

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

(10 April - 6 JUNE 2003)

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CONSOLIDATED REPORT
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After more than a month of slow progress toward alleviating the humanitarian situation in Iraq after the war, the occupying forces finally coalesced into a Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), headed by a US career diplomat, to oversee matters. However, the slow response to the lack of security throughout the country, and especially in the capital, along with the go-slow policy of turning power over to Iraqis, have alienated many people. The CPA is focusing on boosting security, relieving some basic needs and turning some public responsibilities over to Iraqis, on a carefully monitored basis.

The lifting of UN sanctions, stipulated by UNSC Resolution 1483 voted on 22 May, while expected to help in some reconstruction areas, has raised concerns on the fate of the crucial Public Distribution System when the UN's Oil-for-Food program will be phased out in six months. It will also be balanced against the CPA's rigorous policy of de-Baathification, which has seen several hundred thousand employees of the former regime's state apparatus thrown out of work.

After weeks of uncertainty, the CPA is now paying civil servants and pensioners and re-adjusting pay scales to favor certain professions and penalize others.

In the absence of official statistics, non-governmental groups continue to revise upwards their estimates of civilian casualties during the conflict (reaching now some 7,000 killed and 30,000 injured among civilians only), which are also increasing due to post-war incidents of revenge killings, accidents involving unexploded ordinance, and a general lack of law and order. The exact number of Iraqi prisoners of war is also in doubt, due to accusations that the occupying powers have not allowed access to all detainees.

While massive waves of refugees did not result from the conflict, hundreds of thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) must be dealt with, say international officials and aid workers. Several hundred thousand Iraqis outside the country may eventually return, and incidents of violence have already taken place when IDPs seek to return to their original homes, such as in the mixed Kurdish-Arab northern part of the country.

There are also human rights issues related to threats by Iraqis against non-Iraqi refugees residing in the country. Other human rights issues included mass graves of victims from the former regime; these are in fact crime scenes that have been unprotected by the occupying forces. The US and UK have also been accused of human rights violations during the occupation.

The food situation has received a boost with the re-launch in June of the Public

Distribution System, the mechanism that was set up to get food to Iraqis under the UN's Oil for Food Program, but uncertainty remain on the substitute of this crucial program (benefiting to 60% of Iraqi population) vowed to phase out in six months according to UNSC Res. 1483 . In general, relief agencies have demanded better security conditions in order to do their jobs. A preliminary estimate of funding for humanitarian assistance and reconstruction needs stands at about \$2 billion.

Iraq's postwar health situation has been hit by the emergence of several dozen cases of cholera, mainly in the Basra area, due to the lack of clean water. Acute malnutrition is also a chief concern, although aid officials say that Iraq's fairly well-developed health sector needs "jump-starting" and not a thorough effort that would begin from zero. One official has warned of a deterioration in the summer due to the lack of fresh water, which is expected to cause many cases of severe diarrhea. As with other humanitarian areas, the health sector has been hampered by a lack of security and looting of various facilities.

The education sector has begun returning to normal, although weeks of post-war insecurity took their toll on attendance and morale, while the CPA's de-Baathification policy removed many qualified senior teachers who were unfortunate enough to be party members. Ad hoc curriculum reform has also taken place, and fears mount that mid-summer end-of-year examinations might not be handled well enough to ensure a satisfactory pass rate for students.

Public utilities and services have improved at a slow, but steady rate after the war, with security concerns hampering much of the rebuilding efforts. The CPA and international organizations have identified assistance and other needs in the areas of electricity, water supplies and trash collection;

The banking sector and the oil sector, which could help alleviate electricity problems, have been slow to recover.

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A - PREAMBLE

This is a consolidated report covering the two months that followed the occupation of Iraq by the US/UK coalition forces. It falls within the framework of the consultancy project commissioned by ESCWA, "The Iraq War: Social and Humanitarian Implications". It has been preceded by four sequential reports issued on 14 April, 2 May, 12 May and 22 May 2003.

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).

B – SECURITY SITUATION AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), headed by American diplomat L Paul Bremer, has emerged to administer post-war affairs in Iraq after weeks of hesitation and uncertainty by the occupying powers. This occurred in parallel with the UN Security Council passing Resolution 1483 that giving the occupying powers very large prerogatives to administer Iraqi affairs. US President George W Bush had previously announced that combat missions had ended in Iraq at the beginning of May, but an uneasy peace and administrative uncertainty continue to prevail in the country.

While large-scale humanitarian disasters have failed to materialize, some officials have warned that the continuing administrative and political limbo in Iraq, despite the presence of the CPA, could trigger health catastrophes or other social explosions in the near future.

Security remains uncertain in many parts of Iraq, although it has slowly improved in the weeks following the end of hostilities around 9 April. Despite the presence of US and UK military forces, paramilitary groups have sprung up in areas of Baghdad and religious leaders have overseen ad hoc local authority in various parts of the south, while some tribes assumed responsibility for law and order in remote desert areas.

Recent attacks against US troops forced Washington in early June to deploy 1,500 troops in several towns in central Iraq, while thousands of military police were brought in to Baghdad in May to help restore order, after regular army units were deemed unsuitable for the task.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (www.icrc.org) evaluated the security situation at the beginning of June as volatile, despite efforts to establish a credible police force. An 11pm-6am curfew remained in effect in Baghdad, while areas like Basra have seen a noticeable improvement in security.

In mid-May, news reports indicated that 242 people had been killed in Baghdad alone since the end of the war, mostly the victims of shooting incidents. On 13 May, the International Committee of the Red Cross (www.icrc.org) said security remained 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.

Under Bremer, a career diplomat with a background in counter-terrorism issues, the CPA is now trying to improve the poor security situation as well as ensure a transition into a civilian authority run by Iraqis and provide public services and functioning public utilities. Bremer took over in early May from retired US General Jay Garner, who had headed the US' Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA); another top American diplomat charged with responsibility for Baghdad and Central Iraq was called back to Washington shortly after the media reported Garner's imminent replacement by Bremer.

The moves indicated the original transition team's failure to make progress at an acceptable rate, particularly on the security issue. On 15 May, Bremer indicated that the occupying forces would arrest many of the thousands of criminals released by the Saddam Hussein regime last year; officials announced that several hundred arrests in Baghdad as part of the "get tough" campaign. As for the increased military personnel being used in the new policy, the US army posted an additional 9,000 soldiers to Baghdad, an increase from 16,000 to 25,000 US soldiers, with the army now running 24-hour patrols in the city. 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).

However, considerable dissatisfaction with the CPA has arisen with Bremer's decision to eventually name a 35-member political council with which he would consult on policy matters and the appointment of Iraqis to ministry positions; the earlier plan had involved convening a national conference in July to form an interim Iraqi authority. Media reports indicated that representatives of the seven main political organizations that had been coordinating with the CPA were outraged that they were being sidelined while the public saw it as yet another delay in the formation of a functioning government that can meet basic needs. The CPA is reportedly dissatisfied with the level of representation that exile political

organizations enjoy inside Iraq; officials also want to see women, tribal officials and Christians in the Iraqi political authority.

The CPA has made initial steps to transfer authority of day-to-day issues to town councils, which have been elected in Mosul, Kirkuk and Umm Qasr. One-person, one-vote elections for local councils did not and will not take place; instead, the councils are being selected by relatively small groups of several hundred community or tribal leaders. On 28 May, Abdel-Rahman Mustafa, a Kurd, was sworn in as mayor of Kirkuk and an Arab became deputy mayor. American forces organized the vote, which originally saw town representatives elect a 30-member council, with Kurds gaining the biggest bloc. Also in late May, USAID marked the handover of three democracy or capacity-building projects to the transitional town council in Umm Qasr, which include the first-ever access to the internet.

The first six weeks of CPA tenure in Iraq has seen mounting complaints about a lack of security and a range of public services, while Bremer's first moves have put almost half a million Iraqis out of work. The CPA decided on 16 May that some 30,000 senior Baath officials would be banned from public life; a week later, the army and the Information Ministry were dissolved, putting an estimated 400,000 Iraqis out of work without pensions or re-employment possibilities. Many of these individuals had no ties with the former regime. Bremer has reportedly promised that those untainted military personnel below the rank of lieutenant colonel can apply for assignment in the New Iraqi Corps, the new Iraqi military.

The policy of de-Baathification has not run smoothly due to varying criteria for retaining or appointing senior figures; Iraqis have complained that tainted figures have been selected for some civilian posts, while in other cases, Baath party members who did not deserve to be purged were excluded from certain positions. 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 clique within the force. Protests by bus drivers and electricity workers have demonstrated against the firing of dedicated officials or the appointment of tainted ones.

Also threatened by the CPA's actions is Iraq's manufacturing industry, since Bremer announced on 26 May that Iraq was open for business, signaling a flood of cheap imports that have forced the closure of many firms.

Demonstrations by out of work public sector employees, military personnel and others against the US and UK military presence have taken place almost daily in Baghdad and elsewhere.

To shore up the standard of living of public sector employees, the occupying forces in May adopted a policy of emergency payments of \$20 to certain Iraqi police and civilian administrative personnel. According to Iraqi sources, out of approximately 6.5 million Iraqi families, around 2.5 million depended on the state for their income; this figure includes about 1 million civil servants. The coalition authority began 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 coalition officials suspected that they might be continued for several months.

According to the Guardian (www.guardian.co.uk), Information Ministry employees received a final \$50 payment upon being fired, while electricity workers received \$100-500 salaries, as part of the system of boosting the salaries of civil professions and reducing the salaries of "security-related" employees.

Banks, meanwhile, have been closed since 20 March, and the exchange rates of the dinar have seen it appreciate against the USD rising from 4,000 during the war to between 1,200 and 1,500 afterward. This is due to the lack of liquidity in dinar in one hand and the

After 12 debilitating years of economic sanctions following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the United Nations Security Council on 22 May passed Resolution 1483, which ended the sanctions regime and set up the outlines of a system to oversee post-war reconstruction. The resolution establishes a Development Fund for Iraq, to be held in Iraq's Central Bank. However, humanitarian needs, economic reconstruction and the repair of infrastructure, continued disarmament, the cost of the civilian administration and other purposes benefiting the people of Iraq are all supposed to be paid for out of this fund, which appears to cover various standard budgetary items. The fund will receive the proceeds of oil exports, while the only disbursing power is the Coalition Provisional Authority, in consultation with the Iraqi interim administration. The UN's Oil for Food Program is to be phased out over six months and oil sales are protected until the end of 2007 from any action to repay debt.

As a first step, the Development Fund for Iraq is expected to be the opening of accounts of more than \$3 billion in oil revenues, now that the question of temporary responsibility for Iraq's oil is settled. After the resolution was passed, a senior Iraqi oil official said that by mid-June, production could be back up to roughly 1.5 million barrels per day, with about 650,000 barrels for internal consumption and the rest for export. Tamer Ghadban also predicted that the pre-war level of three million bpd could be reached by the end of summer (www.cnn.com).

The day after the resolution was passed, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN high commissioner of human rights, as UN representative in Iraq for a four-month period. Annan has said that unlike what critics might believe, the resolution gives the UN responsibility for a range of issues: humanitarian relief, reconstruction, infrastructure rehabilitation, legal and judicial

reforms, human rights and return of refugees (www.agoodplacetostart.org)

C – HUMAN COST

1 - Killed and Wounded

* **Iraqi civilians:** Figures on civilian casualties provided by the private organization IraqBodyCount (www.iraqbodycount.org) have grown significantly and steadily since the end of hostilities. It now estimates that a minimum of 5,531 and a maximum of 7,203 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the beginning of hostilities. A number of wounded that is at least three times the number of those killed is likely. 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) and as of 21 May, the organization had estimated 4,065 (minimum) and 5,223 (maximum) casualties.

One jump in the figures apparently came from the figure of 1,482-2,009 dead counted in 19 Baghdad hospitals during the period of 19 March - 9 April. Also, the organization estimates that there have been at least 200 civilian deaths from cluster bombs, and perhaps 172 more than that figure. 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), 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 post-war lawlessness in Iraq means that Iraqis are suffering from various types of violence - retribution murders and assassinations, random violence and crime-related killings. Car-jacking has become fairly common in the capital, according to news reports, as have revenge killing of Baath party members of others with ties to the former regime. 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), officials from the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) said they had removed 184,500 items of unexploded ordinance around Kirkuk and Mosul; more than 12,000 mines and booby traps have been cleared.

* **Iraqi military:** An unknown number of Iraqi military personnel, estimated in the thousands, were killed during the conflict. Speculation remains as to whether estimates of a few thousand killed are hiding a much larger number, or whether members of the various armed Iraqi military and paramilitary groups abandoned their positions and melted into the civilian population.

So far, no organizations or parties appear to be interested in looking into these figures and producing detailed casualty estimates for the Iraqi military and paramilitary groups.

* **US-UK military:** Figures provided by the CDI website indicate that 200 coalition forces had been killed through 6 June.

At least 600 US-UK military personnel have been injured.

* **Other:** An unknown number of non-Iraqis were killed, wounded or captured during the conflict; some media have begun to tell their stories as they make their way back to their countries of origin. Their numbers were originally given by the Iraqi regime and various media as 4,000 to 6,000, while coalition forces have declined to specify their numbers as "unlawful combatants".

2 - Prisoners of war:

A late May report in the UK daily The Guardian (www.guardian.co.uk) alleged that some 3,000 Iraqi prisoners of war and other detainees were being held in compounds near Baghdad with no access for Red Cross officials; a reported mid-May mutiny by these detainees had been "dealt with" by US forces, according to the report.

Earlier in May, US military officials in Kuwait said that they had until that point released over 7,000 people, whether civilians, noncombatants or enemy prisoners of war (www.pentagon.gov). This figure, the officials said, includes a small number of alleged criminals picked up during post-war conditions of lawlessness. They said that 500 of the 2,000 remaining detainees would not likely be released; they fell into the following categories: high-ranking figures, criminals and unlawful combatants. There are no known prisoners of war belonging to coalition forces.

D – POPULATION MOVEMENTS (DISPLACED/REFUGEES)

Massive waves of refugees fleeing Iraq or seeking to return never materialized during the war or its aftermath. However, several important refugee issues have arisen, usually involving the thousands of internally-displaced persons (IDPs) in the country and raising concerns about human rights-related issues.

According to the UN International Organization of Migration (www.iom.org), thousands of people fled Iraq's major towns to the relative safety of the countryside during the conflict; many of these IDPs have since returned to their homes. In mid-May, IOM-designated NGOs began the long process of registering these people, living in scattered public buildings or in extended family structures.

The IOM has also begun assessing the difficult conditions faced by thousands of displaced Marsh Arabs, whose long-standing way of life was disrupted by the former regime. The IOM says that Marsh Arabs face the difficult choice of whether they should recreate their former life in the marshes or adapt to a new beginning.

On 12 May, the office of the UN humanitarian coordinator for Iraq (www.reliefweb.int) said it estimated that the stock of internally displaced in Iraq during the last 20 years between 700,000 and 1 million people. Some 600,000-800,000 IDPs are estimated to be located in the predominantly Kurdish north and 100,000 to 300,000 in the center and south.

Relief organizations report that several thousand persons have returned to the Kirkuk area; they have asked thousands of others who wish to do so to delay their move until the necessary facilities are in place. To tackle the issue of forced resettlement and displacement under the former regime, the US-established Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance said on 21 May that it would soon 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".

Occupation forces on the ground have on occasion responded to pressing questions of returning IDPs. 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 taken place over the issue of returnees.

On 6 May, the IOM said that the first program to go ahead under the USAID-funded Iraq Transition Initiative (ITI) is rehabilitating a school in Umm Qasr. The project, worth \$8 million, was launched three weeks earlier. The IOM said the project is designed to identify and address priority needs, with Iraqi participation, with an eye toward encouraging people to return and stabilizing populations. The Umm Qasr project was agreed upon with local input, the organization said. The project is also supposed to coordinate with local and national authorities to facilitate work on other areas - reintegrating internally displaced persons, refugees and former combatants. Other projects under discussion include encouraging the return of qualified Iraqis and

setting up a workable compensation scheme for people to claim damages for lost property and other abuses during the Saddam Hussein regime.

In Geneva, the UN secretary-general's Representative on Internally Displaced Persons, Francis Deng, said 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 ICRC (www.icrc.org) has also been active in keeping people in touch with each other, whether prisoners or Iraqis seeking to contact families abroad. This task is also being performed on an ad hoc basis by media such as BBC Arabic service and Al-Jazeera satellite television, which broadcasts an "open microphone" type of event in which residents of Iraq announce their identities and send reassuring messages to relatives outside the country. Large numbers of Iraqis outside the country are also taking part in this exercise to inform family members in Iraq of their situation.

Meanwhile, a field report by the United Nations Commission for Human Rights (www.unhcr.org) from an Iraqi refugee camp in Iran indicated that many of the 200,000 refugees in that country were anxious to return home. On 25 April, the UNHCR announced its preliminary plan to help 500,000 Iraqi refugees return to their country. About one-third of this figure, or 165,000, represents those refugees living in Iran (out of a total of 250,000) who are expected to return. The UNHCR expects the other refugees to return to come from the following groups: Iraqis in industrialized countries (35,000); neighboring countries, mostly Jordan and Syria (240,000); asylum seekers in other countries (60,000). A total of 900,000 refugees live outside Iraq, according to the UNHCR, which has at least \$130 million budgeted for the repatriation plan.

According to the UNHCR, rising numbers of refugees in Iraq, particularly Iranian refugees in the south, were 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.

E – HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

The issue of mass graves - and the occupying forces' failure to secure these sites - has been raised repeatedly. Mass graves have been found in several sites around the country; however, 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.

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.

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) 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 believed to be missing in Iraq.

HRW also complained that the UN Security Council resolution for lifting sanctions on Iraq 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.

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.

The UK's Ministry of Defense confirmed that it was investigating reports that a British soldier had photographed Iraqi POWs being mistreated (www.telegraph.co.uk). In early June, the newspaper reported that an Iraqi school headmaster and member of the Baath Party had been beaten to death by UK military personnel in Basra; the death in custody of a second man in Basra is also being investigated.

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.

F – FOOD SITUATION AND RELIEF COORDINATION

The World Food Program (www.wfp.org) has focused on re-starting the Public Distribution System (PDS), the first post-war cycle of which began on 1 June. Slightly improved security conditions have helped the beginning phase of this operation, which saw people in all but one Iraqi governorate begin to receive food rations.

Some 2.7 million people received 34,582 tons of food, in a system that before the war provided food to at least 60 percent of Iraq's population of 24 million people. The PDS had been responsible, through a network of some 44,000 food and flour agents and stores around the country, for distributing a monthly ration to Iraqis under the UN's Oil for Food Program.

Some 500 WFP Iraqi employees continued to receive and distribute food supplies during the conflict; another 200 in the south assessed the situation of offices,

warehouses and silos, in preparation for re-starting the PDS. In Basra, WFP employees retrieved the records of all 1.8 million beneficiaries, all cited as efforts that helped the efficient re-launch of the PDS. In launching the PDS, WFP executive director James Morris said the organization was confident that hunger could be averted among Iraqis, although the World Health Organization has warned of a rise in acute malnutrition among children (see section on Health Situation).

Relief officials spent the first weeks after the war assessing Iraq's humanitarian aid requirements, stressing the need for security and awaiting the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on the postwar period. More than 85 NGOs are now active in Iraq, although worries about the need to coordinate with one of the combatant sides - the occupying powers - have discouraged many organizations from getting involved in the postwar reconstruction phase in Iraq.

On 11 May, James Morris, the executive director of the WFP, became the first UN agency chief to visit Baghdad - he accurately predicted that the 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.

A few days later, the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq said that preliminary findings indicated that overall damage to the PDS network was minimal. 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.

On 12 May, the UN Integrated Regional Information Network (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). 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.

Although international aid agencies have generally been reluctant to work with a US military-led interim administration, a number of projects have been launched via USAID. US President George W Bush, in March, asked Congress for \$2.4 billion in funds to create a new account that would cover immediate humanitarian relief and

support for physical and political reconstruction efforts. According to a joint State Department and USAID fact sheet (www.usinfo.state.gov), the total US government commitment for rebuilding Iraq is \$3.5 billion, which includes funding from the State Department. Approximately \$550 million has been designated until now, according to USAID.

USAID has contributed funds for immediate needs to organizations such as Save the Children, the WFP, UNICEF, CARE, and Mercy Corps. Also, USAID has funded an Iraq Transition Initiative, to provide small grants that boost local participation in decision-making and identifying development needs, and is supporting the WHO to improve the Iraqi health care sector on various fronts. USAID has awarded a firm funding to rehabilitate the Umm Qasr port, to improve the delivery system of food and humanitarian materials. USAID is also encouraging the public to make direct cash contributions to various humanitarian organizations, calling this the most effective way to help.

According to USAID, more than \$1.25 billion has been pledged by countries for a variety of humanitarian assistance and reconstruction needs. The top donor countries, according to a list by the US State Department it admits might not be comprehensive, are the United Kingdom (\$382 million), Japan (\$212 million), the European commission (\$117.7 million), Canada (\$74.6 million) and Australian (\$64.9 million).

International aid officials are also working to shore up the agriculture sector, with the latest efforts focusing on the Food and Agriculture Organization's proposal to purchase 500,000 tons of the barley harvest at \$65/ton; the Iraqi Ministry of Trade is expecting to receive funds to the purchase of the wheat crop, with farmers scheduled to receive \$105 per metric ton for the crop.

A report on 10 May in *The Guardian* (www.guardian.co.uk) warned that a collapse of Iraqi agriculture might take place later in the year, due to wide-scale looting of pesticides and seeds required for crops. The poultry industry might also suffer, the report said, citing what it said was a confidential report being prepared by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization. Problems and breakdowns in the irrigation system would also be to blame for crop failure, the report said.

At the end of April, the FAO (www.fao.org) said one-third of the critical spring grain crop was undamaged by the conflict, but that the good news was from the northern part of the country, while the situation in the rest of Iraq was less clear. The report warned that fuel shortages and related electricity problems would hamper irrigation pumps.

G – HEALTH SITUATION

Officials concerned with the post-war health situation have focused on rebuilding what was a fairly efficient health sector while dealing with the worrying situation of cholera outbreaks and widespread cases of diarrhea due to a lack of clean water.

In May, the World Health Organization (www.who.org) confirmed the existence of several dozen cases of cholera in Basra, due to the lack of safe drinking water. The organization cited the lack of security remained a pressing issue, since it affected the health situation (for example, through the looting and destruction of water treatment facilities).

CARE International official Anne Morris said that the country faced a public health crisis during the summer, with diarrhea expected to become widespread due to the lack of safe drinking water (www.reliefweb.int). She diagnosed the situation in Iraq as an unusual crisis, since there is no famine or acute outbreak of disease; instead the continued lack of government meant that the existing health and other infrastructure could begin to crumble quickly.

The WHO's plans for immediate action have focused on restarting Iraq's health care system, distributing medicine, boosting disease surveillance, and providing security. A country-wide system of reporting the outbreak of disease is nearly in place, following coordination between the WHO and Iraqi health care professionals. The distribution of medicines to various governorates has taken place after the CPA provided security for the convoys. Separate from the CPA forces, the WHO envisions the setting up of a 3,000-person security team for hospitals, warehouses, and other facilities. The first batch of these personnel is now being trained. The lack of security in the wake of the coalition's military victory allowed widespread looting to health facilities to take place, as the medicine distribution system broke down.

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.

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.

A seven-member UN inspection team arrived in Baghdad on 6 June (www.reliefweb.int) to determine whether nuclear materials are missing from the

Tuwaitha site, where a number of Iraqis have reportedly suffered from possible nuclear contamination after the site was looted.

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, had passed into 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) 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.

Staff at the Basra Children's Hospital said that 90 percent of 200 outpatients per day were being treated for diarrhea, and others for hepatitis, acute respiratory infections, malnutrition, shigella and typhoid. They identified the problem as the water supply situation in Basra, where sewage is not being disposed of, garbage is being collected intermittently or not at all, and people are using water from the polluted Shatt al-Arab.

Cholera is an acute diarrheal illness that can be fatal if not treated promptly. According to the UN's Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) (www.reliefweb.int), the patients were being brought in too late to hospitals, and that an unspecified number of deaths had occurred, due to severe dehydration and diarrhea. It said that a reduced hospital fee of ID 1,000 (\$.50) per night was prohibitively expensive for many families, while general insecurity in the city was not helping matters. The IRIN report quoted a doctor in Basra as saying that many people were unable to secure fuel supplies to boil water, when asked if people were aware of the precaution.

In general, the fear of water-borne diseases due to insufficient water treatment has led to a variety of health problems, which can include cases of sunstroke, brought on by search for clean water supplies in hot temperatures.

In Baghdad, according to UNICEF (www.reliefweb.int), hospitals in Saddam City (now called Sadr City) reported large numbers of diarrhea cases and a severe shortage of Pentostam, to treat "Black Fever" (which is transmitted through the bite of the sand fly). Crowded conditions mean that children are being exposed to the risk of communicable diseases.

Early in the post-war period, the WHO identified immediate financial assistance as the most pressing need for Iraq's health care system. While there have been donations

of items like field hospitals, the WHO has maintained that Iraq's health infrastructure is fairly good, with 1,447 medical facilities (including 160 hospitals) and 1,285 health centers. With more than 26,000 hospital beds, considered adequate for the population, the WHO believes that the purchase of needed medicine and the payment of salaries for health sector employees are priorities for assistance.

The organization is calling for urgent support to see the Iraqi health care system begin functioning, so that the "gap" in the health care system can be bridged until a new system is in place. The head of the WHO, Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, has termed the strategy one of "jump-starting" services at hospitals, usually through a relatively small infusion of financial assistance. For the country as a whole, the WHO believes that \$20 million a month would be sufficient to maintain the health care system.

H – EDUCATION SITUATION

According to UNICEF (www.unicef.org), most of Iraq's 8,500 schools require repair or clean-up and another 5,000 need to be built to accommodate the country's 12 million school-age children.

Schools have been ransacked by looters and security concerns have kept many students away for long periods of the post-war period. Students at the various levels of education began heading back to school in stages, during the first several weeks of May (3 May for primary level, 10 May for secondary and 17 May for universities).

Poor hygiene and sanitation are serious concerns in primary schools, only half of which have access to potable water. A shortage of safe facilities and trained teachers have forced many schools to operate on shifts.

The lack of security, according to organizations like the International Committee for the Red Cross, hampered efforts to encourage children from returning to class. In the view of the UN Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, a lack of electricity, poor sanitation, insecurity, as well as insufficiently-equipped schools all impeded children's access to education. The United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (www.agoodplacetostart.org) said that there was a gap in the administrative decision-making process; i.e. whether to extend the school year, alter the curriculum, or otherwise make up for deficiencies that have arisen.

Iraqis and aid workers say that an entire country may be "held back" a year if the situation is not rectified in time for end-of-year exams, tentatively scheduled for July.

Efforts to kick-start the educational system were the focus of a visit of UNICEF executive director Carol Bellamy on 18-19 May. Organizations like UNICEF and NGO World Vision (www.reliefweb.int) indicated that the damage from the war and looting to schools varied around the country, with schools in northern areas relatively undamaged. UNICEF later announced that Japan had become the leading governmental donor to UNICEF's appeal for Iraqi children; Tokyo donated \$10.2 million to support the reopening of schools around the country, bringing its total

level of support to \$15 million.

Education is a sector in which the process of de-Baathification has been employed sternly, with sometimes mixed results for the quality of education. Various media reports (see for example, www.telegraph.co.uk) have documented the widespread dismissal of headmasters at various schools, due to their Baath Party affiliation. Since many of these individuals had party credentials in order to gain promotion, the education system has lost many qualified and dedicated teachers.

Meanwhile, curricula have been stripped of "general culture" and "nationalism" subjects, while subjects like history and geography have been stripped down to their bare bones, due to the many references to achievements of Saddam Hussein.

Colleges and universities held free elections for their presidents and other top officials (see www.latimes.com), to purge the sector of figures associated with the former regime. However, security and transportation problems reduced the turnout, as they did for the general effort to get students back to school in earlier weeks.

I – SERVICES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

The return of public services and functioning state utilities continues to experience problems related to unsatisfactory security conditions, administrative delays and other problems, although marked improvements in some areas have taken place.

Media reports indicate that telephone services will take a long time to restore, especially after a fire gutted the central telephone exchange in Baghdad in mid-May, with occupying forces either unwilling or unable to respond. MCI cell phone service to Baghdad is scheduled to begin in early June; the CPA has said it will distribute 2,500 cell phones, 2,000 of them going to municipal leaders and officials.

As for electricity supplies, the lifting of UN sanctions has led the CPA to expect a doubling of electricity supplies for Baghdad in the near future, although summer power demand is expected to rise.

Long lines at gasoline stations in the capital and the booming business in black market gasoline have been blamed on insufficient distribution networks, as well as production problems; these were recently alleviated after gasoline was imported from Jordan and Kuwait.

According to a survey by UNICEF (www.unicef.org), 40 percent of the water network in Baghdad was damaged, with more than 500 separate "breaks" in the network. The damage was attributed to the war and years of neglect prior to the hostilities. UNICEF has awarded a contract for repairs to a local company while supporting some 15,000 Baghdad Water Authority staff to reimburse them for their

services during the war. UNICEF is supplying a total of 800,000 liters of water daily in Baghdad. Along with distribution in the south, the total being provided is 2.5 million liters of clean water daily.

UNICEF has also initiated 30-day programs to help municipalities like Adhamiya, Rusafa Central and Rashid clean up accumulated refuse, a service which ended when the war began. Coalition authorities and the Basra municipal council have begun efforts to pick up trash in that city, while in Baghdad, coalition forces have announced specific times for trash pick-ups.

Water supplies, sanitation and transportation services and electricity remained substandard for weeks after the war, although conditions in the north of the country were markedly better in some areas to begin with or improved rapidly after the end of the war.

Conditions in Iraq's most important oil city, Kirkuk improved dramatically after coalition troops arrived April 10. Media reports say that water, power, banks, schools and a fledgling police force were up and running in May, despite some local complaints that the ORHA was not functioning.

In Kirkuk, according to the NGO Action by Churches Together (www.reliefweb.int), the collapse of the city's water and sewage system was being reversed. The group said water contamination had been cut by half and potable water secured for 660,000 people in central Kirkuk.

The NGO REACH, a local partner of ACT, had agreed with employees of the Iraqi Department of Waste and Sewage to run the institution for one month, as it reorganized itself. They have identified a goal of restoring water supplies and sewage networks to 750,000 other people, an effort likely to cost approximately \$100,000. 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 recovery of the oil sector appeared to stall in May as infrastructure problems pushed back earlier production predictions. On 11 May, production estimates were scaled back by one-third, with production expected to rise only to 1 million barrels per day (bpd) in June (the pre-war level was around 3 million bpd, with 2.1 million bpd exported). Delays were attributed to damaged equipment and shortages of industrial water.

As for the banking sector, the CPA said in early June that in Baghdad, 57 out of 212 identified banks had been assessed, with 31 found to be operational.

MD/AH
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