

OVERVIEW ▶

The international community celebrated as non-governmental organization (NGO) aid workers Simona Pari, Simona Torretta, and their two national staff colleagues were released on Tuesday, after having been held hostage for three weeks. The Multinational Force Iraq (MNF-I) and Iraqi forces launched a campaign in Samarra to root out insurgents who were thought to have seized control of the city. The campaign began late Thursday, with reportedly 130 insurgents killed over two days of fighting. Strikes continue in Falluja as the MNF-I and Iraqi forces seek to rid the city of militants, allegedly connected to Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, who were using it as a base for planning militant activities. The UN continues to closely monitor the humanitarian situation in Iraq with particular concern over increasing disregard for Geneva Conventions by parties to the conflict, as evidenced by the growing number of civilian deaths and casualties.

UNITED NATIONS ▶

The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG), Mr. Ross Mountain, held various meetings while in Geneva, Switzerland during the week. Meetings were held with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the donor community to discuss the progress of the UN Country Team's activities in light of the security situation in Iraq.

UN ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE ▶

A third training programme for Iraqi electoral staff commenced 1 October. This programme will concentrate on a core group of 24 trainers who will be trained on registration procedures and facilitate their own Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) training-of-trainers starting on 8 October. The group is expected to train 6,000 registration workers for the registration exercise beginning in November 2004. The first bulk of training programmes will conclude on 7 October 2004. It is expected that several more training sessions will take place prior to the election date. Those sessions will concentrate on polling and counting.

IECI completed and approved the Voter Registration Procedure, in addition to the regulations earlier approved. Cluster 11 will be in a position to start distributing related material to UN agencies and NGOs who plan to participate in election related activities.

The European Union (EU) has been in close contact with the Electoral Team in Amman and Baghdad. An EU delegation travelled to Jordan to assess the possibility of assisting the UN Electoral Team in Iraq. The trip included meetings with the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), the UN Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), and a visit to the training site of the Iraqi Electoral Officials.

HUMAN RIGHTS ▶

The Human Rights Office (HRO) continued to monitor the situation of human rights in Iraq. It participated and contributed to a Symposium on Housing convened by UN-HABITAT from 28-30 September 2004, and conducted consultations with the Minister for Human Rights on related issues. The Minister made a presentation at the Symposium also addressing the problem of internal displacement. HRO participated and contributed to a consultation organised by the UNDP Programme for Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR) and the World Bank, attended by senior Ministry of Justice (MoJ) officials and several judges from high Iraqi jurisdictions, some of whom made scholarly presentations on crucial constitutional issues. UNAMI/HRO conducted parallel consultations with a number of these officials in connection with the Human Rights Programme for Iraq. HRO continues to liaise with the MoJ as part of the implementation of projects under this programme. In parallel to these meetings, UNAMI/HRO met with representatives of NGOs from Iraq, in connection with its monitoring duties and its contribution to the reconstruction process.

PROGRAMME ►

Education and Culture (Cluster 1)

School in a Box: The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) is currently distributing 3,270 School in a Box Kits, each sufficient for 80 children, to all kindergartens in the South and Centre of Iraq. These kits include items such as exercise books, pencils, erasers, sharpeners, and rulers. While the Ministry of Education (MoE) is distributing the kits in Baghdad, Najaf, and Wassit, UNICEF is supporting the distribution in the remaining governorates. Over the past few weeks, UNICEF has also delivered 755,891 student kits, 1,181,302 student bags, and 10,736 chalk packs to the Directorates of Education in eight governorates of Iraq, to be included in Education Kits for distribution to schools and students.

Primary School Rehabilitation: Four primary schools in Baghdad were successfully rehabilitated, and rehabilitation started in six schools in Mosul and Fallujah. UNICEF also began the process of procuring furniture to supply 3000 schools, including desks and chairs.

Rehabilitation of the Educational Institute: UNICEF, in partnership with the NGO, Life for Relief and Development, began the rehabilitation of the main MoE centre responsible for in-service training of all teachers in Iraq, the Educational Institute for Training and Development in Baghdad. UNICEF is also in the process of procuring equipment and furniture for this institute and all In-Service Training Centres in the 21 Directorates of Education across Iraq.

Health (Cluster 2)

Emergency Health Support: UNICEF continues to provide emergency health support to children and their families in conflict areas, in coordination with the Iraqi Red Crescent and the Ministry of Health (MoH). Over the reporting period, 420 First Aid Kits were released to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society for delivery to the conflict areas of Al Sadr city, Talafar, Samarra and Fallujah. In addition, 200 adult and 100 child hospital beds (worth US\$83,000) were delivered to Baghdad. Distribution of these beds to governorates is scheduled to begin this week, depending on security conditions.

Polio Immunisation: UNICEF is preparing for a second round of Polio National Immunization Days (PNIDs), scheduled to take place from 3-7 October 2004. The PNIDs in the northern and central governorates will be supervised by UNICEF health monitors.

High Protein Biscuits (HPB): 412 MT of HPB, at a total value of US\$400,000, and 350,000 bottles of mineral water were distributed to Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) and hospitals in the Lower South Governorates.

Monitoring of Salt Factories: In the three northern governorates, UNICEF Health Monitors visited five salt producing factories and found that they were all iodizing salt. Monthly monitoring of salt producing factories will continue. Additional quantities of potassium iodate, salt iodization machines, and testing kits were delivered to salt factories in the three northern governorates.

Workshop on Maternal Mortality: WHO supported a workshop on maternal mortality of women in Iraq. The workshop was held in Amman from 26-30 September 2004. Participants included various staff from WHO Headquarters and WHO/Iraq, a number of Iraqi MoH officials, and two officials from the Iraqi Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (MoPDC). The participants approved a plan of action for the coming nine months to do further analysis of the Iraqi Child and Mother Mortality Survey (ICMMS), and made the following recommendations: to follow the completion of the census, conduct a child and maternal health survey led by the MoH and the Central Statistics Organization (CSO), supported by the UN Health Cluster; modify the routinely collected mortality data (death certificate) to provide the

most accurate data possible on mortality by age, sex, place of death, residence, and cause; increase collaboration between the MoH and the CSO to facilitate the completion of the work on ICMMS; and implement the plan of action agreed upon during the current meeting.

Workshop on Nursing and Midwifery: Twenty-eight participants from 11 governorates in Iraq took part in the WHO-supported national workshop, “Orientation on Nursing & Midwifery Legislation and Regulation” that took place in Amman on 28-29 September 2004. The workshop was funded by the UN Development Group (UNDG) Trust Fund and attended by participants from the MoH, Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), teaching hospitals, technical institutes, and training centres.

Nursing and Midwifery Curricula Review: WHO is supporting a national workshop on nursing and midwifery curricula review in Amman, from 30 September - 4 October. The workshop, funded by the UNDG Trust Fund, will be attended by 32 participants, including deans and teachers from Iraqi universities and institutes and representatives of the Medical Committee for Curricula Affairs from the MoH and MoHE. The workshop aims to discuss teaching methods of nursing, introduce and adopt the work plan of the February 2004 workshop, define the current and future trends of the teaching of nursing in Iraq, revise the college curricula for nursing, and design a general framework for colleges of nursing.

**The WHO Iraq Country Office launched a new web site that reflects the various aspects and elements of the nature and work of WHO in Iraq: <http://www.emro.who.int/iraq/>.*

Infrastructure and Housing (Cluster 4)

Symposium on Housing and Urban Development: A three-day “Symposium on Housing and Urban Development” was hosted by the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) in Amman from 28-30 September. The meeting aimed to underscore the national housing needs and priorities based on an interactive dialogue and collective wisdom. The Symposium resulted in the creation of the Amman Declaration that put forth intervention recommendations and an action plan, which were unanimously adopted by participants. Representatives of the Iraqi Government, international organizations, and civil society organizations appealed to the Iraqi Government for the decade of 2005-15 to be declared as the Decade of Housing. Donor organizations were asked to contribute generously to this full scale national effort, which is expected to impact the upcoming Tokyo donor conference.

The Symposium, considered highly successful, received coverage by the local press and television channels which carried news and interviews. The Minister of Planning and Development Cooperation inaugurated the Symposium and participated in all three days of the meeting. Various Iraqi governmental authorities were present including the Mayor of Baghdad, the Minister of Human Rights, and Deputy Ministers from the MoPDC, Housing, Municipalities and Public Works (MoMPW), and Displacement and Migration (MoDM). Participants also included a number of UN-HABITAT High Level Panel Members; Mr Mitsuhiro Kohno, a First Secretary in the Japanese Embassy and a coordinator of the donor conference; the World Bank; NGOs; and representatives from the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP), the UN Education, Scientific, and Culture Organisation (UNESCO), UNDP, the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and UNHCR.

Agriculture, Water Resources, and Environment (Cluster 5)

Pipeline Projects: A new Cluster Task Manager and Deputy Cluster Task Manager have been appointed by cluster partners. Cluster 5 met on 30 September to discuss the status of implementation and to agree upon next steps regarding pipeline projects. The agreed pipeline includes 11 new projects under preparation, out of which six are being currently developed by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), four by the UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), and one by UNESCO. The total value of the pipeline is now estimated to be US\$170.8 million. The top three projects prioritized by the Ministry of

Agriculture (MoA) are as follows: "*Restoration and Modernization of Fish Production in Iraq*", "*Improved Seeds of Food Crops for Iraqi Farmers*", and "*Date Palm Sector Rehabilitation Programme*" for the total value of approximately US\$21.3 million. Both the "*Fish Production*" and "*Improved Seeds*" projects have been approved by the Iraqi Strategic Review Board. In the Water Resources sector, the cluster is now preparing a project on a National Water Resources Management Master Plan, with the estimated budget of around US\$6 million.

Coordination with Iraqi Authorities: From 23 September - 1 October two missions were held by FAO. The first was in coordination with the Minister of Water Resources, Dr. Abdul Latif Jamal Rashid, and the second was in coordination with Dr. Abdul Aziz Fatah Al-Karagolly, Director General of Planning and Chairman of the Donor Committee representing the MoA. Mr. Christian Miczaika, Officer-in-Charge (OIC) from Technical Cooperation Emergency Services (TCES)/FAO Headquarters, participated in both meetings. A series of deliberations culminated in the signing of key documents which will enable FAO to conclude the first phase of implementation and move forward to phase two.

Water Resources Projects: During discussions with the Minister of Water Resources, his Excellency issued a letter dated 26 September 2004, which outlined the strategic direction for the execution of three water resource projects, valued at US\$35.79 million. Both parties agreed to act as joint implementing partners. The three projects include the Ramadi Drain Project, the Pumping Station Project, and the Community Irrigation Project.

Ramadi Drain Project: Under the agreement, FAO was tasked with assessing the possibility of direct procurement of services for the Ramadi Drain Project. Following this, FAO will move ahead with supervision of works and ordering of heavy equipment.

Pumping Station Project: FAO's Technical Officer in Baghdad has been asked to work in close cooperation with the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) Design Committee to facilitate finalization of technical specifications required for the pumps. A detailed survey of the pumping station is now underway covering the pumps, motors, and ancillary equipment, as well as the whole pumping station infrastructure, including trash screens and the cleaning system, gantry crane, transformers, and switch-gear housing. The survey is planned to take 28 days. During this time original equipment manufacturers will be contacted and tender specifications finalized.

Community Irrigation Project: An equipment list of US\$2.28 million was jointly prepared and agreed upon, for which FAO will be required to prepare the technical specifications for the purpose of procuring these items. FAO and the MoWR have chosen seven schemes for rehabilitation, for which irrigation equipment, agricultural supplies, and commodities have been identified. FAO is carrying out pre-feasibility and feasibility studies in collaboration with MoWR, which are expected to be completed by mid-November.

Veterinary Services Project: During discussions with the MoA, an Aide Memoir was signed by the OIC of TCES/FAO and the Chairman of the Donor Committee. Agreed to by the MoA, in the memoir were the technical specifications for the restoration of Veterinary Services in Iraq, amounting to US\$3.1 million. These items have now been marked for immediate procurement.

Food Security (Cluster 6)

Food Security: On 28 September 2004 in Amman, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) launched the "*Baseline Food Security Analysis in Iraq*". According to the analysis, the first of its kind in Iraq, some 6.5 million people – 25 percent of the entire population – remain highly dependent on food rations and are therefore vulnerable. Of these 6.5 million people, some 2.6 million are so poor that they have to resell part

of their food rations to buy basic necessities such as medicines and clothes. A further 3.6 million Iraqis, 14 percent of the population, would become food insecure if the rationing system was discontinued.

The survey was conducted during the second half of last year against a background of potential policy reforms of the Public Distribution System (PDS), which provides the monthly food rations to most of Iraq's population. The results show that despite the PDS, the prevalence of extreme poverty is high in rural areas, particularly among women and children. The study adds that around 27 percent of all children up to the age of five are chronically malnourished. Without the current PDS, this number would increase dramatically, the survey adds.

Under the current emergency operation, WFP is also working to strengthen national institutions connected with food security. For example, it is training Iraqis to carry out their own food security assessments in the future.

Mine Action (Cluster 7)

Mine Action Equipment: The UNDP Mine Action Team visited Kuwait, from 27-30 September, to physically check the condition of two containers of mine action equipment and nine vehicles. This equipment was received from the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) through Danish Church Aid in April 2004, after it suspended its mine action operations in Basrah. The equipment will eventually be handed over, on a loan basis, to a national mine action NGO. In addition, a Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning Workshop for Mine Risk Education is scheduled to be held in Amman, from 10 to 14 October, hosted by UNICEF and National Mine Action Authority (NMAA).

Mine Clearance Activities: In the field, the UN supported clearance activities continued. The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Deminer Course (Level 2) was successfully concluded. Six students have been selected for the EOD Deminer Course (Level 3), which commenced 28 September and will continue until 23 October. During the reporting period, the EOD teams were deployed to a new site in a cluster bomb strike area, close to electricity power-lines and grazing pasture. During initial visual clearance operations, 70 bomblets were detected and 52 have so far been destroyed.

Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons - IDPs (Cluster 8)

The IDP Working Group (WG): During the reporting period, the Cluster 11 Task Manager briefed the IDP WG on the upcoming elections and specific arrangements for IDPs. Various concerns were raised with regard to IDP security, the voter registration locations, IDPs residency and registration issues, travel restrictions for security reasons, and other issues. The electoral team took note of the various issues that will be shared with the teams in Iraq. The IDP WG is assessing additional needs for IDPs during this particular time.

The IDP WG received the Norwegian Refugee Council report on the first IDP training held in September, providing comments and suggestions for future trainings. Plans are being made to have additional tailor made trainings in the future for Iraqi staff and national/international counterparts.

The Working Group, including UNHCR, IOM, and the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), is also taking stock on winterisation needs in northern, central, and southern Iraq. Initial distributions of non-food items (NFIs) are planned for by mid-October in the centre and south. IOM is planning to cover the IDP winterisation needs for over 45,000 IDPs and vulnerable families in the fifteen centre and southern governorates. With coping mechanisms extremely stretched during the last year, partners have advised that the items in the package be focused on warming the populations. The package includes mattresses, blankets, cooking stoves, sweaters, plastic sheeting, buckets, and jerry cans. Distribution is planned to commence in mid-October in Baghdad and the central areas, followed by the southern governorates.

IDP Monitoring: In central Iraq, namely Salah Al Din, Ninewa, and Tameem, IOM has extended the IDP monitoring agreements until December 2004. Despite the increased insecurity, NGO partners are able to maintain coverage of the IDP caseloads, their needs, and protection concerns.

Water Trucking Activities: IOM will extend support for water trucking activities in Babil Governorate for another month, in order to cover 650 IDP families in the villages of Abu Gharaq and Kifil. In parallel, IOM is supporting another partner to install compact units and rehabilitate the water network, thus ensuring access to the IDPs and vulnerable communities hosting them. Originally, it was envisaged that two months of water trucking in the summer would end in September, with a functional water network in place. Delays in the latter have resulted in an extension of water trucking activities.

Distribution of Tents to IDPs: IOM, through an NGO partner, has completed the distribution of 90 tents to the benefit of 450 families affected by the floods in May 2004, who are residing in Al Kheir and Al Uzeir areas, located in the southern part of Missan Governorate. Though the water level has receded, these families were found to still be in need of shelter support. Accordingly, tents were distributed recently in addition to NFIs dispersed during their displacement in June/July 2004.

Third Country Nationals (TCN): IOM assisted in the repatriation of 48 Nepalese nationals over the reporting period.

Project Proposal for Return and Reintegration of IDPs: UNHCR has shared with Cluster 8 members a proposal to be submitted to the UNDG Trust Fund. US\$5.7 million of a US\$21 million project will be allocated towards this project, which aims to benefit the return and reintegration of IDPs and Iraqi refugees in northern Iraq. The project, to be implemented by UNOPS (500 families) and UNHCR implementing partners (500 families), will address the issues of sustainable return and reintegration of displaced persons and refugees, benefiting 1,000 returning families in Peshdar, Koya, Soran districts, and Qushtapa sub-district with shelter materials. Indirectly, another 1,500 families, returned IDPs, vulnerable persons, and receiving communities in Peshdar, Qushtapa, Soran, and Koya districts will benefit from improved access to water, health, education facilities, income-generation, and vocational skills training. Local authorities' capacities will also be increased in order to deliver necessary services. UNHCR is presently assisting over 50,000 persons of concern in over 70 locations in northern Iraq, through reconstruction and reintegration projects.

Returning Refugees: During the last week of September, two convoys were facilitated from Iran to Southern Iraq, with a total of 124 returning Iraqi's. An additional two convoys returned from Iran to Northern Iraq with 405 people. UNHCR also facilitated the individual return from Jordan of 36 Iraqis. Since May 2003, a total of 15,268 returns have been facilitated by UNHCR.

Governance and Civil Society (Cluster 9)

Transfer of Equipment to the Iraqi National Assembly: The UNDP Baghdad offices are in the process of being closed down and transferring the remaining equipment and furniture to a free-zone in Jordan where they will be stored. Due to the security risks and transport costs, the Operations Unit approached programme managers to identify opportunities for Iraqi ministries to buy the quality second hand equipment for their own use. UNDP was approached by the National Assembly of Iraq to provide capacity building programmes to the soon-to-be elected members and to the staff. In addition, they identified a need for technical equipment of all types. The Governance Team of UNDP identified needs for computers and furniture. As a result, representatives of the National Assembly were sent to identify, in the presence of UN security personnel, the specific items in which they were interested. To date, 32 computers have been confirmed for the National Assembly.

Meeting with the MoPDC: A meeting with the MoPDC was held to discuss the ongoing support to its project, “Support to the MoPDC,” that includes a number of components, such as policy advisory support to the Minister, donor assistance coordination, and management training.

Poverty Reduction and Human Development (Cluster 10)

Database Training for the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA): IOM's implementing partner provided three days of training, in Baghdad, to 15 MoLSA staff members working in the Employment Centres of Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Diyala, Hilla, and Diwaniya. The training focused on the use of the upgraded MoLSA jobseekers/employers matching database system to be installed in the coming weeks in all operational MoLSA Employment Centres in the country. The database allows ministry staff to rapidly match the skills and requirements of both jobseekers and employers, and assists the Ministry staff in maintaining records of all jobseekers counselled, short-listed for job interviews, and jobseekers who found employment through the network of Employment Centres in Iraq. Additional training sessions on the use of the upgraded database have been scheduled for MoLSA staff working in other Employment Centres in the country.

Mentoring and General Training of MoLSA Staff: IOM's implementing partner, through nine international experts, continues to provide daily mentoring and coaching to department heads of MoLSA, as well as to their staff. The mentoring activities provide staff with information, insight, feedback, advice, and on-the-job training. A specialized two-day training was held from 29-30 September in Amman on the general functions of the Employment Centres, as well as the use of the reporting database, developed by IOM to assist the Ministry in gathering information on the employment assistance services offered by MoLSA Employment Centres. Participants included four staff members from the MoLSA Statistical Department and support staff of the Vocational Training Central Office. Since May 2004, IOM's implementing partner has delivered 405 hours of training in Baghdad to 538 MoLSA employees working in the Employment Centres.

Meeting with the MoPDC: Members of UNDP's Management and Programme teams met with the MoPDC on 29 September 2004 in Amman to review issues related to UNDP support projects to the Ministry, including reporting and capacity building for the Central Statistics Organisation that is affiliated with the Ministry. Implemented activities were reviewed, and the means to accelerate the implementation of other planned activities under the project were investigated. The project, “Iraqis Rebuild Iraq”, was also on the agenda.

Also during the meeting, the MoPDC presented a framework for the National Human Development Report that is planned to be released next year. The theme that the Ministry chose for the report is “Democratic Transition.” The MoPDC has also prepared a list of professionals needed for the project, and estimated that the cost will be approximately US\$650,000. The Ministry was interested in implementing the project under the National Execution Modality.

Oxford/UNDP Human Development Training 12-25 September 2004: UNDP Iraq participated in the Oxford/UNDP Human Development Training organized by the National Human Development Report (NHDR) Unit - Human Development Report Office (HDRO), and Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford. The course drew on the extensive intellectual resources of Oxford, as well as the practical experience of leading analysts from international development agencies. The course was structured around the following six themes: Conceptual Foundations of Human Development, Measurement of Human Development, Human Poverty, Selected Themes in a Human Development Perspective, Challenges to Human Development, and Human Development and Globalization.

Iraq Multiple Indicator Rapid Assessment Review Meeting, Amman, 9-10 October 2004: The Iraq Multi-Indicator Rapid Assessment of Living Conditions (IMIRA) is a combined effort of the Iraqi Central Organization for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT), FAFO Institute for Applied International

IRAQ

SITUATION REPORT



UNITED NATIONS

27 September – 03 October 2004

Studies, and UNDP. This survey of living conditions, which took place between April and May 2004, includes relevant indicators, and covers over 21,000 households throughout the 18 governorates of Iraq. This study is expected to yield very useful information to planners and policy makers working for Iraq's reconstruction and development. The final report of the IMIRA will be scheduled for official release by COSIT in November, as part of its series of national statistics. A review meeting will be held on 9-10 October 2004 in Amman. Subject matter experts, as well as economists and statisticians have been invited to review the report's main findings and methodological aspects. This will be a key step in the process of finalization of the tabulations, and an opportunity to receive feedback from practitioners working on Iraq that will enrich the report's analysis.

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