suleimanyah, are not under the control of the Iraqi government, access to the displaced population is easier than in the Center/South. UN agencies, NGOs, foreign government representatives, even an Under-Secretary-General of the UN, have visited the camps or the collective communities housing many of the displaced. For the NGOs and foreign representatives such as delegations from the UK and US, the visits take place without the permission of the government in Baghdad. For UN officials including Under-Secretary-General Benon Sevan, it is part of their duties under the Oil-for-Food program, hence they travel to the North with the permission of the Iraqi government. However, UN human rights officials, as earlier noted, such as the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq or the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, have not visited the North. Their terms of reference allow them to visit countries only at the invitation of the government. In this case, the government in Baghdad has unsurprisingly never 'invited' them to visit the North. The principle of state sovereignty is carefully adhered to by UN officials, despite the relative logistical ease of getting to northern Iraq via Turkey, Syria, or Iran.

In 1992, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq, former Dutch diplomat Max Van der Stoep, made his only visit to Iraq but was refused access to the North. He did, however, see enough to write a highly critical report on the human rights situation in the country as a whole. He was never invited back. His successor Andreas Mavrommatis was invited early in 2002, although he also did not travel north. It is hoped that, should he be granted a second visit, he would be allowed into the KRG area." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, pp17-18)

"In the Center and South, the main obstruction to international observers assessing the status of displaced people is simply that the party responsible for the violence and the displacement, the Iraqi government, has no interest in having its deeds exposed. The government uses several tactics to prevent access by international observers to the displaced people." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p34)

"President Hussein obstructed humanitarian agencies from assisting the civilian population in government-controlled areas. For example, only seven international non governmental organizations (NGOs) had

permission to operate in Iraq: CARE, Enfants du Monde, the IFRC, the Middle East Council of Churches, Ponte per Baghdad, Première Urgence, and Voice in the Wilderness." (USCR 2000)

"The Government harassed and intimidated relief workers and U.N. personnel throughout the country, maintained a threat to arrest or kill relief workers in the north, and staged protests against U.N. offices in the capital.

As in previous years the Government did not allow the U.N. Special Rapporteur to visit Iraq, nor did it respond to his requests for information. The Government continued to defy various calls from U.N. bodies to allow the Special Rapporteur to visit the southern marshes and other regions." (US DOS 25 February 2000, Section 4)

"It remains the responsibility of the UN to deal with concerns about the situation in Iraq; but, from 1992, the Iraqi authorities denied entry to Max van der Stoep, who served as Special Rapporteur of the UNCHR until November 1999, and failed to answer any of his communications. His successor, Andreas Mavrommatis, who took up his duties in January 2000, still awaits a response to his request for permission to visit Iraq." (Foreign & Commonwealth Office November 2000, p.2)

"The UN agencies working in Iraq do so under extraordinarily difficult, daunting, circumstances. Their work and living conditions are tightly constrained, and they face enormous obstacles from a number of sources." (AFSC 21 March 2000, "Problems facing UN agencies' work)

"One June 28 [2000], two staff members of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) were shot dead in Baghdad and seven others wounded, reportedly by an Iraqi identified by the authorities as Fowad Hussain Haidar. He said he had carried out the attack in protest at the U.N.-imposed embargo." (HRW December 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

"The government of President Saddam Hussein is slowing crucial aid work in Iraq by refusing to issue visas to international experts, United Nations officials said today.

Experts assigned to Iraq under the 'oil for food' program to work on electricity projects and the removal of land mines in the Kurdish north have been singled out, officials say. More than 270 visa requests have been rejected or have gone unanswered." (Crossette 1 May 2001 in New York Times)

"The [Iraqi] Government has continued a campaign of intimidation directed at U.N. and nongovernmental organization (NGO) relief workers. In February [2001] the Foreign Minister threatened to break off official ties to U.N. workers supervising Oil-for-Food Program distribution in northern Iraq, and to revoke their visas and deport them. In September the Government expelled six U.N. humanitarian relief workers without providing any explanation." (US DOS 4 March 2002, Sect.1.g)

### **Bomb attacks against buildings used by UN personnel and by NGOs in Arbil end 2001 (2002)**

"There were at least eight bomb attacks in Arbil in other cities between November 2000 and October 2001. Some targeted buildings used by U.N. personnel and by local and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In August, the KDP said it had arrested two men in separate incidents whose vehicles were apparently carrying explosives, and that they had confessed to working for Iraqi intelligence. Among them was a Tunisian national employed by the U.N. who was caught on July 19 while returning from Baghdad with explosives in his vehicle. He was released on July 31 and handed over to Tun Myat, U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Iraq, during his visit to Iraqi Kurdistan." (HRW 2002)

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

### National response

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#### Iraq is a state party to several international human rights agreements (2000)

Iraq is a state party to the following international human rights instruments:

Convention	Date of Accession/ Ratification
Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	15 June 1994 (a)
Treaties Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	13 Aug 1986 (a)
Convention on the Rights of the Child	15 June 1994 (a)
Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide	20 Jan 1959 (a)

*Source: UNHCR REF WORLD, July 1999*

Iraq signed but has not yet ratified the following international human rights instruments:

Convention	Date of Signature
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	25 Jan 1971
Human Rights Treaties International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	14 Jan 1979
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	25 Jan 1971
Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others	25 Jan 1971
Human Rights Treaties International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid	09 Jul 1975

*Source: UNHCR REF WORLD, July 1999*

Iraq is not a state party to the following international human rights instruments:

- Treaties Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Refugees and Stateless Persons Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
- Refugees and Stateless Persons Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees
- Refugees and Stateless Persons Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness
- Convention on the Political Rights of Women
- Human Rights Treaties Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity
- 1994 Arab League Convention on the Status of Refugees

Iraq has ratified regional instruments such as:

- The Arab Charter on Human Rights
- The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, Cairo 5 August, 1990
- Declaration on the Protection of Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Arab World, 19 November 1992.

(UNHCR June 2000, pp.8-9)

#### Government denies policy of forced displacement from Kirkuk and the southern marshes despite local and international accusations (1998-2002)

- Amnesty International wrote to the Iraqi Government to denounce the grave violation of the rights to freedom of conscience, freedom from discrimination and the right to physical and mental integrity of the people displaced from Kirkuk
- Academic conference in northern Iraq sent memorandum to UN SG urging the international community to intervene to stop Arabization of Kirkuk area
- An Assyrian coalition denounced in May 2001 the steps taken by Baghdad to change the population demographics, as well as the destruction of historical buildings
- The Association Against Ethnic Cleansing in Kirkuk announced its foundation in July 2001
- Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected allegations of forced displacement of non-Arabs around Kirkuk as baseless accusations
- Iraqi Minister of Interior said to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iraq in 2002 that activities in Kirkuk were sanctions imposed on people who did not cultivate their land
- Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims that only routine activities to track criminals and deserters are conducted in the southern marshes

"Amnesty International wrote to the Iraqi Government on 30 March 1998 expressing serious concern about the forcible mass expulsions of Kurdish and other non-Arab families on the basis of their ethnic origin. The organization stated that the action taken by the Iraqi authorities is considered a grave violation of the rights to freedom of conscience, freedom from discrimination and the right to physical and mental integrity. Amnesty International urged the government to halt the expulsions and to allow all those families already expelled to return to their homes in the Kirkuk area. The organization also made its concerns public in a statement issued on 29 April 1998 [...]

As of August 1999 no response from the Iraqi Government on these forcible expulsions had been received by Amnesty International." (AI 24 November 2000, "Forcible expulsion")

"An April 2001 academic conference in Irbil issued a memorandum that has now been sent to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The memorandum urged the international community to intervene to block the further arabization of the Kirkuk area and also to end the ethnic cleansing of that region. It asks that the UN force Baghdad to reveal the fate of thousands of Kurds and others who have been detained and then disappeared. And it calls for an expansion of the safe haven to include Kirkuk." (RFE/RL 8 June 2001)

"The 23rd Assyrian Universal Alliance World Congress expressed its concerns about Iraqi oppression of the Assyrians in Bet Nahrain, 'Zinda' reported on 29 May. The congress declaration condemns 'steps being implemented by the Iraqi government to change the population demographics on the Nineveh Plain,' as well as the destruction of historical buildings and archeological sites. And it denounced 'the implementation of a policy in Kirkuk, Mosul, Ein Sifneh and elsewhere to prevent Assyrians, Kurds and Turkmen[s] from buying land for the construction of homes unless they are willing to change their legal (census) nationality designation to Arab.' (RFE/RL 8 June 2001)

***For the entire declaration of the 23rd Congress of the Assyrian Universal Alliance, please see [\[External Link\]](#)***

"[...] [T]he Association Against Ethnic Cleansing in Kirkuk has announced its foundation and declared that the ethnic-cleansing policy of the Iraqi government in Kirkuk and other areas under its control aims to eradicate Kurdish identity in these areas; it maintains that this policy represents a danger to Iraqi unity." (RFE/RL 21 July 2001)

***According to the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs:*** "Fabrications made by (Stoel [i.e. former Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq, Max van der Stoel]) about violations against the Kurds in Al- Ta'mim province (Kirkuk) and coercive displacement and resettlement campaigns are merely untrue and baseless allegations. We [Ministry of Foreign Affairs]

confirm that no such cases had existed, that citizens in those areas are leading their normal life and practicing their daily works and duties, and that their rights are guaranteed under the Constitution and effective laws. (Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001)

*According to the Iraqi Minister of Interior:* " the Special Rapporteur [on the situation of human rights in Iraq] pointed out that several allegations received recently claimed that non-Arabs were being forcibly expelled from their land in the north, especially in the Kirkuk area. The Minister [of Interior] pointed out that what was currently going on in the north was related to initiatives aimed at maximizing the agricultural output of one of the most fertile regions of Iraq. The Minister explained that a specific policy was currently in place which would require landowners to cultivate their land. If this was not done, certain restrictions could be imposed. While it was acknowledged that this issue was too complex to be covered in depth during the meeting, upon the request of the Special Rapporteur the Minister undertook to work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare an explanatory note on the issue. This would then allow the Special Rapporteur to study the question in depth and to formulate additional questions, recommendations, etc." (CHR 15 March 2002, para.39)

*According to the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs:* "Iraq is accused of committing grave violations of human rights in the marshes area, launching arbitrary bombing against villages there and coercively displacing their residents.

In this respect we [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] would like to highlight the fact that the government authorities there undertake their routine activities in tracing criminals and deserters who in most cases resort to the marshes area to hide there taking advantage of the area's geographical nature in order to evade legal persecution for the crimes they have committed." (Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2001)

### **Regional government in northern Iraq works with the UN to implement programs in favor of the displaced and other vulnerable groups (2001-2003)**

- Mine awareness campaign and coordination with the United Nations for de-mining activities (2001)
- Reconstruction of houses for internally displaced from Kirkuk and other vulnerable people (2001)
- Construction of housing units in Erbil and Dahuk governorates (2002)
- Regional government openly applies political criteria towards the level of assistance it provides to the IDP population (2002)
- Regional government complain of lack of UN help to prepare for war fall out (Jan 03)

"The KRG, in both its Erbil (KDP) and Sulaimaniah (PUK) incarnations, openly applies political criteria towards the level of assistance it provides to the IDP population. It attempts to provide for the 'humanitarian needs' of people who have been expelled, often under violent circumstances from their homes, while not encouraging these people to resettle on a permanent basis. The Kurdish authorities adamantly insist that all displaced people should return to their original homes. While the incentive for this approach is based on a desire for justice there is also a political agenda: if the displaced do not return to Kirkuk and the surrounding areas, there will be a demographic shift towards the non-Kurdish populations of Turkmen, Arabs, and Assyrians. The PUK and the KDP see this as not only rewarding the Iraqi authorities for their Arabization program, but undermining any future claims of the Kurds to the Kirkuk region." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, pp23-24)

"One of the largest projects to be undertaken by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is the reconstruction of the region to repair the damage done under the successive Iraqi regimes. During the past two to three decades, more that 4,000 villages were destroyed and the inhabitants forced to move from their traditional lands and homes. Wars and internal conflicts have added to the problem of displaced people

living in the region too. The Iraqi policy of Arabization continues to fuel the problem of people displaced from their homes and lands with many of them choosing to move to Iraqi Kurdistan. The KRG commits funds towards the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the area along with funds allocated under the SCR-986 Oil-for-Food Program.

As part of the KRG goal to reconstruct the region, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Development has begun work on a project to construct 400 houses for families of the martyrs, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) – many from Kirkuk, and returnees from Iran." (Kurdistan News May 2001)

"The Ministry of Reconstruction and Development (MORAD) in Irbil has released its 2001 data for projects both completed and currently under implementation. According to the figures acquired from MORAD Minister Nasreen Sideek Mustafa, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) spent \$68.5 million in 2001 for reconstruction in the Irbil and Dahuk governorates (the KRG in Sulaymaniyah separately handles projects in the Sulaymaniyah and "New Kirkuk" Governorate).

In the Irbil and Dahuk governorates, MORAD completed 1,833 housing units, with an additional 3,463 under construction. UN Security Council Resolution 986 "Oil-for-food" income funded the completion of 36 educational projects (including schools, dormitories, and teacher's guest houses), with another 140 under construction. During the first eight phases of the UN oil-for-food program, MORAD built a total of 351 village schools and 91 staff houses. The KRG also built or has under construction more than 1,000 kilometers of new roads in the two governorates, as well as five bridges. All nine new veterinary clinics to support local husbandry have been completed.

Providing access to water remains a major MORAD concern in the Irbil and Dahuk governorates, especially after a three-year drought. MORAD trucked water into 193 villages at a cost of nearly \$218,000. In addition, MORAD drilled 43 new wells, and upgraded 857 water systems." (RFE/RL 12 April 2002)

"The head of the Mine Coordination Office of the Kurdistan Regional Government recently set out the extent of the continuing danger of mines in Iraqi Kurdistan. In an interview with "Iraqi Kurdistan Dispatch," a web-based news service, Siraj Barzani estimated that 12-15 million mines had been laid in Iraqi Kurdistan. There were around 3,500 known minefields. More than 3,600 people had been killed by mines since 1991 and more than 6,000 had been injured by blasts that often left them maimed or handicapped. Each month there are between 10 and 20 civilian casualties on average. There are 25 different types of mines that have been identified, the most common being a fragmentation type and a blast type, both intended for an antipersonnel role.

Barzani said mines were laid in Kurdistan during four different periods. The first was during the 1970s when the Iraqi army was trying to curb a Kurdish uprising in pursuit of self-rule. The second was during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war when both sides heavily mined the border areas. The third period was prior to the Gulf War when the Iraqi army laid barrier minefields along the border with Turkey to prevent an allied invasion from the north. The fourth period was during fighting between rival Kurdish groups between 1994 and 1997, when Kurds laid minefields to protect themselves from their rivals. He noted that mine-laying during this period was much less extensive.

Two organizations are at work clearing mines. The Mine Advisory Group (MAG), an international nongovernmental organization, has been working since 1993. Also, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has been at work since 1998. Together they have destroyed nearly 100,000 mines and nearly 150,000 pieces of other unexploded ordinance. The area cleared of mines is over 14 million square meters.

The main reason for such slow progress, Barzani explained, is the absence of minefield maps. The UN has asked Baghdad for such maps but has not received any cooperation. Another difficulty is that the minefields are often parts of larger battlefields so there is a huge amount of metal fragments, which

confuses the mine-detecting equipment. In these circumstances the whole area has to be dug out by hand. This is extremely slow. Specially trained dogs and mechanical flails are also used.

The Mine Coordination Office is part of the Ministry of Humanitarian Aid and Cooperation in the Kurdistan Regional Government. The office supervises and monitors the work of all local and international NGOs as well as UN agencies. Barzani said the emphasis was now on developing local capacities. "When local assets are promoted, project implementation tends indeed to be more cost-effective and sustainable," he was quoted as saying." (RFE/RL 26 July 02)

"Kurdish parties running a Western-protected enclave in northern Iraq have initiated limited contingency plans to cope with possible Iraqi reprisals in the event of a US war on Baghdad but complain that the international community is doing precious little to help them.[...]

We have repeatedly approached the United Nations" about helping the region prepare for the fallout of war, 'but we got no response,' said Hoshyar Siwaili, undersecretary at the KDP's ministry of humanitarian aid and cooperation.

Lack of resources prevents the Kurdish parties from implementing large-scale contingency plans in their region, which has been off limits to the central government since the 1991 Gulf War, he said." (AFP 2 Jan 03)

### **Creation of Joint Committee on Displaced Persons by Kurdish authorities following 1998 accord (2002)**

- According to some NGOs, return of internally displaced in the North is very politicized

"In the September 1998 Washington accord, the two governing parties of the Kurdish Regional Government, the PUK and the KDP, committed to stop battling and to begin the process of forming a unified governing structure for the North. A Higher Coordinating Committee (HCC) was set up with prime ministers from the two parties as chairs to begin the process of implementation.[...]

One of the subcommittees formed was the Joint Committee on Displaced Persons. According to the accord a timeline for the return of displaced people was to be presented within one month of the signing of the agreement. It was not until June 2001, after numerous pledges, promises and 'constructive' meetings that the first 70 families returned (out of a total of some 100,000 people). In July 2001, one month later, another 120 families, evenly split between the two sides, returned. More recently, the numbers have been picking up. According to the PUK, there have been nine groups of returnees, which include 1,256 families (7387 people) returning to KDP-held areas and 721 families (3323 people) returning to PUK areas, for a total of 10,710 people.

The sessions of the KRG joint-parliament held in early October 2002, and the statements of the two leaders Mas'oud Barzani and Jalal Talabani regarding renewed commitment to implementing the Washington accord are likely to further increase returns.

The system works as follows: First, each party presents to the joint subcommittee a list of potential returnees with supporting documentation as to home ownership. Second, the committee meets and goes over the names and agrees on a number to return to each side. Third, the receiving party is responsible for seeing that the returnees' homes or apartments are vacant and habitable.

One NGO, Peace Winds Japan, has recognized the value and risks inherent in assisting this group of displaced people to return home. Rather than avoiding the risk, it claims,

NGOs can facilitate [the] peace process by strategic application/allocation of humanitarian or development assistance projects in view of conflict dynamics in a given region . . . PWJ is now seriously considering implementing projects which would facilitate the exchange of the IDP families in both KDP-held and PUK-held territories.

This is in stark contrast to the view of another major NGO operating in the North which told us, "The reason we do not get involved in IDP issues is that it is very political, and the danger of being politicized is too great." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, pp27-28)

### **Kurdistan Regional Government officials criticized slow pace of UN aid programs (2002)**

- Many Iraqi Kurds reportedly complain that the UN does not respond to their needs

"Many KRG officials, however, are not satisfied with the "slow pace" of UN aid programs. PUK Deputy Prime Minister Adnan Mufti met with a delegation of the United Nations Development Program and criticized it for the slow pace of its operations, according to the 19 April issue of "Al-Ittihad," the Arabic-language daily newspaper of the PUK. According to "Al-Ittihad," Mufti "called on the UN to play its role in dealing with failures and shortcomings in the electricity sector and consolidating cooperation and coordination with the institutions of the Kurdistan Regional Government." Mufti also requested the UN speed up organization of teacher-training courses, and "to respond to the needs of the health and agriculture sectors." (Some Iraqi Kurdish hospital officials interviewed in spring 2001 said that the UN often takes up to 18 months to deliver approved equipment. If that equipment is faulty, then another 18 months can be wasted waiting for replacement parts.)

Many Iraqi Kurds complain that the UN does not respond to their needs and concerns; they say that many Arab national UN employees, such as those from Egypt, Yemen, Jordan, and Sudan are especially unresponsive. According to a 27 March 2001 United Press International report, Husseyn pressured UN agencies to "do his bidding in northern Iraq." The article pointed to one example where Rima al-Azar, a Lebanese UNICEF child protection officer in Irbil, unilaterally severed UNICEF's contracts with NGOs operating in Iraqi Kurdistan, apparently without any authorization from her superiors or UN offices in Geneva and New York. There have been other problems with the UN. According to farmers and officials of the University of Sulaymani College of Agriculture, a pesticide supplied to farmers by the UN wiped out nearly the entire chickpea crop in spring 2001, leaving several farmers who had sought UN agricultural advice destitute." (RFE/RL 26 April 2002)

## **Selected UN activities**

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### **UNICEF prepares to respond to immediate and basic needs of children and women in Iraq, including IDPs (Jan 03)**

"In light of a possible humanitarian crisis in Iraq, UNICEF is focussing its efforts mainly on preparedness activities to respond to the immediate and basic needs of children and women in Iraq and the neighbouring countries. UNICEF's planned interventions focus on reducing and mitigating the impact of a conflict on health and nutrition status, ensuring access to potable water and sanitation facilities, and ensuring learning

opportunities by children as well as their care and protection. Within Iraq, UNICEF is the lead agency for water and sanitation and co-lead agency for food focusing on therapeutic feeding and nutrition surveys. UNICEF will actively participate in other areas such as health, education, protection, transport, logistics and communication, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and asylum seekers. Whether inside or outside Iraq, UNICEF is ensuring that its humanitarian response is co-ordinated with the response of respective governments, sister UN agencies, Red Cross/Crescent Societies and international NGOs. [...]

### **Emergency Programme Objectives**

The following are the emergency programme objectives during the first month of a crisis for Iraq. In all cases, UNICEF will work in areas that are accessible to its staff (national and international):

#### ***Health***

To ensure a proper assessment of the health conditions of the affected population is carried out on time, especially of children and women.

To prevent outbreaks of measles in IDP settlements and contiguous areas through vaccination of children between 6 months and 16 years of age.

To ensure the availability of emergency drugs and ORS for PHC facilities, IDPs and targeted areas.

To ensure the safe delivery services for women in PHC facilities, IDPs and targeted areas.

To ensure the availability of relevant IEC material concerning health, especially care and management of childhood illnesses.

#### ***Nutrition***

To ensure a proper assessment of the nutritional conditions of the affected population is carried out on time, especially of IDP children.

To carry out nutritional monitoring and surveillance of the population and especially vulnerable groups.

To ensure continued rehabilitation of acute malnourished children in CCCUs, hospitals and IDP areas.

To ensure the availability of relevant IEC material concerning nutrition, especially breastfeeding.

#### ***Water and Sanitation***

To carry out a proper assessment of the water and sanitation conditions of the affected population.

To ensure the availability of potable water and sanitation services to most affected areas.

To ensure that the affected/displaced populations in urban areas have access to minimal potable water service through the use of water purification tablets and limited water tankering (especially to IDP areas and health facilities).

To ensure that IDPs - with particular emphasis on women and children - have access to facilities, supplies and information that contribute to their hygienic status and protects them from water borne diseases.

To ensure the availability of relevant information and communication material (IEC) concerning safe water and hygiene, especially related to water purification and prevention of water-borne diseases.

To co-ordinate all UN and NGO assistance in the area of Water and Sanitation.

#### ***Child Protection***

Carry out a rapid assessment of the conditions of institutionalised children, as well as IDP children with special protection needs (unaccompanied children, children with disabilities and traumatised children).

Ensure that institutionalised children with special protection needs have access to shelter, food and clothing, especially institutionalised and IDP children.

Ensure special care, protection and physical and psychosocial support for IDP children with special needs

Ensure special care, protection and psychosocial support of unaccompanied children, and their reunification with their families

Ensure the development of safe spaces for children and youth in IDP areas.

Reduce the risk of injuries and death as a result of landmines and/or unexploded ordnance (UXOs) and cluster bombs.

#### ***Education***

To conduct a rapid assessment of the education sector and psycho-social situation of children, especially in IDP areas

To ensure the resumption of educational and recreational services in IDP and other affected areas for children and adolescents, through the provision of basic educational supplies and teaching materials." (UNICEF 14 Jan 03)

### **WFP stock food for 900,000 Iraqis in case of conflict (Jan 03)**

"The UN World Food Programme (WFP) is stocking up food in countries neighbouring Iraq to feed some 900,000 Iraqis for a three-month period in case of a war against Baghdad, a senior WFP spokesman said Wednesday.

'We are close to the completion of pre-positioning food for some 900,000 people for three months in the surrounding countries,' the chief of the Rome-based WFP Public Affairs Service, Trevor Rowe, told AFP in Amman.

Rowe stressed, however, that this was merely a contingency plan and that the amount of food was "elastic" and would increase as needed.

"We are not predicting a war on Iraq but we have to be prepared,' he said." (AFP 29 Jan 03)

### **Oil-for-food program established to alleviate humanitarian needs of Iraqi population (1996-2002)**

- Oil-for-food program was set-up in 1996 as a temporary measure while the sanctions were in place
- In May 2002, UN SC members agreed to revise the sanction regime to ease its humanitarian impact
- Oil-for-food program was extended for 6 months in December 2002

"In the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War in 1991, the United Nations sent a mission to Iraq which reported the makings of 'an imminent catastrophe if minimum life supporting needs are not rapidly met.' The Security Council responded by offering Iraq, in August 1991, an opportunity to sell oil to meet its people's basic needs while the sanctions, imposed in August 1990, remained in place. That offer was not accepted and over the following five years there was widespread suffering with food shortages, an absence of essential medicines and a general deterioration in essential social services.

In 1996 the Government of Iraq and the United Nations Secretariat reached agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding, setting out the details of implementing Security Council resolution 986 (1995) which had been adopted 13 months earlier. Resolution 986 (1995) set the terms of reference for the oil-for-food programme.

'Oil-for-food is a unique programme, established by the Council as a temporary measure to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, which is being implemented within the context of a sanctions regime with all its attendant political, psychological and commercial dimensions, until the fulfillment by Iraq of the relevant resolutions, including notably resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April 1991.' (The

Supplementary Report of the Secretary-General of 1 February 1998 - S/1998/90)" (UN Office of the Iraq Programme 2001)

"Under the program, the country also is permitted, under U.N. control, to import food, medicine, supplies for water, sanitation, electricity, agricultural, and education projects, and spare parts for the oil sector." (UN DOS 4 March 2002)

***May 2002: UN SC members agreed to revise sanction regime to ease humanitarian impact***

*To see UN SC Resolution 1409 of 14 May 2002 modifying the sanction regime, please see [\[External Link\]](#)*

"The key element in the new arrangements is the Goods Review List provided for in paragraph 2 of UNSC Resolution 1382, passed in November 2001. Items specified on this list, defined as for military or dual use, are to be separated from humanitarian goods. Russia's agreement to accept this list, after protracted negotiations, cleared the way for implementation of the new "smarter" sanctions. The US sweetened the pot for Russia by removing holds on over \$200 million of Russian contracts with Iraq in late March. By the rules of the 661 Committee which presently scrutinizes orders for humanitarian goods, all Security Council members are allowed to query and hold up such orders. About 90 percent of the \$5 billion worth of contracts currently on hold are being blocked by the US and Great Britain.

The new proposals are expected to end this system of 661 Committee scrutiny of humanitarian goods. Under the new system, contracts containing goods on the Goods Review List will be reviewed by the UN Office of the Iraq Program (OIP) -- which administers oil for food. This office would then send the contracts to the UN Monitoring and Verification Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which head up efforts to prevent Iraq from obtaining banned weapons. In turn, these offices can refer contracts considered objectionable to the 661 Committee for rejection or passage.

A proposal to tighten up on regional smuggling -- key to earlier drafts of the "smart sanctions" resolution -- has been dropped. Neighboring states, including Syria, which is currently a Security Council member, are unlikely to give up their expanded commercial contacts with Baghdad and resisted any attempts to restrict this trade. The State Department estimates that Iraq reaps \$2.5 billion a year from smuggling oil outside the oil for food program.

The imposition of "smarter" sanctions has arguably come as too little, too late. As the Iraqi regime is well-adapted to sanctions, both in terms of political control and its regional and international networks of trade, clandestine contacts and money laundering, the new measures are unlikely to exact a significant tax on regime coffers." (Graham-Brown 14 May 2002, in MERIP)

*In December 2002, the UN SC extended the 'oil-for-food' programme for 180 days (UN SC 4 Dec 02)*

***For a chronology of crises between Iraq and UN over arms inspections between 1991 and 1998, see AFP 12 Nov 1998 [\[Internet\]](#)***

***To access the home page of the United Nations Office of the Iraq Programme Oil-for-Food: [\[Internet\]](#)***

### **Little focus on the internally displaced from the United Nations (Oct 02)**

- UN-Habitat Survey 2001 is one of the few comprehensive information on IDPs in Iraq generated by the UN
- According to a report by Brookings Institution, UN agencies, the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, and the UN Office for the Iraqi Program have become intimidated by the Iraqi government

"As the spokesperson for the UN Office of the Iraq Program (OIP) said, 'The UN under this program does not deal with IDPs. We are only in Iraq to observe the distribution of supplies. The government of Iraq is directly responsible for programs for IDPs and I don't believe they have any programs for IDPs. Only in the three northern governorates do we have specific projects because we are operational.' In response to a query on assistance to the displaced in Iraq, the World Food Program (WFP), a key observer of the distribution the OIP spokesperson referred to, commented: 'As for the south, the characteristic lack of information as to their plight does not allow us to assess the real complexity of the issue.'

It is, however, harder to understand why information on the displaced in the northern governorates, beyond Baghdad's control, has also been so limited for so long. This may still be due in part to Baghdad, as any UN agency capable of gathering information is dependent on the Iraqis for access to the North. There may also be reluctance within the rival Kurdish authorities to identify the displaced populations, since these authorities also have had a hand in creating and prolonging some of the displacement. Third, within the UN agencies operational in Iraq, there is no focal point on displaced persons, no advocate who has made the IDP cause a primary concern.

Within the United Nations, the primary source of information on the internally displaced in Iraq is the UN Special Rapporteur for the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq. Holders of this mandate, however, in the two trips to Iraq they have made over the past decade, have not been allowed by the Iraqi authorities to study the situation of the displaced first hand. In light of this experience, it is not surprising that the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, appointed in 1992, has not sought to visit Iraq; nor has he been invited to visit.

Reports from UN humanitarian agencies, the OIP, and the Secretary-General provide very little information regarding displaced persons. For the North, reference to the displaced is always in the context of their shelter needs and the programs to address them. An exception is the UN-Habitat survey published in January 2001. [...]

Privately, we heard of the reasons for this code of silence. UN agencies, the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (UNOCHI), and the OIP have become intimidated by the Iraqi government. Rank-and-file UN officials in Iraq have seen colleagues expelled or their contracts terminated because their visas were not renewed. Senior UN officials have not been known to stand up for them. At the same time, in the North, UN agencies reportedly have engaged in 'turf wars,' competing with each other for the sizable funds that Oil-for-Food makes available. A culture of subservience in the government-held areas and reported turf wars in the North have combined to undermine humanitarian goals. It is no surprise that, as a result, the weakest members of Iraqi society, the internally displaced, have fallen through the cracks." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, pp3-4)

#### ***2001 UN-Habitat IDP Site and Family Survey***

"The objective of this survey is certainly that of accounting for the IDP population according to [...] the definition according to which IDPs are all those people that have been displaced in any time against their will. The survey aims also to satisfy some more specific policy information needs that will help international community to develop policies for humanitarian aid. These needs are:

Assessing the magnitude of the IDP phenomenon with reference to the size and location of IDP settlements. Producing evidence on problems that affect this population and to ascertain vulnerability gradients and differentials existing among them.

Acknowledging their different biographies and their different needs and expectations, particularly with respect to on-going resettlement programs.

Making decision makers aware of the groups that are receiving support from humanitarian programs and the groups that are lacking assistance." (UN-Habitat January 2001, p2)

## **In the North, UN assistance to IDPs has been spotty according to report by Brookings Institution (2002)**

"In the North, where the UN agencies implement the programs, albeit having to deal with pervasive and continual Iraqi government obstruction, assistance to the displaced has been spotty.

**Food** – On the one hand, distribution is to the whole population and a special program has been set up for those newly displaced until they receive verification of residency and can again access normal monthly rations. On the other hand, general distribution is impeding local food production. Moreover, the UN success in the North contrasts with the availability of food to displaced persons in the Center/South where there have been problems with registration.

**Health** - According to the UN Habitat survey, tens of thousands of the displaced have no access to regular health care. The relevant UN agency, the World Health Organization, appears to have no targeted programs for the displaced. Of the \$2 billion worth of health sector materials delivered to Iraq under the Oil-for-Food program, for which WHO is either the direct implementer or the UN designated observer, none has been allocated to the long-suffering victims of the chemical weapons attacks, many of whom are displaced.

**Shelter** - The conditions in the reception camps have improved recently due to the IDP Unit created in UNOPS. Nonetheless, individual families continue to be housed in tents for months or years. Although, there is a continual flow of expelled people from Center/South to North, the UN-Habitat settlements are slow to build and are expensive and culturally inappropriate. They physically and economically isolate the IDP population, furthering its dependency on UN handouts and the political control of the authorities.

**Physical Infrastructure** - The infrastructure of the North has shown some dramatic improvements since the advent of the KRG, and much of this has been due to the Oil-for-Food program. The displaced population has shared in the general improvement in roads and will share in the general improvements in electricity supply once the projects are completed. However, the infrastructure of the 'collective towns,' inhabited solely by IDPs, has received little attention from UN agencies.

**Social Infrastructure** - There is little understanding of the nature of the problems specific to IDP families with special needs and no programs tailored for them" (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p44)

## **Sanctions raise serious concern at international level despite "Oil-for-food" Program (1999-2002)**

- The Center for Strategic and International Studies reports that Iraq's GNP had already dropped before the Gulf War due to the Iran-Iraq War and low oil prices
- NGOs denounce the high human price paid by the Iraqi population because of the embargo
- For ICRC, the 'Oil-for-Food programme' has had some positive effects, but has neither halted the collapse of the health system, nor improved the economic situation of the population
- Several NGOs doubt that the revised sanction regime of May 2002 will improve the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi population

### **According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the embargo is not the cause of Iraq's current economic decline**

"Saddam has [...] tried to blame most of Iraq's current economic decline on UN sanctions, but Iraq's GNP dropped much further as a result of the Iran-Iraq War and lower oil prices before the Gulf War began. The World Bank estimates that Iraq's GDP dropped by an annual average rate of 6.8% during 1980-1990, the worst economic performance of any of the more than 200 countries it surveys. Iraq also exhausted virtually

all of its national reserves and went deep into debt. Estimates of Iraq's total foreign debt in 1990, including interest, range from \$80 billion to \$109 billion.

The increases in Iraq's population interacted throughout this period with the decline in its economy to cut Iraq's per capita income. Iraq's population increased from 13.2 million in 1980 to 18.4 million in 1990 - an increase of 38%. Its GNP shrank by well over 65% during the same period. US and World Bank estimates indicate that Iraq's GNP per capita dropped by well over 50% from the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War to [the] time [when] Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Any estimates of the trends since the Gulf War must be far more speculative, but CIA, EIA, and World Bank estimates indicate that Iraq's population increased by another 16% between 1990 and 1997, while its GNP shrank by at least another 55%. If one examines the impact of nearly two decades of continuous war, austerity, and sanctions, the Iraqi population rose by more than 50% during 1980-1996, while the GNP shrank by well over 80." (Cordesman November 1998, p.8)

**According to other sources, sanctions have an dire impact on the humanitarian situation**

"The sanctions have, according to many international experts, journalists and UN agencies, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), crippled Iraq's economic infrastructure and have resulted in the breakdown of the socio-cultural fabric of the society, acute poverty, malnutrition, wide-spread corruption and crime, and the reported deaths of over half a million children under the age of five." (AI 24 November 1999, "Background")

*'The Oil-for-Food programme'* "has done much to alleviate the plight of the civilian population, especially as regards food and medicines. Malnutrition rates have stabilized since the programme began to be implemented in 1997. However, it has not halted the collapse of the health system and the deterioration of water supplies, which together pose one of the gravest threats to the health and well-being of the civilian population.

Resolution 986 also allows certain equipment to reach Iraq, for example pumps for water treatment. This does not, however, solve all the problems. The equipment needs to be properly installed and backed up by more general maintenance work on existing equipment and structures. The government often does not have the resources to pay for contractors to install it. This has thus become one of the major tasks for humanitarian organizations in Iraq." (ICRC 14 March 2000, III)

"The overall humanitarian situation in Iraq remained dire despite the expanded 'oil-for-food' program'. In his March 10 [2000] report to the Security Council on the operation of the program, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted that 'an excessive number of holds' continued to impede the relief program. These included holds on contracts in the water and sanitation and electric power sectors, which he stated were a major factor impeding progress in the area of public health. In his most recent report of September 8 to the Security Council, the Secretary-General noted some improvements in this area, but said that 'infrastructural degradation' of the water and sanitation sector was being exacerbated by 'the absence of key complementary items currently on hold and adequate maintenance, spare parts and staffing.' As regards the electricity sector, the report stated that the 'entire electricity grid is in a precarious state and is in imminent danger of collapsing altogether.' The overall provision of health care and services was said to be in 'steep decline.' This assessment was supported by the findings of U.N. and other humanitarian agencies." (HRW December 2000, "Human Rights Developments")

"[The] embargo, unprecedented in its comprehensiveness and now well into its tenth year, has taken an enormous toll on Iraqi lives and had a ruinous impact on Iraqi society. [...]The balance sheet of several years of sanctions against Iraq reveals a minimum of political dividends as against a high human price paid primarily by women and children. The food rationing system provides less than 60 percent of the required daily calorie intake, the water and sanitation systems are in a state of collapse, and there is a critical shortage of life-saving drugs. [...]

The devastating impact of the sanctions is largely a consequence of their unprecedentedly comprehensive scope and duration, coupled with the fact that their imposition followed the military campaign to compel Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. This campaign, conducted under the authority conferred by Resolution 678 (1990), included air attacks that crippled most of Iraq's electrical power system. Because of the centrality of the country's electric power grid to water and sewage treatment, the health care system, agricultural irrigation, and other vital civilian areas, these attacks have had grave civilian consequences. The embargo, in turn, has severely impeded the repair and reconstruction of these sectors that together function as a life support system for most of Iraqi society. More than nine years after the war, it is less and less possible to resort to the make-shift repairs and cannibalization of parts that for a number of years enabled the country to keep in operation some of its pre-war stock of generators, transformers, water pumps, and similar sorts of equipment.

This physical breakdown has been accompanied by the devastation of the country's human resource infrastructure. Real incomes and purchasing power of the great majority of Iraqis plummeted, leading many salaried professionals and skilled workers to emigrate or to shift to casual unskilled labor. This systematic 'de-skilling' of the population has been aggravated by the severe intellectual isolation stemming from the extension of the embargo to cover professional and scientific journals and books as well as travel outside the country to professional conferences and the like. The damage to the country's physical and human infrastructure and the acutely distressed income levels of most of the population have seriously compromised the beneficial impact of a program limited to commodities alone." (HRW 5 January 2000)

"As in war, it is civilians who are the prime victims of sanctions. Salaries are as low as US\$2 a month; there is around 50% unemployment. People have had to sell their belongings in order to survive -- first their cars, then household appliances, even their books and furniture. Regular school attendance by children under 15 has fallen drastically since 1990 for 'school does not give us money in order to live'. And in the schools themselves, pupils often have to squat on the floor for want of chairs and desks. Water pipes have not been repaired, and there are huge pools of stagnating water in the school yard." (ICRC 14 March 2000, 1)

***Several NGOs doubt that the revised sanction regime will improve the humanitarian situation of the Iraqi population***

"CAFOD, the Catholic Aid Agency, says the new economic sanctions on Iraq reflect little more than cosmetic changes and will do little to help the plight of the ordinary people.

The new UN resolution on economic sanctions focuses on streamlining procedures rather than on radical change while the number of projects on hold continues to escalate dramatically." (CAFOD 16 May 2002)

"The Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq (CASI) today expressed its disappointment at the failure of UN Security Council Resolution 1409 to address the humanitarian crisis in Iraq sufficiently. The resolution, which implements a revised Goods Review List of 'dual-use' items with effect from 30 May 2002, indicates the cementing of the US-UK policy of 'smart sanctions' on Iraq.

The resolution is likely to have little effect on Iraq's humanitarian situation." (CASI 15 May 2002)

**UNICEF and other organizations highlight reasons for North-South economic disparities (2000-2002)**

- The Oil-for-food program in the South is administered by the Iraqi regime, while in the North it is under UN responsibility

- 87% population living in the Center/South have access effectively only to about 53% of the oil for food money
- In the North, the program includes a cash component, through which oil for food money can be used to pay local labor or to purchase local goods, which is not the case in the Center/South
- The North benefits from other elements as well: many international NGOs are present in the North; the North is the traditional agricultural center of Iraq
- According to a SCF UK study in 2002 on Kurdish livelihoods in northern Iraq, sanctions have almost totally impoverished the population of northern Iraq despite oil-for-food program

"At the political level, the largely Kurdish North functions under the Western protection, and the food, health, and economic life of the three governorates are managed by local Iraqi Kurdish officials under the control of the UN. In the Center/South the Iraqi government maintains sovereign control of food rationing, health infrastructure, the economy, etc., although it remains under close and constant supervision by the UN. Economically, the North is far more productive: it is the traditional agricultural center of the country, its border with Turkey is thoroughly porous for both legal and clandestine trade, it has sufficient indigenous water supplies, officials are permitted to purchase local food and other commodities, and it has access to a cash component out of its oil for food funds that can be used to hire local workers or buy local materials for reconstruction. It currently receives a higher per capita amount of money from the oil for food program.

The UNICEF director spent some time explaining to the staff delegation [of the American Friends Service Committee] the question of disparity in health and other social indicators between the North and South/Center of Iraq. This has been a consistent issue in U.S. and other policy debates, with the assertion made that 'the' reason for the discrepancy is the fact that the UN controls distribution in the North, and the Iraqi regime in the South/Center.

Dr. Rao Singh [UNICEF Director] made clear that the issue arises from a complex set of factors, not any single issue, and is certainly not only because the UN is responsible in North and Iraq in Center-South. There are many reasons:

1) There is a significant per capita disparity in oil for food money available for education, infrastructure, etc. in favor of the North. This is because the 13% component of the oil for food funds reserved for the North is taken off the top; the Center/South's share is not 87%, but is only what is left over after deducting the required 30% off the top guaranteed to the Kuwait reparations fund, and the amount deducted to cover costs of the UN operation. The result is the 87% population living in the Center/South have access only to about 53% of the oil for food money.

2) In the North, the program includes a cash component, through which oil for food money can be used to pay local labor or to purchase local goods (food or supplies). In the Center/South, no oil for food money can be used for local purchases or labor, creating additional problems in transport, installation, and use of imported goods. Therefore in the North that cash component allows a much more efficient use of money.

3) Human resources are a serious problem in the Center/South. There are many highly trained professionals left there still working, but they work for government wages which now average \$10/month.

Other UN officials provided additional insight to the complexity of the disparity. Non-governmental humanitarian organizations with large-scale financial and political support from Western governments, began working in the North immediately after the Gulf war in 1991; there are now more than 30 agencies working there. In the Center/South, partly because of Iraqi government restrictions and other difficulties, most NGOs began working only after 1996, and there are only 11 there now, mostly with much smaller-scale resources. Additionally, the North was the traditional agricultural center of Iraq; almost half (48%) of Iraq's arable land is in the North, populated by only 13% of the people, and locally produced food is far more abundant. The availability of fresh water is also far higher, and the North's longstanding traditional

agricultural methods were far less vulnerable to coalition bombing during Desert Storm than was the newer high-tech, industrialized electricity-dependent agricultural systems in the Center/South.

There are certainly related problems having to do with the role of the Iraqi regime. It seems clear that the government has access to some amount of money (generally thought to be between \$300 and \$400 million) obtained from smuggled oil sales. That money is generally not being used for civilian assistance, although the palace-building projects provide WPA-style construction work for Iraqis, using local cement, local labor, and payment in local currency. However, it is likely that it is not a sufficient amount of money to be able to play a major role in the broader sanctions-driven impoverishment." (AFSC 21 March 2000, "Humanitarian effect of economic sanctions")

"The Save the Children UK study [on Kurdish livelihoods in northern Iraq] concludes that sanctions and the Oil for Food program have almost totally impoverished the population of Northern Iraq – raising dependency levels to internationally unprecedented levels - and that the Government of Iraq is a major beneficiary of the Oil for Food program, as it manages food distribution. The organisation warned, however, that any scaling back of the Oil for Food program currently associated with sanctions could "send Kurds living in Northern Iraq over the edge into a humanitarian catastrophe." (SCF-UK 4 Feb 2002)

### **Habitat (UNCHS) provides shelter, infrastructure and services activities to internally displaced persons (1999-2002)**

- United Nations Humanitarian Coordination for Iraq is the ad hoc agency coordinating implementation of Security Council Resolution 986
- Habitat (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements) assists in implementing settlement rehabilitation component of Oil-for-Food Program
- Program gives particular attention to the needs of internally displaced persons and those most affected by the breakdown of services
- According to Habitat, rehabilitation activities in the south of the country started in 2000 but were slow due to sanctions (2002)

"UNOHCI (United Nations Humanitarian Coordination for Iraq) is the ad hoc agency coordinating implementation of Security Council Resolution 986. All the UN agencies, apart from UNHCR, are involved in supervising implementation of the oil-for-food programme in their specific fields through small-scale but regular programmes." (ICRC 11 June 2001, Sect.1)

"UNCHS (Habitat) was called upon to assist in the implementation of the Settlements Rehabilitation component of the 'oil for food' agreement between the Government of Iraq and the United Nations. The agreement allows for attention to be paid to the urgent humanitarian needs of the population affected by the conflict in the Gulf. Other UN agencies are implementing complementary activities under the programme in other sectors such as food, health, energy and de-mining.

The programme gives particular attention to the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and those most affected by the breakdown of services, numbering over half a million people. The overall works on urban and rural services benefit either directly or indirectly the three million people living in the Northern Governorates. The programme provides integrated packages of infrastructure and services to achieve four main goals: the resettlement and consolidation of rural villages; the attention to growth centres and towns; the rehabilitation of infrastructure in urban areas; and, the attention to Internally Displaced Persons. The programme is implemented in close collaboration with the local authorities and the active participation of communities and the private sector in all stages from planning to actual execution of work [...]

Each of the programme components consists of 'packages' of shelter, infrastructure and services activities aiming at giving an integrated humanitarian response to the needs of IDPs and rural and urban communities. The selection of the 'package' of activities to be implemented in each community is carried out with the participation of the beneficiaries and in consultation with other external support agencies implementing complementary activities.

The activities included in each package in consultation with the affected communities and local authorities might include:

- i. Rural access roads and ancillary works
- ii. Water supply and sanitation
- iii. Essential infrastructure (irrigation channels and others)
- iv. Buildings for schools and health centres
- v. Organisation and capacity building for rehabilitation and operation
- vi. Shelter with community participation

Organisation and capacity building activities are an integral part of the community rehabilitation process in order to ensure its sustainability." (UNCHS December 2000)

"The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) continued to construct shelters and associated facilities in the three northern governorates. [...]

So far, about 8,000 new houses have been constructed since the start of the programme. The number of additional houses planned to be built across all three governorates is estimated at about 26,000. These figures are too low in comparison with the high estimated number of internally displaced persons in the area. In that regard, the results of the Habitat surveys will be used in devising, through improved planning and coordination in cooperation with all concerned, an accelerated resettlement strategy that addresses more precisely the particular needs of the various categories of beneficiaries within viable communities. The strengthening of local sustainability, the availability of building materials and the maximization of local construction industry output are also factors in this programme. [...]

A total of 150 families, previously living in most deplorable conditions at a temporary camp at Kani Shaitan in the governorate of Sulaymaniyah, have since December been moved to new houses constructed by Habitat in nearby Chamchamal. Habitat is planning to construct additional houses in Chamchamal for priority allocation to the approximately 50 families remaining in Kani Shaitan. Local authorities have demolished the camp and are planning to close off the area completely once the remaining eligible families have been housed in Chamchamal town." (UN SC 2 March 2001, para. 135-137)

#### ***The case of Dal da Ghan, village of Northern Iraq***

"During the Iraqi Anfal campaign about 4000 villages like this one [Dal da Ghan, northern Iraq] were forcibly depopulated, burned to the ground and dynamited by government troops. In some cases soldiers burned down the trees, and relocated the inhabitants to camps away from the borders with Iran and Turkey. You can still see the ruins of village after village along the highways. Dal da Ghan itself was destroyed in 1987.

The reconstruction of Dal da Ghan is part of a virtual UN welfare state in northern Iraq. Over the last few years the UN Habitat program scouted out villagers who were willing to return. The program spent about US \$24,000 to provide the village with material to build houses, schools, roads and water facilities." (Aquila Lawrence, Summer 2000)

#### ***Construction activities in the south of Iraq***

"Par suite des sanctions imposées par les Nations Unies sur l'Iraq, beaucoup d'activités de construction ont été suspendues. Malgré de grands efforts de réhabilitation, les réseaux de traitement des eaux et d'approvisionnement en eau et les systèmes d'élimination des eaux usées ont été réduits à moins de la moitié de leur capacité. L'effet de la dislocation des services sur les populations urbaines qui se concentrent

dans certains quartiers de Bagdad deviennent catastrophiques. Les conditions de vie se sont détériorées et les risques de maladies se sont accrus. Il faut des processus novateurs pour améliorer les conditions de vie dans les quartiers, s'appuyant sur la participation des communautés, en partenariat étroit avec les autorités locales. [...]

Le projet consiste en un schéma pilote de réhabilitation communautaire qui est mis en œuvre dans deux communautés choisies de Bagdad, Shu'lla et Habibia." (UN-Habitat 2002)

### **WFP distributes food to the internally displaced in northern Iraq and observes adequacy of rations in government-controlled area (2000-2002)**

- WFP distributes food to all 3.5 million inhabitants of Northern Iraq, including to IDPs
- Some new IDPs said they lacked a ration card and could therefore not access the food distribution system
- According to an SCF survey in 2002, 60 percent of the population in Northern Iraq is dependent on the WFP food ratio
- WFP also runs special income generation projects targeting internally displaced persons

"WFP distributes food to all 3.5 million inhabitants of Northern Iraq. The IDPs are included in this distribution. WFP has two programs to benefit the displaced: supplemental feeding for all malnourished people and a one-time food distribution to the victims of Arabization upon their arrival in the North." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p21)

"In the areas under the control of the two Kurdish authorities (PUK and KDP), the UN's World Food Program (WFP) is responsible for food distribution. The system has worked reasonably well though persistent complaints have been heard about newly displaced persons lacking their ration card not being able to access the distribution and second that the quality of food distributed is often poor.[...]

In the areas under the control of the Iraqi government, the distribution of the food rations is done by the Ministry of Trade of the Iraqi government. The UN is limited to an observation role." (CHC 15 Nov 02)

According to an SCF survey in 2002, "60 percent of the population in Northern Iraq is dependent on the World Food Program (WFP) food ration with insufficient alternatives if the food ration is withdrawn or if the Oil for Food programme is stopped." (SCF 17 Dec 02)

*To view SCF survey from February 2002, please see reference below.*

"The WFP operation in Iraq includes both participation in the general food distribution to the Iraqi population under Security council resolution (SCR) 986 and a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) [Iraq 6085.00] targeted to malnourished children, their families, patients in hospitals and residents in social institutions. Under SCR 986, also known as the 'oil for food' agreement, WFP is responsible for observing the equity, efficiency, and adequacy of the ration throughout Iraq, and for conducting distribution of commodities to 3.1 million people [including displaced persons] in the three northern autonomous governorates." (WFP 2000)

"While WFP assisted IDPs under different EMOPs in the aftermath of Gulf war, IDPs are no longer a WFP category of beneficiaries under SCR 986 and the general food distribution scheme as, according to the MOU between the UN and the GOI, every person residing in Iraq is entitled to food ration regardless of status [...]

[The] food need [of the internally displaced persons] is fully met through the WFP safety food basket net . Hence we can say that WFP feeds all 800,000 IDPs in Northern Iraq . IDPs major needs , mostly unmet, are houses, water, sanitation, drainage system, electricity etc.

WFP considers IDPs among the most vulnerable of all the beneficiaries. Hence, in addition to general food distribution to all IDPs, all WFP household food security/income generation interventions (about \$ 6 million) started in 1999 are targeted to IDPs, particularly Female Headed Households. This include small ruminant projects, backyard poultry projects and gardening projects . These interventions enable households to supplement the general food ration ( eggs , meat , vegetable etc..) and generate some income to meet other needs." (WFP February 2001)

### **UNOPS procures emergency relief items to internally displaced persons in northern Iraq (2001)**

"[...] [T]he United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has taken over from the United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq the responsibility for procuring emergency relief items such as tents, blankets, heaters and stoves to support internally displaced persons. [...] At the beginning of April [2001], UNOPS will conduct an assessment of emergency needs for those living in camps and 'hard' shelters in order to ensure that appropriate and adequate relief items are provided." (UN SC 2 March 2001, para.138)

### **UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator will be focal point on IDPs (2003)**

"In Iraq, the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq is headed by WFP official, Ramiro Lopes da Silva who took over from another WFP official, Tun Myat, in July 2002." (Fawcett & Tanner, Oct 02, p7)

*The Humanitarian Coordinator has been designated as IDP focal point.*

### **UN Human Rights bodies condemn forced displacement from Kirkuk and other human rights violations in Iraq (2000-2002)**

- Government challenged the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to provide evidence of allegation of forcible expulsion
- UN Commission on Human Rights urged government to stop practice of forced deportation and relocation (April 2000 and April 2001)
- Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights on Iraq is gathering evidence of forced displacement from Kirkuk
- UN Special Rapporteur finally allowed in Iraq in Feb 2002; last visit of Special Rapporteur was in 1992

"The practice of forcible expulsions of thousands of families on the basis of their ethnic origin violates Iraq's obligation under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), to which it acceded in 1970. Article 2(1a) of CERD states that 'Each State Party undertakes to engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against person, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this legislation'. In its 14th periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in February 1999 Iraq denied that it had expelled non-Arab families. It stated that 'The Government of Iraq categorically refutes the allegation that it has forcibly expelled non-Arab ethnic groups

and requests the Committee to provide it with the factual evidence substantiating that allegation.' [ CERD/C/320/Add. 3 - Periodic Report of Iraq, page 9.]" (AI 24 November 2000, "Forcible expulsion")

"The Special Rapporteur [of the UN Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq] asked those alleging [that non-Arab resident of the Kirkuk area are driven from their homes by the Government] to supply him with a list of the families who left the Kirkuk area, containing names, addresses, circumstances and date of departure from Kirkuk, copy or mention of any legal documents invoked or served on them, and information on circumstances connected with their relocation, as well as information as to who moved into their abandoned residences." (UN GA 14 August 2000, para.51)

"A significant breakthrough was achieved in the context of the relations with the Government of Iraq when the Government, in January 2002, announced that it would accept a visit to Iraq by the Special Rapporteur, who eventually undertook a mission to the country from 11 to 15 February 2002. [...]

The Special Rapporteur appreciates this positive response from the Government to his repeated requests for a visit. He sees this initial mission as an exploratory one, the main purpose of which was to set the stage for future cooperation. Owing to the short notice prior to the mission, as well as the short duration of the visit, the Special Rapporteur decided that only a limited number of pre-selected human rights issues could be raised.

The Special Rapporteur is pleased that contacts with the Government were established and that mechanisms and procedures for communications with the Government regarding allegations of violations of human rights were put in place during the mission. The success of the dialogue will depend on the continued cooperation of the Government. The ultimate measure of success will be the successful implementation of recommendations submitted by the Special Rapporteur.[...]

[...] the Special Rapporteur continued to receive from various sources a number of written allegations of human rights violations. Allegations of violations committed by the Government covered a very broad range of issues, including arbitrary and extrajudicial execution, cruel, degrading and inhuman treatment and punishment, restrictions on religious and political freedom, forced displacement of ethnic minorities and "arabization", and forced military recruitment. The Special Rapporteur plans to investigate these allegations further in the context of the new mechanisms and procedures established with the Government of Iraq in this regard." (CHR 15 March 2002, Introduction)

Following his visit to Iraq, the Special Rapporteur noted: "Although there has been progress in establishing a dialogue with the Government, the Special Rapporteur regrets to reiterate that this dialogue has remained at a far too general level." (UN GA 20 Aug 02, para.24)

"Special rapporteurs are independent experts who report to the annual sessions of the UN Human Rights Commission, which established the mandate for a rapporteur on Iraq in 1991.

Since then, the Iraqi government has accepted only one visit, which was conducted by the former special rapporteur Max van der Stoep in 1992." (AFP 12 Feb 2002)

[The Commission on Human Rights] "calls upon the Government of Iraq [t]o respect the rights of all ethnic and religious groups and to cease immediately its continued repressive practices, including the practice of forced deportation and relocation, against the Iraqi Kurds, Assyrians and Turkmen, in particular their deportation from the regions of Kirkuk and Khanaqin, and against the population of the southern marsh areas, where drainage projects have provoked environmental destruction and a deterioration of the situation of the civilian population, and to ensure the personal integrity and freedoms of all citizens, including the Shia population." (CHR 18 April 2000 & 18 April 2001)

*The UN General Assembly "Notes with dismay* that there has been no improvement in the situation of human rights in the country;

*Strongly condemns:*

(a) The systematic, widespread and extremely grave violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law by the Government of Iraq, resulting in all-pervasive repression and oppression sustained by broad-based discrimination and widespread terror;

(b) The suppression of freedom of thought, expression, information, association, assembly and movement, through fear of arrest, imprisonment, execution, expulsion, house demolition and other sanctions." (UN GA 27 Feb 2002)

## **UNOPS and several NGOs conduct mine clearing programs in northern Iraq (2000-2002)**

- UNOPS has an emergency de-mining program with teams in the three northern governorates
- UNOPS launched the night phase of the mine action project in northern Iraq in 2002

"Landmines in the north, mostly planted by the Government before 1991, continued to kill and maim civilians. Many of the mines were laid during the Iran-Iraq War; however, the army failed to clear them before it abandoned the area. The mines appear to have been planted haphazardly in civilian areas. Landmines are also a problem along the Iraq-Iran border throughout central and southern Iraq. There is no information on civilian casualties or the efforts, if any, to clear old mine fields in areas under the central Government's control. According to reports by the U.N. Office of Project Services, the Mines Advisory Group, and Norwegian Peoples Aid, over 3,000 persons have been killed in the three northern governorates since the 1991 uprising. The Special Rapporteur repeatedly has reminded the Government of its obligation under the Land Mines Protocol to protect civilians from the effects of mines. Various nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) continued efforts to remove land mines from the area and increase awareness of the mine problem among local residents. In December 1998, the Government declared that mine-clearing activity was subversive and ordered NGO workers performing such activity to leave Iraq. On April 26, a New Zealander working for the U.N. mine-clearing program in the north was shot and killed by an unknown assailant who first asked for water and then fired three times at close range." (US DOS 25 February 2000, "Respect for human rights, g.")

"UNOPS is the UN organization which is officially dealing with mines in the autonomous governorates of Erbil, Dubouk and Sulaimanyah. UNOPS, under UNDP, has established an emergency de-mining programme with one team of expatriate de-miners stationed in each governorate. The expatriate teams are training local teams in de-mining techniques and have already started clearing identified fields." (IFRC 5 December 2000, Sect.3)

"UNOPS has been asked by the UN Office of the Iraq Programme to launch the ninth phase of a mine action project in northern Iraq.[...]

The project will help create a safer environment for farmers and others who depend on the land for their livelihoods in three northern governorates of the country and complete the implementation of a comprehensive network of services for victims.

Statistics show that as of the end of August 2001, approximately 27,000 families in 165 communities have so far benefited from UNOPS-implemented mine-clearance activities. As a result of UNOPS' work, more than 400,000 kilogrammes of crops were produced in 2001 on cleared land, 34,700 livestock can now graze safely, 3,300 people have improved water supplies, and 400,000 people near Sulaimaniya have access to electricity.

According to a UNOPS survey of almost 4,500 communities in the region, about 1,100 of them, mostly in rural areas, have been affected by the explosive devices. Mines hamper economic development because

they prevent the reconstruction of road networks and power lines, restrict the movement of teachers, technicians and doctors, and the transport of food and medical aid." (UNOPS 29 Jan 2002)

## **Selected NGO & Donor Response**

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### **ICRC, IFRC and NGOs are planning assistance to answer the needs of IDPs and other civilians in case of a conflict in Iraq (2002)**

According to Refugees International: "The U.S. government, the U.N. and relief organisations are all working to find ways to minimise the impact of conflict on civilians.

However, they have been working on parallel, but separate, tracks that don't allow for adequate coordination. The reasons for this are clear.

The United States doesn't want to reveal details of its war plans. The U.N. is reluctant to look like it is in league with the United States in planning for a war that Secretary-General Kofi Annan says he hopes can be avoided.

NGOs don't want to get too close to the military, out of fear that they will appear to be humanitarian agents of the attacking forces.

Fortunately, the parallel planning processes are beginning to merge; there is increasing dialogue between among NGOs and the U.N. and increasing contact between NGOs and the U.S. government, although contacts with the military remain very limited." (Bacon 13 Dec 02)

#### ***ICRC***

"The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) [...] has been building stocks of medicine, sanitation equipment and blankets inside Iraq, where it has some 30 international staff, and in neighbouring states." (Reuters 13 Jan 03)

#### ***IFRC***

"With the increasing threat of war, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is speeding up preparations for responding to a possible humanitarian crisis in the country, said its president Dr. Hisham Salman Al-Sadoon yesterday in Baghdad.

Within weeks, emergency relief items will be available for up to 100,000 people across the country, thanks to ongoing joint efforts by the IRCS and the International Federation, he announced.

These will include tents, blankets, heaters, kerosene lamps, stove and cooking sets as well as first aid mobile kits and jerry cans for carrying water. Dr. Al-Sadoon insisted that, in case of a major humanitarian crisis, "the primary role of the Red Crescent would be to meet the urgent needs of the population during the first 10 days." (IFRC 27 Sept 02)

#### ***Joint NGO Emergency Preparedness Initiative (JNEPI)***

"Mercy Corps and international partner agencies have formed the Joint NGO Emergency Preparedness Initiative (JNEPI) to coordinate planning and preparedness activities for a possible humanitarian crisis in Iraq. Based in Amman, Jordan, the consortium is funded by the participating agencies and the US Agency for International Development.

The JNEPI project was initiated by International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Save the Children/US, and World Vision to serve as a clearinghouse for information gathered by the agencies through their assessments and experiences in the region." (Mercy Corps 7 Feb 03)

***International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation (IBC) (based in Istanbul)***

"We have agreed with the Turkish Red Crescent to deliver the food, blankets and other emergency relief material to Northern Iraq through their trucks. After the delivery to specific centers in Iraq the staff of our local partners will distribute the material to the beneficiaries. We have preferred this way because during the war roads of transport will be closed to all NGO's except TRC. We are free to select the beneficiaries and not obliged to deliver the material only to TRC camps." (IBC 30 Nov 02)

**ICRC & IFRC provide assistance to the internally displaced population in northern Iraq (2000-2002)**

- In northern Iraq, ICRC focuses on providing basic infrastructure to the displaced (water & sanitation)
- In 2000, ICRC provided non-food items to 400 displaced families in southern Iraq
- In 2001, IFRC distributed to IDPs in northern Iraq items most needed during cold winter months such as blankets, kerosene heaters, etc.

***ICRC***

***In 2000***, the "ICRC remained concerned about the humanitarian implications of the sanctions on Iraq. To alleviate the plight of the civilian population, it continued to focus its activities on needs not covered by the oil-for-food programme." (ICRC 6 July 2001)

"The ICRC's goal in **northern Iraq** is that internally displaced persons and rural communities in particular should have access to water and benefit from sanitary conditions in accordance with WHO standards. The focus is therefore on basic infrastructure such as water-supply systems and sewage-evacuation networks requiring either maintenance work or emergency repairs. An important criterion for new projects in 2001 will be, apart from the humanitarian needs, that for some reason they cannot be carried out under the oil-for-food programme." (ICRC 11 June 2001)

"In northern Iraq, the water situation improved in a camp for 5,000 displaced persons in Arbil following work by ICRC engineers to extend the internal network and increase the number of water distribution points. [...]"

In Iraq thousands of people have been driven from their homes, in particular in northern Iraq where, according to the authorities, fighting between rival Kurdish factions has displaced some 120,000 people. Many of the displaced are living in tents, open spaces, or unheated public buildings. In northern Iraq, the ICRC continued to carry out individual surveys of displaced families, and pursued its cooperation with the Iraqi Red Crescent for the distribution of non-food items.

In 2000 the ICRC carried out a survey, in cooperation with the Iraqi Red Crescent and local authorities, of the internally displaced population in southern Iraq. A group of 400 families (2,334 people) was identified as the most vulnerable and received an ad hoc supply of non-food items). (ICRC 6 July 2001)

"The ICRC's main office is in Baghdad, and there are three offices in northern Iraq (in Arbil, Dohuk, and Sulaymaniyah). It is thus the ICRC's largest operation in the Middle East." (ICRC 14 March 2000, IV)

"An important development in 2000 was the reopening of an office in the southern city of Basra." (ICRC 6 July 2001)

### **IFRC**

*In its annual report for 2001, IFRC said that:*

"Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees have settled in the northern governorates and live in precarious conditions in abandoned complexes, tents, schools or other unoccupied buildings. The vulnerable families needed blankets, heaters, plastic sheeting, kerosene lamps, tents, cooking sets, jerrycans and water tanks.

*Goal [of Disaster Response]*

To alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable refugees, IDPs and returnee population in the three northern governorates. The total number of beneficiaries was more than 6,500 families in the Duhok, Erbil and Suleimaniah governorates. Distributions included the items most needed during cold winter months such as blankets, kerosene heaters, etc." (IFRC 28 May 2002)

### **Donors' and international NGOs' activities aim to complement Oil-for-Food Program (1999-2003)**

- EU is the largest donor of humanitarian aid to Iraq and focuses on the center and south of Iraq
- CARE & Première Urgence both have projects to house internally displaced persons

### **EU**

ECHO's current criterion for establishing priorities is to provide actions that are complementary to the oil-for-humanitarian goods program in favour of the most vulnerable, concentrating on topical sectors where it would remain useful and cost-effective. In particular, compensation for the lack of 'cash assistance' in the centre and south ( pop. Mio 19, Baghdad Mio 4) where humanitarian needs are greater than in the north of the country (pop. Mio 3). A 8,6 million Plan of Action for Iraq for the year 2000 was approved by the Commission on 19 April 2000. [...]

The Plan of Action activities are implemented through various NGOs and UN agencies namely: Care-UK, Première Urgence (France), Enfants du Monde - Droits de l'Homme (France), Médecins du monde (France), Netherlands Red Cross, UNICEF and UNHCS (UN Centre for Human Settlements, Habitat)." (EU 19 February 2001)

"The E.U. remained the largest donor of humanitarian aid to Iraq, with 8.6 million euros allocated for the year through the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO)." (HRW December 2000 "The Role of the International Community")

### **CARE**

"Apart from the United Nations and Red Cross, CARE is the only international NGO that has a significant and active presence in Iraq. CARE International has been working in Iraq since the beginning of the humanitarian crisis in 1991, meeting the basic humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. Projects have been funded by various donors including the Government of the UK, Norway, the Netherlands, USA, Australia, South Africa, the European Union in addition to UNICEF, UN WFP, UNHCR and UNDHA." (CARE 16 December 1998)

"CARE has been actively engaged in various sectors, but most extensively in the areas of water, sanitation, education and health." (CARE Australia 2001)

"CARE International began working in Iraq in 1991 following the Gulf War. Since that time, CARE is the only international non-governmental organization to maintain a continuous program in the center and south of the country. Since 1995, CARE's programs have focused on water and sanitation, health and children, providing supplementary food and milk to 97 pediatric hospitals. In the past 12 years, CARE's programs have provided humanitarian assistance to more than seven million people -- approximately one-third of the population of Iraq." (CARE 31 Jan 2003)

### ***Première Urgence***

"The situation of [the] displaced populations is particularly precarious since they are not covered by any governmental programmes. Thousands of families live in great difficulty in unhealthy shelters; unused barracks, temporary dwellings made of earth or branches, abandoned schools,...

In 1999, Première Urgence started the rehabilitation of community centers to house these displaced populations. Our objective is not only to provide them with better living conditions, but also to encourage their integration into the economic and social fabric." (Première Urgence 2000)

## **Alliance Internationale pour la Justice (AIJ) organized a Conference on Iraqi refugees and IDPs (July 2002)**

Agenda related to Internal Displacement:

"The displacement of Kurds, Turkmens, Assyrians and Shias, by Françoise Brié, International Alliance for Justice

The situation of displaced persons in Kurdistan, by Nasreen M. Sideek Barwari, Minister of the Kurdish Regional Government

The Displacement of Kurds and others in the Kirkuk Region, by Dr. Nouri Talabany, Kiruk Trust for Research and Studies (United Kingdom)"  
(AIJ 4 July 2002)

## **References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement**

### **Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of Feb 03)**

- Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation
- Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)
- Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages
- Training on the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

### **Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation**

None

### **Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)**

None

**Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages**

The GP are available in Arabic.
Documents: GP in Arabic [Internet]

**Training on the Guiding Principles**

None

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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CERD	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
EIA	Energy Information Administration
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
GNP	Gross National Product
HROI	Human Rights Organization in Iraq
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross
INC	Iraqi National Congress
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KDPI	Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran
OIP	United Nations of the Iraq Program
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
SCIRI	Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq
SCR	Security Council Resolution
Sfr.	Swiss Francs
UNCHR	United Nations Commission on Human Rights
UN-Habitat or UNCHS	United Nations Center for Human Settlements
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
USCR	U.S. Committee for Refugees
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

## LIST OF SOURCES USED

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