

# IRAQ

## SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

9-15 August 2004

UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ

### OVERVIEW ►

In Iraq the newly installed United Nations (UN) Special Representative for the Secretary-General (SRSG) Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi said this week, "The current strife and instability, in Najaf and other places, cannot be addressed through security measures alone. They require political consensus building, rehabilitation measures, and the promotion of the rule of law." Although efforts to mediate the crisis in Najaf stalled, Mr. Qazi reiterated the UN offer to assist. SRSG Qazi urged all parties to respect, and protect, the rights of civilians.

### SECRETARY-GENERAL, KOFI ANNAN ►

Najaf In response to renewed clashes in Najaf, the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan (Friday 13 August) made it clear that the UN is dedicated to the principle of peaceful settlement. The UN remains committed to doing everything possible to assist the Iraqi people. To that end, Mr. Annan said he believed that the dismantling of all militias is an important step toward the establishment of Iraq as a civil society based on the rule of law.

National Conference In Baghdad, SRSG Qazi told the participants of the country's National Conference that a credible political transition is the best solution to ongoing violence. Voicing deep regret over the loss of life and casualties suffered by the Iraqi people, he emphasised the importance of a broad and inclusive political process and moderation in advancing the political transition. The most immediate goal, Mr. Qazi said, is the election of a "credible and inclusive" Interim Council to ensure successful elections by the end of January 2005.

UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) The UN Security Council (Thursday 12 August) unanimously renewed for a further year the mandate of UNAMI.

### PROGRAMME ►

#### Education and Culture (Cluster 1)

School Survey The data entry for the Ministry of Education (MoE) countrywide survey of some 20,000 schools – supported by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) is now complete and awaiting publication by the Ministry.

School Rehabilitation In addition to the 28 schools under rehabilitation, the bidding process for the rehabilitation of 40 primary schools is currently under review according to UNICEF. Technical assessments and bidding documents for rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in 200 schools was initialised this week.

Capacity Building The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) delivered desktop publishing equipment to the MoE this week as part of its Textbooks project. Three of the fourteen candidates nominated for the three-year UNESCO (Italian co-sponsored Fellowships for Iraqi Women) have confirmed their participation and have finalised their travel preparations for departure to Italy by the end of August. The three host universities are University of Foggia, University of Sannio, and University of Mediterranean.

Project Implementation Discussions on project implementation between UNESCO, Iraqi counterparts from the Ministry of Culture, and the Cluster, continue to examine the modalities for implementation, including the timeline for procurement and contracts. In a separate development, an Iraqi ministerial team was sent to Nineveh archaeological site to survey site and produce a technical report on the immediate procurement needs. This UNESCO project is funded by the Norwegian Fund-in-Trust.

#### Health (Cluster 2)

Najaf In response to the increased number of injuries resulting from continued violence, including in Najaf, a Ministry of Health (MoH) appeal has resulted in the procurement and delivery by the UN World Health Organisation (WHO) of emergency medical supplies into Baghdad, valued at US100,000 (predominately I.V. fluid).

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WHO will also procure 1,000 doses of anti-diphtheria serum, and 40 entomological monitoring kits (US\$25,000), required for the surveillance and control of malaria and leishmaniasis (parasitic disease). Meanwhile in Najaf, UNICEF has provided 75 health kits (100 people per kit) through its partner - Iraqi Red Cross Society. This follows earlier efforts on the 14<sup>th</sup> to distribute 112,000 litres of water to the city's outskirts, provide 50-75,000 litres of fuel for water stations, purification tablets, collapsible bags and water tanks - in collaboration with Islamic Relief.

Sadr City UNICEF distributed 1,690,000 litres of water to residential areas, and Al-Jowader Hospital, in cooperation with the Baghdad Water Administration. Additional assistance delivered included 75 health kits, purification tablets and fuel (3,000 litres). Concern has been expressed at the laying of landmines in Sadr City. Compounding the problems posed by power-cuts and fuel shortages, UNICEF has reported operational difficulty due to the lack of willing drivers, inability to undertake assessments (insecurity) and the absence of government employees due to insecurity and direct threats.

Capacity Building WHO assisted 30 Iraqi doctors attend the 21st Annual Conference of the Arab Medical Union in Istanbul (Turkey) 6-12 August 2004. The Conference provided a forum for the sharing of experience and knowledge, and facilitated communication with other medical bodies in the European Union.

Health Rehabilitation Project for Iraq (HRPI) Preparations continued this week for the September visit to Baghdad of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) HRPI and U.A.E. Red Crescent Society cardiology team.

### **Infrastructure and Housing (Cluster 4)**

Wreck Removal Survey The preliminary report on the environmental damage limitation survey for the removal of forty wrecks from Iraqi waterways has been issued by the UN Development Programme (UNDP). It is estimated that there are in excess of 260 sunken vessels varying from tugs to tankers impeding access to Iraq's two major deep-water ports. Concerns have been expressed about the hazards of raising these vessels, as many might contain a range of pollutants including metals, pesticides, hydrocarbons as well as various munitions and unexploded ordinances (UXOs). The potential presence of UXO is of particular concern. Significant quantities of underwater outlying ordnance and explosive devices, as well as sunken ammunition cargo, are known to exist. Fast vessels with sea-to-sea and sea-to-air missiles are submerged alongside cargo wrecks. Unless careful measures are taken, their removal could pose a serious threat not only to human life but also impact on the national and regional marine and coastal environment. With this in mind, under the sponsorship of UNDP, a comprehensive technical survey of forty sunken vessels was undertaken at the beginning of 2004 by the Department for International Development (Dfid-United Kingdom), the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME). Environmental, navigational and explosive hazards were recorded. An environmental damage limitation strategy for each of the vessels inspected and costing for their removal has been defined. In addition, an Oil Spill Contingency Plan outlining spill scenarios, response strategies and training needs has been articulated. A comprehensive report will be prepared for the next meeting of the ROPME, scheduled in Kuwait in October 2004. The results of the Survey and follow-up activities will be one of the main items on the agenda. Over the past year, UNDP has been involved in an ongoing series of projects opening the access channels to the ports through dredging, and to salvage and remove shipwrecks.

### **Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons - IDPs (Cluster 8)**

Close coordination is in place between Cluster 8 (and its IDP Working Group) and the UN Emergency Working Group coordinating response to emergencies triggered by recent events in Najaf and other troubled Iraqi cities. The IDP WG provided analysis of displacement patterns and made policy recommendations on assistance strategies for newly displaced populations. Exact numbers are not available due to hindered access, but it is clear that people residing in areas exposed to the conflict have moved to host communities particularly around the outskirts and within Najaf. Emergency assistance is being provided by local and international NGOs most of which are Cluster 8 partners.

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The Ministry of Displacement and Migration, Cluster 8's key government counterpart, is centrally involved in coordination of humanitarian assistance to the affected population.

Assisted voluntary return of Iraqi refugees The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) continued to facilitate the return of Iraqi refugees from Iran through the north eastern Haj Omran border. A total of 543 Iraqi refugees returned in five convoys since the start of the operation in late June 2004. This brings the total number of Iraqi refugees who came home with UNHCR assistance from Iran, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon to 13,173 most of whom returned to the southern and central parts of the country. The majority of those now returning to the North had been living for many years in refugee camps in Kordestan Province in Iran and are now going to their areas of origin in Sulaymaniah, Erbil and Dohuk. The returnees are provided with free transportation for all family members and personal effects up to places of final destination within the three northern governorates. In addition, all were given cash assistance, a non-food item (NFI) package (a tent, blankets, plastic sheeting, kitchen set, etc) and one month food ration. Medical screening as well as mine awareness training are conducted by UNHCR partners at the start of the journey home.

The long-term reintegration needs of the returnees will be addressed through the recently launched joint UNHCR/UN Office of Project Services (UNOPS) reintegration programme for 3,000 returning IDP and refugee families in the three northern governorates; As well as support to some 20 return communities in the lower south. Both programmes received funding from the UN Development Group Trust Fund.

In early September, UNHCR, Iraqi Government officials, and implementing partners will hold a two-day review of the assisted return operation thus far. Lessons learned will be used to inform the way forward on policy and operational matters. All parties agreed to put on hold return operations until the review takes place and also in view of the fluid security situation in the southern part of Iraq.

Contingency Stocks In order to prepare for increased humanitarian needs, IOM has requested that contingency NFI stocks in Baghdad and Samawa be increased to meet the needs of 20,000 people (minimum).

IOM has procured an additional four (4) Emergency Medical Health Kits for pre-positioning (each kits meets the needs for as many as 40,000 people for three months).

Emergency Distributions In response to needs stemming from the Najaf crisis, an IOM partner distributed 150 kerosene lamps, 150 hygiene kits, 150 cooking sets and 150 plastic sheets for 115 families (695 individuals) in Zaid Ben Ali and 32 (225 individuals) families in Rasheed Al Higree Shrine. Another IOM partner in Karbala released NFI for 200 families (1,400 people), including canned food for 1,500 families.

IDP Assistance The IOM IDP programme approved the distribution by an implementing partner of 650 jerry cans and 650 hygiene kits for an emergency water and sanitation project in Al Kassen, Babil Governorate. The project will provide water and health awareness to 4,550 vulnerable individuals. In a separate development, IOM has identified and is finalising an IDP Monitoring Partner agreement for Najaf Governorate. Though the new partner will take over monitoring activities for the governorate, the previous partner remains operationally active and is fully engaged in monitoring handover activities.

### Governance and Civil Society (Cluster 9)

Training on the Household Survey Senior staff from the Iraqi Central Statistical Organisation attended training in Oslo (7-11 August) organised by FAFO IAS - the Norwegian organisation working with UNDP on the release of a multi-indicator Household Survey involving over 22,000 Iraqi families. The initial survey tabulations will be analysed during a review conference bringing together government representatives and specialist organisations in October. On the basis of these discussions a final survey and analysis report will be released in November to guide the work of planners and decision-makers across Iraqi ministries, including international organisations, involved in the reconstruction process in Iraq.

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Support to Local Administration - Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works Under the Public Administration Programme, UNDP is targeting 4-5 key ministries that are strategically important to the effective functioning of the Iraqi state. The programme will involve provision of technical advice and training to strengthen existing institutions and systems. On 8-9 August 2004, UNDP organised a strategic planning meeting with seven senior officials from the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MMPW) to discuss and identify strategic priorities for the Ministry and to develop a capacity-building programme. During the workshop, these issues as well as approaches/methodologies and an action plan were developed. UNDP will proceed with the development of a proposal for a short-term capacity building programme to help improve the public administration and human resources development programme and interventions of the MMPW. This programme will target senior management, middle-management, and local administration. Two project proposals will be developed and submitted to the UN Development Group Trust Fund in October. UNDP will also explore funding opportunities from bilateral sources. The capacity building programme includes basic computer and language training inside and outside the country. Immediate equipment requirements of the Ministry will also be met.

### **Poverty Reduction and Human Development (Cluster 10)**

Iraq Reconstruction Employment and Programme (IREP) The deteriorating security in Basra and other cities in the south has affected the implementation of IREP projects. Some of the activities foreseen for the week were postponed and the UNDP office was forced to close for one day. There are currently 29 ongoing projects involving some 3,800 workers. Almost 200,000 person days have been generated. As of 14 August, 91 projects to the value of over US\$2 million have been implemented involving some 10,800 workers, generating 500,000 work-days.

Workforce Development and Veteran's Services (WDVS) IOM's implementing partner trained staff at the Baghdad Employment Centre on the usage of the newly upgraded jobseeker-employer matching database. The training highlighted the importance of Employment Centre Units working together to increase the quality of the services provided as well as the processes' transparency. IOM's implementing partner in Baghdad, in collaboration with Employment Centre key staff, completed drafting departmental and staff Terms of References.

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