

**THE IRAQ WAR:**  
**SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN IMPLICATIONS**

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REPORT NUMBER FOUR  
(11 - 21 May 2003)

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report is the fourth in a series on the social and humanitarian implications of the Iraq war. It covers the period between 11 and 22 May 2003, and focuses on developments regarding the situation faced by Iraq on the administrative, health, food supplies, education and services levels.

A new US-selected team to oversee the reconstruction of Iraq has focused on shoring up the security situation, a step many see as a precondition for the efficient distribution of humanitarian aid. The occupying forces have announced the arrest of dozens of alleged looters, although the practice has not been eradicated. Baghdad's lack of security continues to remain a concern, and several thousand US military police will be brought in shortly to bolster an under-equipped local police force. Meanwhile, the postwar political transition has experienced further delays, as the occupying powers have apparently ruled out any "government" until an interim authority oversees reform in areas like the constitution, the electoral system and school curricula. The policy of de-Baathification has had mixed results, with Iraqis complaining that some deserving individuals have been kept out of public life while some cronies of the old regime have retained certain positions. Meanwhile, the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance has altered pay scales for civil servants, to promote civilian professions like teaching and medicine at the expense of military and security-related ones.

Independent estimates of casualties have begun to produce rough estimates of the civilian cost of the war, as earlier figures on dead and wounded are revised upward. Retribution murders, whether politically- or ethnically-based, are also taking place, while unexploded ordinance remains a deadly threat, particularly to children forced to supplement meager or non-existent family incomes by scavenging for metals.

While massive population movements or displacement never took place, aid officials are dealing with an expected imminent return of half a million Iraqis from abroad, as well as the ongoing difficulties faced by thousands of internally displaced persons and non-Iraqi refugees. The US military has found itself forced to hammer out an ad hoc agreement between Arabs and original Kurdish landowners in Kirkuk, after a wave of violence sparked by Kurds anxious to reclaim their old properties. Mass graves continued to be uncovered by the public, while official oversight is absent.

Claims of wartime human rights abuses such as torture by US and UK troops have also come to light.

As the UN Security Council prepared to lift sanctions on Iraq and phase out the Oil For Food program in six months' time, international aid officials began assessing and re-establishing Iraq's Public Distribution System, which had ensured food supplies for most Iraqis during the old regime, as part of the OFF program. Aid flows, meanwhile, continue, as countries like Australia, the UK and Canada outline their aid packages for postwar Iraq.

The health situation remains a major concern, with the confirmation of several dozen cases of cholera and widespread acute malnutrition on the rise among children. Health concerns ranged from the basic - securing safe supplies of drinking water - to the more complicated - checking whether looted nuclear facilities had contaminated the public. Otherwise, the lack of security negatively impacted health care as well as education, as parents remain wary about sending children back to school. Public services have improved somewhat but remain very uneven, as northern areas do relatively well compared to the rest of the country. The recovery of the oil sector, a key signal for the pace of reconstruction, has been beset by various delays, due to infrastructure and the lack of security at some installations.

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A - PREAMBLE

This is the third report within the framework of the consultancy project commissioned by ESCWA, "The Iraq War: Social and Humanitarian Implications". This project involves:

- \* Monitoring the social and humanitarian repercussions of the war on the following levels: human security, the health situation, the nutritional situation, basic public services and utilities, displaced and refugees, the housing situation, and the education situation.
- \* Identifying priorities to confront the situation and drafting relevant recommendations and suggestions, with a focus on areas falling within the interest and purview of the United Nations (and particularly ESCWA).

During the initial stages of this project, it is natural for the greatest portion of our attention to be taken up by human conditions and the related relief and assistance actions in the wake of military activities on the one hand; and the collapse of the former government and its administration, on the other. The decline in the intensity of the conflict; the increasingly stable security conditions; the creation of new administrations by the occupying forces; and the beginning of political process; will gradually move the focus of the project toward reconstruction, rehabilitation and development (which are ESCWA's core tasks).

Likewise, it is natural that reports and updates during the initial stages of this project will be predominantly descriptive and analytical, with recommendations and suggestions gradually taking shape as the project moves forward.

B - LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

The United States' new choice to lead reconstruction efforts in Iraq, career diplomat Paul Bremer, spent the first two weeks of his tenure stressing the need to address the main concern of Iraqis - the situation of lawlessness, chaos and insecurity that has prevailed since the fall of the regime in early April.

Bremer, who is US President George W Bush's presidential envoy to Iraq, has essentially taken over for retired General Jay Garner, who had headed the US' Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA). Also, an American

diplomat charged with responsibility for Baghdad and Central Iraq, ambassador Barbara Bodine, was called back to Washington shortly after the media reported Garner's imminent replacement by Bremer. Analysts said the moves indicated the recognition that the transition team had failed to make progress at an acceptable rate and were particularly hurt by the failure to ensure security.

On 15 May, Bremer indicated that the occupying forces would seek to round up many of the thousands of criminals released by the Saddam Hussein regime last year and announced that 300 people had been arrested in Baghdad as part of a "get tough" campaign.

Two days later, US Major General William Webster announced that coalition troops had arrested 129 people over the past 24 hours for offences ranging from looting to shooting at US forces.

As for the increased military personnel being used in this new policy, Webster said the US army had posted an additional 9,000 soldiers to Baghdad, meaning an increase from 16,000 to 25,000 US soldiers, with the army now running 24-hour patrols in the city.

For his part, Bremer announced the military police contingent of US forces would jump from 6,000 to 13,000 (in the capital, this would mean doubling the current force of 2,000).

On 16 May, Kenzo Oshima, the United Nations' global coordinator for humanitarian affairs, met with Bremer and said the lack of security was hampering the effort to provide humanitarian aid - the same day, news reports indicated that 242 people had been killed in Baghdad since the end of the war, mostly by gunshots.

There have been contradictory reports about the situation of the police force in the capital. On 18 May, according to media reports, a US military survey of Baghdad's 43 police stations found 86 percent of the 8,200-man police force back on the job. A week earlier, according to the British daily *The Guardian*, 80 percent of Baghdad police stations had been damaged by looting, while other media have reported that Iraqi policemen have been under-equipped and unenthusiastic about spending the night in their stations.

The Iraqi public and several Iraqi politicians have been outspoken in blaming the US for the lawlessness being allowed to continue. On 17 May, Kenzo Oshima said that while there was, at the moment, no "major humanitarian crisis" in Iraq, there was the potential for grave humanitarian problems unless US and British forces swiftly restored security. On 13 May, the International Committee of the Red Cross ([www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org)) said once again that security remains the top issue for Iraqis, adding that looting, banditry, car-jacking, physical attacks and killing were commonplace in the capital. The organization said that while schools have re-opened, parents remain

concerned about their children's safety.

Meanwhile, discussion continued at the United Nations to produce a Security Council resolution that would lift sanctions imposed after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. During discussions on 20 May of the latest version of the US-UK draft resolution, members reportedly asked numerous questions and demanded changes, and led to that approval for a fourth draft should come around 22 May. The new draft includes a political role for the UN special representative in Iraq, whom UN secretary general Kofi Annan has said will be appointed quickly once a resolution is passed. The draft phases out the Oil For Food program over six months (originally four months) and sets up a special development fund for Iraq, which critics believe could mean that Iraq's oil money will fund its reconstruction after the US-led war. The draft also mentions a role for UN weapons inspectors, without specifying responsibilities. Media reports say that the Bush administration is pushing for Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN high commissioner of human rights, to be named UN representative in Iraq, saying that such an appointment could broaden the organization's role in the reconstruction effort.

At the same time, the US has dropped some of its own sanctions, such as letting: US residents to send up to \$500 a month to Iraq, allowing humanitarian aid supplies to be sent to Iraq, authorizing any activity paid for by the US government, including reconstruction moves by contractors, and permitting privately funded humanitarian activities by US-based organizations.

However, a report in the British daily *The Observer* on 18 May ([www.observer.co.uk](http://www.observer.co.uk)) said that Kurdish authorities in the north were going ahead with oil deals with European and American companies without consulting other Iraqi groups or the US administration in Baghdad.

As for contributions to peace-keeping operations, Polish Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski said on 12 May that his country would eventually take charge of south-central Iraq, instead of a larger zone originally offered in the north. Poland has said it is prepared to send 2,000 peacekeepers but it is unclear where another 5,000 troops for the zone would come from. The zone, between Baghdad and Basra, includes the cities of Najaf and Karbala and has a population of 3 million and an area of 80,000 square kilometers.

While the occupying forces pushed the issues of international legitimacy in one hand and security in the other further up their priority list, they pushed further back the matter of handing over power to an Iraqi government. On 20 May, John Sawers, British Prime Minister Tony Blair's special envoy to Iraq, said that the occupying powers would hand over power to an Iraqi government only after elections, which

could take one or two years. A future constitution, he added, would grant a form of autonomy to a Kurdish area that is larger than the current three provinces in the north. The following day, Bremer announced that an interim Iraqi authority, which will oversee the pre-election phase, would be selected by a national conference in mid-July, rather than the month of June, as previously announced. The coalition's strategy appears to be one of building from the bottom up, rather than the top down, which could mean a significantly long "transitional period." Media reports said that coalition officials have settled on the idea of setting up an interim authority rather than provisional government; this authority of unelected individuals would draw up a constitution, revamp the educational system and devise a plan for future democratic elections.

Actual transfers of power at lower levels, meanwhile, have begun slowly. On 15 May, British forces handed over the port city of Umm Qasr to an interim, 12-member local council and all but a handful of the 200 British troops were scheduled to depart. However, the occupying forces later delayed the scheduled election of a full-fledged council by at least one week, reportedly to produce proper voting procedures and voter lists. The northern city of Kirkuk, with 700,000 residents, is scheduled to hold elections for its local council in late May and become the third city (along with Mosul) to have functioning local councils.

One-person, one-vote elections for local councils did not and will not take place in these three towns; instead, the council are being selected by relatively small groups of several hundred community or tribal leaders.

One of the main planks of the occupation forces' post-war arrangements involves the policy of "de-Baathification." On 11 May, coalition forces commander General Tommy Franks announced that the Baath Party had been dissolved and invited all parties to participate in political life except those "who urge or practice violence." However, this move and Bremer's later pledge to exclude some 30,000 party members from public sector jobs (on 16 May) did not translate into a smoothly-running policy. There appears to be varying criteria for retaining or appointing senior figures; Iraqis have complained that tainted figures have been selected for some posts, while in other cases, Baath party members who did not deserve to be purged were excluded from certain positions. A report by the Associated Press (on 12 May) quoted a returned Iraqi exile, Walid Khalifa of the Iraqi National Accord, as saying he had quit his post on the UK-appointed Basra city consultative council due to the presence of profiteers with ties to Saddam Hussein. On 13 May, the Health Ministry announced that resignation of its top Iraqi official, Ali Shinan Janabi, due to his refusal to condemn the Baath Party, in which he had formerly been a member. A week later, coalition forces said that eight other senior Health Ministry officials would be replaced as well due to their ties with the party. Also on 13 May, the

coalition forces told self-appointed Baghdad police chief, Hamid Rahman, an Interior Ministry official, to not come back to work. Rahman, who was attempting to fill the gap left by an earlier resignation of Zuheir al-Naimi, was accused of running his own police clique within the force. On 19 May, 100 bus drivers in Baghdad protested the firing of their boss, a member of the Baath party, on the grounds that he was not tainted by his association with the former regime; the following day, 50 electricity department employees demonstrated against the appointment of a former Baath party official, Karim Wahid Hassan, to head the department. On 11 May, US Chief of Staff General Richard Myers says that Bremer and retired general Jay Garner, the outgoing top American civilian administrator in Iraq, would be studying ways to create a "reformed" Iraqi armed forces, beginning by dissolving the Republican Guard and other units closely linked to the old regime.

The ORHA has continued making \$20 payments to state employees and has begun paying pensioners \$40. The latter payment is to tide over the country's 1.8 million pensioners until looted records can be reconstructed; the \$20 payments were originally meant to be a one-time step but even ORHA officials suspected that they might be continued for several months.

There has been some confusion about the payments, which have been taking place for a few weeks. Some reports have spoken of an upcoming \$30 emergency payment for civil servants, while earlier dollar payments have had differing impacts due to fluctuating exchange rates. The ORHA said on 20 May that it has 130 billion Dinars ready to pay back salaries on a new wage scale, which reportedly increases the salaries of teachers and policemen and reduces that of military and security personnel.

Along with these developments, the Associated Press reported on 13 May that the dinar was up to 1,500 against the dollar, compared to 4,000 during the war. More recent reports have cited a figure of 1,200 to the dollar. Banks, meanwhile, have been closed since 20 March.

## C - HUMAN COST

### One - Killed and Wounded

Iraqi civilians: Figures on civilian casualties provided by the private organization IraqBodyCount ([www.iraqbodycount.com](http://www.iraqbodycount.com)) have grown significantly since earlier in the month. It now estimates that a minimum of 4,065 and a maximum of 5,223 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the beginning of hostilities. This is compared to our report of 2 May, which gave the figure of at least 2,500 killed and 10,000 wounded; in our 12 May report, we quoted Iraq Body Count's figures of 2,233 (minimum) and

2,706 (maximum).

The increase in the figures is apparently due to a new figure given, of 1,482-2,009 dead counted in 19 Baghdad hospitals during the period of 19 March - 9 April.

The organization, which appears to be the only party attempting to undertake a systematic effort in this regard, provides a detailed database for its figures, which were compiled by checking the reports of more than 60 leading news and media organizations and meticulously subtracting figures if there is the possibility of duplication in various media reports.

According to a survey by the Los Angeles Times ([www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com)), more than 1,700 civilians were killed and 8,000 injured in the battle for Baghdad alone. It also includes figures for the first 2 and 1/2 weeks after the city's fall on 9 April.

William M. Arkin, senior fellow at the Center for Strategic Education at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, and a consultant and contributor to The Los Angeles Times, said that it probably will not be known until summer or later how many civilians died in Iraq but that the number will probably be "many thousands."

The continuing lawlessness in Iraq means that Iraqis are suffering from various types of violence - retribution murders and assassinations, random violence and crime-related killings. On 18 May, the singer Daoud Qaisi was murdered in his Baghdad home; he headed the union of Iraqi artists and had glorified the regime. Also, unknown assailants (believed to be students) shot to death the deputy dean of the Faculty of Science at Baghdad's Mustansiriya University, reportedly because he harassed female students. In northern cities like Kirkuk, media reports indicate that despite generally calm conditions, a huge amount of weapons remain in the hands of Saddam Hussein supporters, increasing the possibility of violence. Some 10 people were killed over a single weekend in Kirkuk, in violence between Arabs and Kurds.

There remains the serious problem of unexploded ordinance, which continues to plague the country, especially its children. Various media reports have noted that young children, whose family economic conditions have prompted them to locate items that can be sold, have been the most affected by this phenomenon. On 12 May, six Iraqi children were killed and 10 injured in Basra when a bomb they were trying to dismantle exploded. They were trying to retrieve copper in order to sell it, according to press reports. According to the UN Integrated Regional Information Network ([www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)), officials from the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) said that they had removed 184,500 items of unexploded ordinance around Kirkuk and Mosul; more than 12,000 mines and booby traps have been cleared.

## D - POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

As relief officials prepare for a possible influx of thousands of Iraqis returning to their country from abroad, concerns continue to be raised about the rights of refugees and displaced Iraqis inside the country. On 12 May, the office of the UN humanitarian coordinator for Iraq said that between 700,000 and 1 million people are estimated to be internally displaced in Iraq ([www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)). Some 600,000-800,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) are estimated to be located in the north and 100,000 to 300,000 in the center and south. Prior to war, the vast majority was hosted in communities and around 18,000 continued to require assistance, in public places and camps. In the immediate aftermath of hostilities, incidents such as looting, destruction of property and forced expulsions took place in major cities, affecting all communities and leading to some population movement. On 13 May, the International Organization of Migration said that as humanitarian workers were beginning to gain access to Iraq after the war, the organization had identified some 58,000 IDPs in the south and center of the country. About half were living in abandoned public buildings, a quarter staying with host families and a quarter living in rough tents or in the open.

According to the UNHCR ([www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)), rising numbers of refugees in Iraq, particularly Iranian refugees in the south, are being targeted by local residents. Around 1,200 refugees, mainly Iranian Kurds, remain in a no-man's land on the Jordanian border and some 1,000 Palestinians who received benefits under the former regime remain displaced in the capital, after being evicted by their landlords. Meanwhile, a field report by the UNCHR from an Iraqi refugee camp in Iran indicated that many of the 200,000 refugees in that country were anxious to return home. The agency is preparing for the possible return of up to 500,000 Iraqi refugees, mainly from Iran and Jordan. The UNHCR says that the organization is now operating in Iraq's three main regions.

To tackle the issue of forced resettlement and displacement under the former regime, ORHA said on 21 May that it would, in the next few weeks, establish a committee to oversee the amicable settlement of property disputes.

The office asked Iraqis to not settle conflicts over the ownership of a house, land or commercial establishment "by your own hand."

With this country-wide pronouncement coming six weeks after the fall of the regime, occupation forces on the ground have on occasion responded to pressing questions of returning displaced persons. In Kirkuk, US military personnel oversaw, according to media reports, an agreement to split profits from this year's harvest between Arabs and Kurdish returnees to lands that they had been forcibly displaced from. Despite

the generally better levels of security in northern towns like Kirkuk, incidents of violence between Arabs and Kurds have been reported.

The New York Times ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)) reported from Mosul that the region's barley crop will rot unless farmers are paid by the occupying authorities at a pre-determined price set by the old regime. Ethnic disputes have seen Kurds come to reclaim lost land here as well; farmer estimates that 10 percent of the area's land in dispute.

In Geneva, the UN secretary-general's Representative on Internally Displaced Persons, Francis Deng, said that the UN should be asked to help with the issue of internal refugees displaced by the previous regime. He said reconstruction and development funds, including oil revenues, should be used to help people return or obtain compensation for land and property lost but in either case "fairness must be assured for the more than 200,000 Arabs" settled in the Kirkuk area by the former regime.

The issue of mass graves - and the occupying forces' failure to secure these sites - was raised repeatedly throughout the middle of the month. On 12 May, the BBC ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)) reported that 126 bodies had been found in a mass grave near Basra, making it one of the country's largest find so far. However, in a process that would be repeated at other sites, no organization or authority oversaw the exhumation process of what could prove to be a crime scene if those responsible are ever brought to justice. Several dozen coffins were lined up in a local mosque to allow relatives the opportunity to identify the bodies. On 14 May, press reports cited human rights groups and Iraqi organizations as predicting that a mass grave in Mahawil, near Hillah, may contain up to 15,000 bodies. Human Rights Watch ([www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)) said the US had known about the site since 3 May but had taken no action to protect it. HRW said that another site, containing 1,000 bodies, was located in the village of Mohammed Sukran, north of Baghdad. HRW said that some 290,000 people were believe to be missing in Iraq. On 16 May, the BBC said the remains of up to 600 Kuwaiti prisoners from the 1990 Iraqi invasion had been uncovered in a mass grave near the Iraqi town of Habbaniya, south-west of Baghdad. Moreover, the draft resolutions for lifting sanctions on Iraq, being debated by the UN Security Council, had no human rights provisions, HRW said, mentioning issues such as tribunals over past human rights violations and mechanisms to discourage further violations from taking place.

On 18 May, the ICRC ([www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org)) handed over in Basra to the Iranian authorities the remains of Iranian soldiers killed during the Iran-Iraq war. The ICRC also handed over the remains of 84 Iraqi soldiers also killed or taken captive during the same war. The Iranian bodies were discovered by British forces in April in southern Iraq.

Also, Amnesty International said it was investigating reports that Iraqi POWs were tortured by US and British troops. Amnesty officials said a "substantial proportion" of 20 former POWS interviewed claimed that they had been maltreated; the UK's Defense Ministry said it had not seen details of the accusations. On 20 May, the British Defense Ministry acknowledged that a senior army officer, Lieutenant Colonel Tim Collins, was being formally investigated over alleged war crimes in Iraq. The army's special investigations branch is looking into allegations that Collins' treatment of prisoners of war and an Iraqi civic leader may have broken the Geneva Convention. On 17 May, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) accused Saddam Hussein's son, Uday, of torturing and jailing athletes when he headed Iraq's national Olympic squad

## E - RELIEF COORDINATION AND FOOD SITUATION

Relief officials are continuing to assess Iraq's humanitarian aid requirements, as they stress the need for security and await the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on the postwar period.

On 11 May, James Morris, the executive director of the World Food Program, became the first UN agency chief to visit Baghdad - he said the Public Distribution System (PDS) would be revived by 1 June for a six-month, \$1.85 billion program to distribute 2.8 million tons of food, the agency's largest program. He stressed the need for security to prevail so that aid workers can do their job. On 15 May, the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq said initial assessments of the PDS are ongoing, but that preliminary findings indicated that overall damage was minimal. The office called insecurity the main constraint to resuming the PDS, as not only are warehouses vulnerable, but food agents require assurances of security before receiving rations for further distribution. The system, which was responsible for distributing rations to 60 percent of Iraq's 27 million people before the war under the Oil For Food Program, involves 44,000 food agents. Speaking on 21 May, the top UN relief official in Iraq, Ramiro Lopes da Silva, said that the occupying powers appeared to be taking a more active stance on the issue of providing security, although looting continued to take place. Da Silva and Bremer, in a meeting on 14 May, also focused on the ways the UN and its specialized agencies could help in the recovery of Iraq. The possibility of the UN using Oil For Food program money to buy locally-produced crops was discussed. A statement by da Silva's office ([www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)) said the UN was ready to do so through the Ministry of Trade, establishing security across the country was an important prerequisite to such an undertaking.

The statement added that a major local purchasing exercise by the UN would help address current concerns that farmers are short of options for selling of their grain,

previously purchased by the government. Farmers do not have access to warehouses and locating buyers outside Iraq is problematic.

Meanwhile, aid continues to flow into the country; Jordan's national carrier, Royal Jordanian, said on 21 May that it would launch its first cargo flight to Iraq in a few days' time to transport humanitarian aid ([www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)). After the maiden flight, Royal Jordanian will make three weekly flights to Iraq on Saturdays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, it said. An Airbus 310 cargo plane that can carry up to 40 tons of UN-authorized humanitarian aid will be used on those flights, the airline added.

On 12 May, a statement by the UN Integrated Regional Information Network ([www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)) said that UN agencies and programs have identified goods in 293 contracts under the Oil For Food program worth \$802 million as shippable by 3 June. Most of these goods are in the food (\$356 million) and electricity (\$204 million), agriculture (\$119 million) and health (\$81 million) sectors.

For its part, the ICRC has invited national Red Cross organizations from around the world to meet in Baghdad to frame a coordinated response by the Red Cross to the continuing humanitarian crisis in Iraq ([www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)). Work has already begun on strengthening the capacity of Iraqi Red Crescent to meet the most immediate needs of the Iraqi people including food, medicine and clean drinking water.

On 18 May, UNICEF head Carol Bellamy warned that Iraq could slip into a "major crisis" without swift action to meet humanitarian needs; she said UNICEF had secured \$70 million in pledges for a six-month emergency humanitarian aid program.

Australia announced its commitment for the people of Iraq stood at more than \$100 million; with \$55m to meet immediate humanitarian needs ([www.reliefweb.org](http://www.reliefweb.org)). In a statement on 12 May, Australia said another \$45m would go to priority reconstruction activities where it can offer particular expertise, namely the rehabilitation of Iraq's agricultural sector, with re-establishing food security and revitalizing production key reconstruction challenges. The main priorities are re-establishing Iraq's operational and institutional structures and enabling Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture to function effectively. A further priority is to help Iraq harvest the current crop and ensure the planting of summer crops.

On 14 May, Canada said it would provide Iraq with a total of \$300 million in humanitarian aid and reconstruction, after pledging \$100 million in March. The funding is expected to help Iraqi authorities improve basic services, including access to clean water, proper sanitation and good primary health care, as well as support efforts to build democratic institutions and help reform judicial, police and correctional services.

The UK's Department for Overseas Development said on 16 May that it had committed £115m to support work by humanitarian agencies in the Iraq and has

£95m set aside for further contributions. A further £60 million was set aside by the Chancellor on 9 April for Departments to claim from the Treasury for work in Iraq if and when needs arise.

In addition, the Ministry of Defense has been allocated £30m by the Treasury to help it carry out its humanitarian obligations under the Geneva Convention and The Hague Regulations.

## F - HEALTH SITUATION

More than a month after the end of hostilities, international organizations announced either the confirmation or high likelihood of serious health problems afflicting the country. The World Health Organization ([www.who.org](http://www.who.org)) confirmed on 14 May the existence of four cases of cholera in Basra and said another 18 cases were likely. A later statement by the UN office of the humanitarian coordinator for Iraq said the number of cholera cases had risen to 38. WHO officials expressed their concern with the rapidly rising rate of diarrhea cases around the country as well and said the lack of security remained the most pressing item, as it affected various aspects of the health situation.

On 21 May, the UN said that one million cubic meters of waste water was spilling daily into the Tigris and its tributary, the Diyala, due to the poor state of Baghdad's water sewage plants. The top UN relief official in Iraq, Ramiro Lopes da Silva, said that rehabilitation work as part of a \$1.8 million UNDP plan financed by the oil for food program, had almost finished, but now around \$5 million would be needed to return the plant to its pre-war state. Polluted water has been cited for the rise in diarrhea cases and the cholera outbreak.

Also on 14 May, UNICEF announced that acute malnutrition rates among Iraqi children had nearly doubled in the last year, due to a lack of safe drinking water, coinciding with war and the breakdown of social services. The organization cited findings showing that 7.7 percent of children under 5 were suffering from acute malnutrition, compared to 4 percent in February 2002. The organization says that security concerns have prevented it from carrying out aid operations. In the first half of the month, media reports expanded on earlier worries of sickness from nuclear contamination; the International Atomic Energy Association, on 12 May, said it wanted to investigate reports that Iraqis living near the looted nuclear site al-Tuwaitha have become sick from contamination. A week later, IAEA head Mohammed ElBaradei warned that the looting of nuclear sites could lead to a contamination "emergency"; he urged the return of UN inspectors, which was contingent on the passing of a UN Security Council resolution.

Dr. Ghulam Popal, the World Health Organization (WHO) representative in Iraq,

said on 12 May that his top priority for the health sector was "security, security and security," the breakdown of which had consequences for various aspects of the sector. He also said that WHO had 25 teams in Iraq trying to assess the most urgent needs.

The office of the UN's humanitarian coordinator for Iraq said that in Baghdad, half of the health facilities, all in the Shiite neighborhood of Sadr, are in the control of militias of religious groups who are paying salaries, managing facilities and, reportedly, waiving user fees for poor people. Indications from Baghdad, the office said, suggest parallel health systems are being established

Also, a press report by The Guardian ([www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)) on 11 May indicated that trafficking in cocaine and heroin had begun in some Baghdad neighborhoods, a practice that residents said was non-existent under the former regime.

## G - EDUCATION SITUATION

Students at colleges and universities headed back to school on 17 May, after primary and secondary level students were encouraged to return earlier in the month. College and university faculty members also conducted free elections of their university presidents and other top officials (LA Times: [www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com)). The selections must be approved by the US occupation authorities. However, the lack of security and services like transportation hampered the turnout, a situation also complained about by students who returned for classes.

According to the ICRC, schools have opened but the lack of security has discouraged many children from returning to class.

UNICEF's executive director, Carol Bellamy focused on kick-starting the educational system during her visit to Iraq on 17-19 May. According to the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, a lack of electricity, poor sanitation, insecurity, as well as insufficient schools are all impeding children's ability to access education. The occupying powers have said that schools are in the process of being surveyed for structural damage.

## H - SERVICES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

The return of public services and functioning state utilities continues to experiencing problems related to looting and a lack of law and order, as well as other problems. Media reports indicate that telephone services will take a long time to restore, especially after a fire gutted the central telephone exchange in Baghdad on 11 May, with occupying forces either unwilling or unable to respond.

In general, politicians and officials have reported some improvement to power and water supplies in the capital; however, service remains erratic, according to media

reports. And after an overall record of improving conditions in Baghdad during May, recent media reports have indicated that amounts of uncollected trash are beginning to accumulate to alarming levels, with possible negative health repercussions ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)). Meanwhile, conditions in Iraq's most important oil city, Kirkuk have improved dramatically in the five weeks since coalition troops arrived April 10. Media reports say that water, power, banks, schools and a fledgling police force are up and running, despite some local complaints that the ORHA is not functioning yet. A 500-member, ethnically balanced police force have earned respect of locals, reports say.

On 13 May the US' Major General David Petraeus said that 90 percent of Mosul had water and power services, with public servants receiving payments and policemen returning to their jobs. The UN's Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq announced that the water supply in Basra was being restored, but leakages to the network continued to impede progress. Fresh water supplies brought in by tank continue to support many towns, according to the HCI's office.

On 11 May, Karim Hassan, the head of the Electricity Commission, says Baghdad is only receiving 40 percent of the power it needs; saying he hoped full power will be restored in two months.

The recovery of the oil sector continues to stall as infrastructure problems push back earlier production predictions. On 11 May, acting oil minister Tamir Ghadban announced the scaling back of production estimates by one-third, expecting to produce only 1 million barrels per day (bpd) in June (the pre-war level was around 3 million bpd, with 2.1 million bpd exported). He attributed the delay to damaged equipment and shortages of industrial water. He said Baghdad would see imported gasoline supplies from Kuwait to reduce shortages which appeared to have eased somewhat by the end of the month.

On 14 May, Reuters reported that the Basra refinery would back to full capacity, 140,000 barrels per day, from current 68,000 bpd, by 27 May if other links and pipelines are repaired on time. The refinery produces diesel, gasoline and kerosene.

MD/AH

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