

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

13 September – 19 September 2004

UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ

OVERVIEW ►

This past week has seen increased violence throughout the country. The Multi-National Force (MNF-I) and government forces battled insurgents in Falluja, Sadr City in Baghdad, and elsewhere throughout the country. The evolving situation in northern Iraq and Kirkuk, specifically, is causing growing concerns that the condition could quickly deteriorate amid increased tensions between various ethnic groups. On Saturday, a car bomb detonated in front of the Iraqi National Guard headquarters in Kirkuk. Kidnappings continue as two Americans and a Briton were seized from their home in Baghdad on Monday. Some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are reviewing their operational modalities, due to the increase in abductions and the deteriorating security situation. Despite overwhelming challenges, Iraqi Airways resumed international flights for the first time in 14 years and will be providing flights to neighbouring Syria and Jordan twice a week.

UNITED NATIONS ►

The Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) Ashraf Qazi addressed the Security Council on 14 September stating, “My brief introductory stay in Baghdad has convinced me that the people of Iraq desperately want peace and to be masters in their own country. They have the talent and the will to peaceably persevere on the path towards these objectives. They see an effective UN role as critical to the realization of their hopes.”

HUMANITARIAN ►

The Deputy Special Representative to the Secretary General (DSRSG) travelled to New York to meet with key UN departments and agencies concerned with Iraq. He briefed UN Development Group (UNDG) members regarding preparations for the upcoming Donor’s Conference in Tokyo, Japan, as well as the situation during his recent mission to Iraq. He also met with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and with the Special Representative for the Secretary General (SRSG) who is also in New York. During the coming week, he will continue these meetings, as well as meet with the visiting Iraqi delegation and attend the General Assembly Iraq session.

The UN Country Team (UNCT) Representative in Baghdad, Mr. Yacoub El-Hillo, met this week with the Minister of Displacement and Migration, together with the Chairman of the Iraqi Property Claims Commission (IPCC). Various elements of the IPCC were discussed including support to the Commission, out-of-country claims, the link between the IPCC and the Ministry of Displacement and Migration, as well as concerns over growing tensions in Kirkuk.

UNAMI continues to raise, at the ministerial level, concerns of continuous violations of International Humanitarian Law in regards to the lack of protection of civilians in conflict areas and indiscriminate attacks on residential areas. Since March 2003, the civilian death count is approximately 13,000 deaths and 50,000 wounded. Within the past week, it is reported that 180 Iraqi civilians died and 300 were wounded.

The provision of humanitarian assistance and access proves to be increasingly difficult due to the deterioration in the security situation. UNAMI is maintaining links with NGOs and continues monitoring developments regarding the implications of their restricted capacity in the present security climate.

UN ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE ►

Recruitment and Training of Personnel: Recruitment of heads of governorate electorate officers is almost complete, including the Regional Electoral Officer for Kurdistan. Basra and Baghdad are still to be completed. Recruitment of senior trainers is under way. UN sponsored training of 50 trainers is scheduled from 1-7 November. Training will focus on voter registration operations. Additional operational training

sessions for voter registration scheduled in Baghdad and the rest of the country is expected to be completed by 20 October.

Establishment of the Electoral Register: The voter register database construction is now complete. No technical difficulties were encountered in the migration and amalgamation of the Public Distribution System (PDS) database and the forming of the voter register database. Tenders are out for printing of registration information forms, data entry center, and registration kits. Procedures for voter registration are almost finalized and are expected to be approved soon, in order to allow preparations for operational training. Design of public information activities for voter registration is in progress.

HUMAN RIGHTS ►

The Human Rights Office (HRO) continues consultations in Baghdad and Amman with the Iraqi Minister of Human Rights, in regards to various activities planned by the Ministry. The Minister has informed the HRO of a decision by his government to ratify the International Convention Against Torture and extend an invitation to the Special Rapporteur on Torture, of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

PROGRAMME ►

Health (Cluster 2)

Emergency Drugs Supplied: Emergency Health Support to children and their families in conflict areas is provided by UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in coordination with the Iraqi Red Crescent and the Ministry of Health (MoH). Emergency drugs worth US\$165,000 - out of the total order of US\$3.7 million- were delivered to Baghdad during the reporting week. Remaining shipments are expected to be delivered within the months of September and October 2004. Supplies included 177,900 doses of Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine delivered to the Sera Institute in Baghdad and 800,000 Autodisable syringes distributed to the Directorate of Health in Erbil, covering immunization programme needs for over a year.

Coordination with Iraqi Authorities: UNICEF is scheduled to meet with the MoH to plan the forthcoming training-of-trainers' workshop on breastfeeding, organized in cooperation with LINKAGES (10 Iraqi participants, 10 days), taking place on 3-13 October, 2004, in Amman. A separate meeting with the MoH, Nutrition Research Institute (NRI), and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to discuss the planning meeting for the Micronutrients Survey is scheduled for 11-15 October, in Amman. Survey planning will be facilitated by a UNICEF consultant.

Polio National Immunization Day: The preliminary report covering the three northern governorates indicates that 576,966 children under five were vaccinated with Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV), covering 96.2% of all children under five in the three governorates.

High Protein Biscuits (HPB): 14 containers (230 MT) of HPB were delivered to the central and southern governorates during the past week to cover around 99,166 rations of HPB for malnourished children under five, as well as pregnant and lactating mothers.

Nutrition Research Institute: More than 50% of the rehabilitation of the Nutrition Research Institute (NRI) work has been completed.

Health Rehabilitation Programme for Iraq (HRPI): The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) coordinated the arrival of four doctors and four nurses from Basrah to Kuwait. The Iraqi medical team will undergo training for a number of weeks, beginning 20 September at the Chest Hospital in Kuwait. The

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

13 September – 19 September 2004

training component is part of the IOM health activities in Iraq. In addition, the HRPI team assisted in the return of one case from the USA.

Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons - IDPs (Cluster 8)

National Conference: With a view to strengthening the capacities of the Government of Iraq and the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) in seeking durable solutions for the internally displaced people in Iraq, the cluster agreed to support the organization of a National Conference. The Conference would be hosted and owned by the MoDM and is intended to contribute to the development of a national policy to address the displacement crisis in Iraq.

Two consultants have been hired as the National Conference focal points, to be based in Amman and Baghdad. In early September, the Amman based (DRC) consultant was seconded to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Iraq Operations Unit in Amman (IOUA) Team. A first proposal on the purpose, objectives, and expected outputs of the National Conference was presented to the IDP Working Group on 16 September and is serving as a basis for discussion. The National Conference has tentatively been scheduled for November.

Procurement for Winterisation Stocks: IOM has begun the procurement of stocks for the winterisation of over 30,000 IDP and other vulnerable families in central and southern Iraq. The items for this distribution include blankets, cooking stoves/heaters, mattresses, plastic sheeting, jerry cans, and clothes; and in some limited cases, tents. The distribution is planned to begin in October through NGO partners.

Governorate Profiles: The monthly governorate profiles which summarize the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) situation, including caseloads and needs per governorate, have been compiled by IOM and circulated to all concerned parties. The profiles cover the 18 governorates of Iraq, with IOM input covering the fifteen centre and southern governorates, in addition to the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) information on the three northern governorates.

Emergency Health Kits: To aid quick response in times of emergency, IOM has procured and pre-positioned four additional Emergency Health Kits in the IOM-non-food items (NFI) depot in Baghdad. The NFI depot, which is able to cater to 2,200 families, is managed by an NGO partner and stands ready to release items to all NGOs during emergencies.

IDP Monitoring: In the Lower South, IOM has extended the IDP monitoring agreements for the governorates of Muthanna, Thi-Qar, and Wassit until December 2004. For the rest of the country, the extensions are being processed.

Adult Literacy and Computer Training: In Amarah, Missan, IOM has signed a new project agreement supporting “Adult Literacy and Computer Training for Vulnerable Families in Missan.” The project targets IDP, returning refugee, and other vulnerable families in Amarah where employment generation is the most critical need.

Workshop on Migration: IOM has commenced preparatory works for designing and conducting a workshop with senior officials from Iraqi Ministries with a stake in migration. The workshop will assist the Iraqi Government to further define and align migration management portfolios among and within key ministries, set up priority areas for the Capacity Building and Migration Management (CBMM) programme interventions, and develop a work-plan for targeted technical assistance in this sector of governance.

Support of Iraqi Authorities: Two Iraqi officials, one from the Ministry of Interior and another from the MoDM, were supported by IOM in the participation of the workshop in Macau SAR on “Best Practices in



Operation Cooperation,” from 13 - 15 September, 2004. The workshop has been organized within the framework of the Bali Ministerial Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons, and Related Trans-National Crime. The workshop aimed to identify a best practice “model” for strengthening national law enforcement cooperation efforts and cooperation across borders and regional jurisdictions.

Syrian Refugees: Over the last three weeks, the severe clashes in Baghdad's Haifa Street area hampered the distribution of assistance to the Syrian refugees (e.g. transportation allowances, rental subsidies, and medical assistance). Some of the refugees' homes were directly damaged by stray bullets and mortar rounds. UNHCR's partner in Baghdad was only able to assist 61 people (out of 540 people) with rental and transportation allowances.

Al Tash: As a result of the kidnapping of two of its staff, UNHCR's partner, in charge of then Iranian Kurdish refugees in Al Tash camp was forced to considerably downsize its activities. As a result, Al Tash camp, at present, cannot be visited on a daily basis. Assistance in the sectors of water supply, sanitation (regular clearing of the open-type sewerage), health (daily maintenance of medical personnel in the camp), as well as maintenance of police for physical security is still provided on a regular basis.

Palestinian Refugees: UNHCR continues, through MoDM, to provide rental subsidies to evicted Palestinians in the centre of Baghdad. A total of 143 refugee families were assisted with new accommodation. Discussions are ongoing with agencies on the ground to provide additional assistance to the refugees in the income generation, education, and shelter sectors.

Poverty Reduction and Human Development (Cluster 10)

Personnel Database: IOM, through its implementing partner (Legend Land), continues to enter information on the recently designed Personnel Database. To date, 80% of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' (MoLSA) staff has been registered, including permanent and temporary staff. IOM continues to work with MoLSA offices in the governorates to make sure that the remaining staff members are registered.

Baghdad Employment Centre: During the present reporting period, Legend Land continued to provide technical assistance to the Finance Unit of the Baghdad Employment Centre. IOM and the Finance Unit designed a budget template and both are currently preparing the 2005 budget. Also, IOM's implementing partners are strengthening the ability of the Finance Unit in its cash flow monitoring system.

* * * * *