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ACTIVITIES OF MILITIAS IN IRAQ

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ACTIVITIES OF MILITIAS IN IRAQ

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1. PURPOSE

This issue paper provides case officers with a general picture about the various militias in Iraq, their aims and their area of influence. It is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of militia groups as at last count, the Iraqi government has documented 200 different distinct groups. Instead the paper identifies common themes of militias and singles out significant groups.

The paper reports on human rights and safety issues without necessarily excluding forms of harm or treatment which do not have Refugee Convention motivation.

Decision makers must be satisfied in examining each case that the harm found is motivated by Refugee Convention ground and amounts to persecution. Consideration of whether a fear of persecution for a convention ground is well founded will also need to be undertaken as usual.

Definition

Militia forces in this paper are defined as armed groups of people, who use their weapons for political, criminal, financial or vendetta reasons. These armed groups can range from individual cells with only 2 or 3 persons to centrally directed large groups of armed people.

Formation of militias

Due to the lack of law and order after the fall of Saddam's regime, a security vacuum developed, allowing militias to step into the void.¹ Given the comparatively small number of soldiers used during the invasion period, Coalition countries did not provide sufficient troops for the post-war phase. Well aware of their inability to provide sufficient security or to remove militias forcefully, Coalition commanders either ignored these militia groups, or did little to disarm them.² In many cases, Coalition forces have struck unstable and short-term compromises with many militia forces to minimise further political damage to the interim government that can result from further clashes.³

As a result, militias in Iraq have an increasing impact on the lives of Iraqi citizens. While the central government and its forces remain weak outside of Baghdad, various armed groups control parts or whole towns around Iraq.⁴ In these areas, militias exercise executive and judicial power over residents.⁵

The majority of militias are anti-government/coalition forces who claim that the central government is illegitimate and aim to remove the coalition presence in Iraq.⁶ Other more extremist elements view Iraq in a wider scheme of Western encroachment

¹ House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs, *Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge*, 29 July 2004, CX99692.

² Ibid.

³ Filkins, D., 'US to integrate Iraq militias', *New York Times*, 25 May 2004, CX102376.

⁴ Fisk, R., 'Bloodshed in Baghdad as insurgents try to isolate government', *The Independent*, 15 Jul 2004, CX98021.

⁵ Fisher, I., 'Iraqi liquor store owners fear fundamentalists' rise', *New York Times*, 16 July 2004, CX98130; Abdelhadi, M., 'Analysis: Iraq's Christians under attack', BBC News, 2 Aug 2004, CX98979; UNHCR, *Country of Origin Information - Iraq*, I. Security Situation – General Overview, A. Law enforcement and police structures, Sept 2004, CX99690.

⁶ Hashim, A., 'Terrorism and complex warfare in Iraq', *Jamestown Foundation*, Volume 2 Issue 12, 17 Jun 2004, CX96767.

into Islamic affairs and viewed their battle with coalition and Iraqi forces as a holy war.⁷ There are also leaders who use their militia to gain political leverage against the government.⁸ Not all militias are anti-government forces. In the north, KDP and PUK Peshmerga forces are examples of a pro-government militia who will work with local authorities as it suits their political parties' goals.⁹ Lastly, a significant numbers of militias are criminal gangs who would rob, kidnap or perform other criminal activities for financial reasons.¹⁰

2. CATEGORIES OF MILITIA GROUPS

Pro government militia

The largest pro government militias are armed wings of political parties whose members are part of the Interim government or the previous Interim Governing Council under the Coalition Provisional Authority. The most prominent ones being the Peshmerga forces of the PUK and the KDP (Annex 1) and the Badr Corp of the SCRI party (Annex 2).

Even among pro-government militias, disarmament has been proven to be extremely difficult.¹¹ The poor security environment makes it a difficult case for the government to claim that the authorities would provide sufficient security in an environment where ethnic, religious and political tensions are present, perpetuating a mentality that security is best trusted to no one else except their very own.¹²

Pro government militias operate with the blessing of local or central government, and in some cases, work along side the Iraqi Police Service to provide law and order.¹³ Residents in Samawah, East Baghdad and Basra for example, would go to the offices of militia for assistance rather than their local police stations as the police are often helpless to help residents.¹⁴ However, many pro government militias do not operate strictly within law enforcement and the judicial system and have exercised vigilante-type justice in their area of influence.¹⁵

Instead of disarming militias, government officials, coalition forces and various businesses in Iraq hire or form militias of their own for their own security in the form of private security contractors.¹⁶ Recent reports of abuse by contractors raised a number of important legal issues under international, and U.S. and Iraqi law.¹⁷ Licensed contractors with the U.S. government reportedly sign agreements that

⁷ Ware, M., 'Meet the new jihad', *Time Magazine*, 5 Jul 2004, CX99107.

⁸ Hashim, A., 'Understanding the roots of the Shi'a insurgency in Iraq', *Jamestown Foundation*, 1 Jul 2004, CX101157.

⁹ *Voice of the Mujahidin*, 'Iraqi premier, Kurdish leaders discuss security cooperation', 12 Jul 2004, CX97865.

¹⁰ Allberitton, C. & Walt, V., 'How to free a hostage', *Time Magazine*, 19 Jul 04, CX98572; House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism*, Iraq, Iraq and al Qaeda, 29 July 2004, CIS#14058, p. 19.

¹¹ Abedin, M., 'SCIRI: An ally to America?', *Jamestown Foundation*, 7 Nov 2003, CX101141.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Al-Taie, A. & Jabbar, A., 'Mahdi Army keeps the peace', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 13 Jul 2004, CX98134.

¹⁴ Cole, J., 'US Mistakes in Iraq', *Testimony before Senate Committee on Foreign Relations*, April 20, 2004, CX108153.

¹⁵ UNHCR, *Country of Origin Information - Iraq*, Sept 2004, CX99690

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Human Rights Watch, Q&A: *Private Military Contractors and the Law*, 21 Oct 2004, CX105478.

provide them with immunity from prosecution under Iraqi law.¹⁸ At the same time, these contractors are not subject to U.S. military law but remain "the responsibility of the contractor's management structure, not the military chain of command"¹⁹. Human rights groups have voiced their concern regarding the legal loophole which allowed private security contractors to operate without any judicial accountability.²⁰

Pro government militias have also been known to operate outside the wishes of the government in hot spots like Kirkut, where Peshmerga forces were known to evict Arabs from their homes.²¹

Anti government militia: Insurgents

By far the largest numbers of militia forces are anti-government militia groups. The size and numbers of anti-government militia cannot be verified. US official estimated 12,000 to 16,000 insurgents in October 2004.²² While the Iraqi intelligence chief, Maj. Gen. Mohammed Abdullah al-Shahwani, claimed that there are between 20,000 to 30,000 insurgents and about 200,000 sympathisers.²³ There is no evidence that the number of insurgents have declined as a result of Coalition and Iraqi attacks to date.²⁴ Groups form and disperse spontaneously and many Iraqis have allegiance to many different militias and even government forces.²⁵

There is no typical insurgent. The insurgency includes unemployed men who can make money planting bombs; Iraqis angered by the loss or imprisonment of a family member, or enraged by the presence of foreign occupiers; gangsters that operated freely under Saddam Hussein; tribal sheiks who do not wish to yield power to a central government; Saddam loyalists and former Republican Guard members; ethnic Sunnis who fear revenge by majority Shiites; Shiites who fear a return to power of a Sunni-dominated government²⁶

Despite their lack of common vision and motivation, they are able to cooperate and coordinate attacks. The commonality among these groups is that they view coalition forces as foreign occupiers and the present government as illegitimate.²⁷

- Sunni Arabs

Many experts believe that Iraqi Sunni Arabs dominates the insurgency.²⁸ CSIS stated that 35 Sunni Arab groups have claimed responsibility for terrorist or insurgent attacks.²⁹ In addition, most of those captured or killed have been Iraqi Sunnis as well

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Human Rights Watch, *End abuse of detainees in U.S. custody - HRW letter to national security advisor*, 3 May 2004, CX93879; Landau, S., "Support Our Mercenaries", *Counterpunch*, 18 Oct 2004, CX105116.

²¹ Muhammed, D.A., 'Political Parties Stir Unrest in Kirkuk', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 10 Nov 2004, CX107338; *IRIN*, 'Focus on displacement in Kirkuk', 23 Sep 2004, CX103100.

²² Cordesman, A., *The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14262, p. 13.

²³ *Yahoo News*, '25 Killed in Car-Bomb Attacks in Iraq', 5 Jan 2005, CX110971.

²⁴ Cordesman, A., *The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14262, p. 13.

²⁵ Hashim, A., 'Terrorism and complex warfare in Iraq', *Jamestown Foundation*, Volume 2 Issue 12, 17 Jun 2004, CX96767.

²⁶ Diamond, J., 'Prewar intelligence predicted Iraqi insurgency', 28 Nov 2004, CX105510.

²⁷ *Christian Science Monitor*, 'Classic guerrilla war forming in Iraq', 20 Sep 04, CX103195.

²⁸ Cordesman, A., *The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14262, p.12.

²⁹ Ibid.

as 90-95% of those who has been detained by Coalition forces.³⁰ While the insurgency does not have the support of all Sunni Arabs, its range encompasses all classes, both urban and rural, including students, intellectuals, former soldiers, tribal youths, farmers, and Islamists.³¹ Furthermore, the insurgency also has the tacit support of many within the Sunni Arab community, especially in towns such as Fallujah and Ramadi.³² Some polls indicate that well over 33% of Iraqi Sunni Arabs support the insurgency.³³ A member of the Fallujah administrative council openly stated that insurgents are "Mujahideen" or holy warriors. "We don't know them," he said, but then ventured to add, "Al Anbar (the province where Fallujah is located) has a bigger nationalist consciousness than the rest of Iraq. We are also more religious. We consider this resistance a religious duty and a nationalist one as well."³⁴

- *Shia Arabs*

Coalition forces expected the Shia majority to welcome regime change due to the unpopularity of the previous regime among the Shiites. Despite the steps taken to appease the Shia majority, such as providing them with the greatest number of seats in the interim governing council and later on the interim government, there remains a general resentment against the occupation. Coalition forces' heavy handed approach in tackling insurgents, minimal visible results with reconstruction and overall pessimism about progress has angered poor and disenfranchised young Shia men.³⁵

Many of these young men turn to cleric Muqtada al-Sadr who articulates these views strongly against coalition forces and the interim government (Annex 3). Actions taken against him have been widely viewed by many of his supporters as attack against the Islamic religion, and as a consequence, the movement also manages to rally support from Sunni insurgents too. Due to his popularity, his militia, the Mehdi Army have significant presence in Baghdad, Najaf, Karbala, Kut, Nassariah and Basrah.

- *Foreign fighters*

The Iraqi government claims that the insurgency is dominated by foreign fighters.³⁶ Many experts however note that there is no evidence of foreign fighters dominating the insurgency, pointing to the very small numbers of foreigners arrested for partaking insurgent activities.³⁷ The efficiency of attacks, the regularity and the speed with which insurgents were organised in the aftermath of Saddam's fall all point to a large amount of Iraqi involvement.³⁸ Reporters who venture into insurgent territories all claim to see little foreign involvement, describing most of the insurgent activities as

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ *Christian Science Monitor*, 'Classic guerrilla war forming in Iraq', 20 Sep 04, CX103195.

³² Al-Yasi, A., 'What Lies Behind Fallujah Rising?', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 5 Nov 2004, CX107073.

³³ Cordesman, A., *The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14262, p. 13.

³⁴ Hashim, A., 'Terrorism and complex warfare in Iraq', *Jamestown Foundation*, Volume 2 Issue 12, 17 Jun 2004, CX96767.

³⁵ Barnett, N., 'Mahdi Army uprising pose challenges to Iraqi government', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 1 Sep 2004, CX104277.

³⁶ International Institute of Strategic Studies, *Speech to IISS by Dr Ayad Allawi, Prime Minister of Iraq*, 20 Sep 2004, CX106162.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs, *Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge*, 29 July 2004, CX99692.

"home-grown".³⁹ The Centre for Strategic and International Studies estimates foreign fighters make up about 5% of the total number of insurgents.⁴⁰

Experts suspect that the small numbers of foreign fighters in Iraq work closely with elements of the old regime and the indigenous Islamic extremists.⁴¹ They are also suspected to be behind many of the large scale attacks that cause widespread civilian casualties.⁴² The use of indiscriminate violence has alienated the vast majority of Iraqi public opinion across all sections of society, the carnage it has produced has been a major set back for state building and stability. Thus "mainstream" local Iraqi insurgency tends to separate themselves from the attacks of these extremist elements.

Anti government militia: Criminal gangs

The general lawlessness situation has been widely attributed to organised criminal gangs. Activities of gangs include robbing, raping and kidnapping of Iraqi citizens and foreigners, looting of government buildings and hospitals, people trafficking and drug dealing.

Toby Dodge from the International Institute of Strategic Affairs states that these "industrial scale" criminal gangs operating in the urban centres of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul.⁴³ He argues that it is organised crime that makes the everyday lives of Iraqi city dwellers so precarious. Criminal gangs capitalised on readily available weapons and the weaknesses of the police force to prey on middle class Iraqis through car jacking, housebreaking, murdering and kidnapping. It is groups like these that make the roads surrounding Baghdad so dangerous.⁴⁴

Because criminal gangs try to avoid attacking coalition forces, they operate freely all over Iraq. The Iraqi police force is unable to reign in criminal gangs because it is under equipped and faces constant attacks from other anti-government forces, leaving Iraqi citizens to fend for themselves against criminal gangs and their activities.

3. MOTIVATIONS OF MILITIA GROUPS

Islamic-nationalist

The decline in importance and fortune of former regime loyalists allowed for an Islamic-nationalist element to gain prominence within the insurgency. Made up of former military personnel and motivated by the preaching of the Sunni clergy, the insurgency has benefited tremendously from a fusion between nationalist and Islamist sentiments among Sunnis.⁴⁵

Iraq has witnessed a rising tide of political activism among the mainstream clerical

³⁹ *The Guardian*, 'Basra arrest bolsters revenge theory', 23 Apr 2004, CX93278; Hashim, A., 'Terrorism and complex warfare in Iraq', *Jamestown Foundation*, Volume 2 Issue 12, 17 Jun 2004, CX96767.

⁴⁰ Cordesman, A., *The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14262, p. 15.

⁴¹ Ware, M., 'Meet the new jihad', *Time Magazine*, 5 Jul 2004, CX99107.

⁴² Radu, M., 'The Enemy in Iraq', *Front Page Magazine*, 31 Oct 03, CX104465.

⁴³ House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs, *Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge*, 29 July 2004, CX99692.

⁴⁴ House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, *Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism*, Who are carrying out the attacks?, 29 July 2004, CIS#14058, p. 19.

⁴⁵ Ware, M., 'Meet the new jihad', *Time Magazine*, 5 Jul 2004, CX99107.

establishment. Political and social discontent within the Muslim communities have been brought many young and charismatic clerics to rise. Given the lack of notable political leaders in Iraq today, many disenfranchised Iraqi turn to these charismatic clerics who preach resistance and extremism.⁴⁶ Some of these clerics also post fatwas on their internet sites calling on "holy jihad and civil disobedience".⁴⁷ Militias of Ansar Al-Sunna (Annex 4) and the Mehdi Army take cues from the sermons of these clerics for their insurgent activities.

Tribal affiliation

Young men from the various Sunni Arab tribes have also begun to swell the ranks of the insurgency. Angered by what they saw as outrageous behaviour by U.S. forces, tribes such as the Albueissa have played a prominent role in the tribal-based insurgency; its members claimed that their fighters shot down the U.S. Army Chinook which resulted in the deaths of 17 U.S. troops in early November 2003.⁴⁸

A number of Sunnis and Shiite militias also operate within tribal allegiances. Fallujah in central Iraq is the most prominent example of this phenomenon. Fighters in Fallujah owe allegiance to tribal sheikhs from the Zawbaa, al-Jmailat, al-Falahat, Abu Alwan, Abu Muhammed, Abu Nimir, and Abu Kalb tribes, who in turn are loyal to the Sunni clergy, in particular, Sheikh Abdullah al-Janabi, who is said to be a resistance leader in Fallujah.⁴⁹ Even the popular Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani received protection from tribal members when Al-Sadr's forces entered Najaf.⁵⁰

Religious extremist

Religious extremist groups, ranging from the Ansar Islam group (Annex 5) to the Tawhid and Jihad group (Annex 6), to regional clerics with extremist tendencies have been imposing strict Islamic laws in the area they control.⁵¹ Political leaders have also attributed most of the foreign kidnapping, executions and large scale attacks on mosques and churches to these extremist elements.⁵²

Political power

For leaders who are not part of the interim government, militia activities are an effective way to influence the government and may allow them to gain a seat of power in the future Iraqi government. Insurgency activities are an effective manner to gain widespread public support. Most prominent example of this would be Al-Sadr and his Mehdi army.

⁴⁶ Hashim, A., 'Terrorism and complex warfare in Iraq', *Jamestown Foundation*, Volume 2 Issue 12, 17 Jun 2004, CX96767.

⁴⁷ *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst*, 'Through the eyes of the mujahideen', 1 Dec 2004, CX110544.

⁴⁸ Hashim, A., 'Terrorism and complex warfare in Iraq', *Jamestown Foundation*, Volume 2 Issue 12, 17 Jun 2004, CX96767.

⁴⁹ Al-Yasi, A., 'What Lies Behind Fallujah Rising?', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 5 Nov 2004, CX107073.

⁵⁰ Jabar, F., 'Rethinking Iraq: Tribal Identities', *Middle East Institute*, 25 Apr 2004, CX99316.

⁵¹ Schanzer, J., 'Ansar al-Islam: Back in Iraq', *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2004, CX98226; Rasan, D., 'Patchwork of Insurgent Groups Runs Fallujah', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 17 Sep 2004, CX103279.

⁵² Amnesty International, *Iraq: Hostage-taking and killing must end immediately*, 22 Sep 2004, CX103123; Huggler, J., 'Insurgents will run wild, despite the Fallujah onslaught', *The Independent*, 9 Nov 2004, CX107058.

Sunni clergymen and tribal leaders have also used the insurgency to gather support to their cause as well as to capitalise on the government's inability to suppress insurgents through negotiation tactics for more significant political gains.⁵³

Pro-Saddam

Washington portrays the violence as the work of regime "hold-outs", die-hard Saddam loyalists who may have formed utilitarian alliances with radical Islamists from across the Middle East.⁵⁴ However, Saddam loyalist probably only form a minority of fighters although they may be involved in the top level of many groups as they appear to have a significant role in funding of many nationalistic militia groups.⁵⁵ US commander, General Casey and the Iraqi Defence Minister, Hazan Shaalan believe that Ba'ath leaders in Syria coordinate some or many of the Saddam sympathisers in Iraq.⁵⁶ Many Saddam loyalists have since denounced allegiance to Saddam and have joined the Islamic cause instead.⁵⁷ Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri, a former senior official in the Baath Party is said to have built connections with many clerics and have been providing arms and money to various militias.⁵⁸

4. LEADERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

Leadership structure

Overall, the resistance seems to be headed in the direction of a movement composed of disparate parts with a kind of collective leadership, rather than a single or unified organization with centralized leadership, possibly with Baath party members establishing links between disparate groups.⁵⁹

Outwardly, a second leadership structure appears to have developed around both Sunni and Shia extremist clerics. Sheikh Abdullah al-Janabi is probably the most prominent member of these Sunni clerics but the Muslim Scholars Association is also likely to have a major inspirational influence on Sunni militias.⁶⁰ Similarly, Al-Sadr's control over the Mehdi army does not extend far beyond his call to arms for the Mehdi Army, through the mosques' loudspeakers.⁶¹ These clerics may therefore only provide inspirational rather than operational leadership.

A third source of direction appears to come from foreign jihadis such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, although their leadership capabilities within the resistance movement is only limited to a few Sunni insurgent groups.⁶² All leadership elements appear to operate on the basis of extensive personal, family, or other social networks, providing

⁵³ Baram, A., 'The Iraqi tribes and the post-Saddam system', *Brookings Institution*, 8 Jul 2003, CX103927.

⁵⁴ Fahim, A., 'The eternal circle of the Iraqi insurgency', *Asia Times*, 30 Oct 04, CX106272.

⁵⁵ Ware, M., 'Meet the new jihad', *Time Magazine*, 5 Jul 2004, CX99107.

⁵⁶ Cordesman, A., *The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14262, p.13.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Schanzer, J., 'Ansar al-Islam: Back in Iraq', *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2004, CX98226.

⁵⁹ White, J., Orenstein, T. & Sicherman, M., 'Gaining ground – Resistance in Iraq since the transition (Part I): Evolution and status', *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, 16 Sep 2004, CX108203.

⁶⁰ Ridolfo, K., 'Sunni Leaders Vow Support For Militants', 15 Nov 2004, CX107666.

⁶¹ Barnett, N., 'Mahdi Army uprising poses challenge to Iraqi government', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 1 September 2004, CX104277.

⁶² White, J., Orenstein, T. & Sicherman, M., 'Gaining ground – Resistance in Iraq since the transition (Part I): Evolution and status', *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, 16 Sep 2004, CX108203.

natural leadership, support, and communication mechanisms and increasing the difficulty of penetrating them.⁶³

Voluntary recruitment

- *Resentment*

The deployment of large numbers of troops, mass arrests and widespread house searches created resentment among most of the Iraqi population. This has done little to stem the tide of violence. Large numbers of arrests and detentions fuelled resentment and swell the ranks of the disaffected.⁶⁴ Instead of crushing the resistance, Coalition actions have instead increased recruitment into various militias. A US Army soldier in Iraq said:

"the guerrillas are filling their losses faster than we can create them. We have shown a willingness to inflict civilian casualties as a necessity of war without realizing that these same casualties create waves of hatred against us. These angry Iraqi citizens translate not only into more recruits for the guerrilla army but also into more support of the guerrilla army".⁶⁵

- *Financial reasons*

There is evidence of insurgency paying children as young as 10 to 12 to lob grenades at coalition patrols.⁶⁶ Criminals have been known to be paid to place bombs and mines and serve as snipers against coalition forces.⁶⁷ The unemployment situation has caused many young men to turn to the insurgency as an income in addition to resentment against the current government and coalition force. Insurgents will pay a man up to \$100 to attack a U.S. patrol, says a CSIS report.⁶⁸

Forced recruitment

There is no evidence of any forced recruitment of civilians into militias, however there are known community groups who were evicted from their homes for not supporting insurgents.⁶⁹ Kurds in Fallujah, Ramadi and Samarra, for example, had to flee due to a perception of collaborating with Coalition forces. Residents were told to leave unless they join the insurgency.⁷⁰ The only unsubstantiated claim, for forced recruitment/intimidation is the one below, reported by a journalist from the Institute for War and Peace Reporting:

We took the dusty back roads through Najaf's industrial and residential suburbs. We stopped a passer-by, who directed us to a nearby hospital where he said the Mahdi Army could be found. Then he added, "Are you Sadrists? If not, I'll kill you."⁷¹

5. MILITIA'S IMPACTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF CIVILIANS

Militia activities of both criminal and insurgent types have made all Iraqis around the country desperate for improvement in public safety.⁷² A survey conducted by the

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs, *Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge*, 29 July 2004, CX99692.

⁶⁵ Lorentz, A., 'Why we Cannot Win', *Les Rockwell.com*, 20 Sep 2004, CX104466.

⁶⁶ Vick, K., 'August takes a heavy toll: 1,100 wounded in Iraq', *Washington Post*, 6 Sep 2004, CX104463.

⁶⁷ Radu, M., 'The Enemy in Iraq', *Front Page Magazine*, 31 Oct 2003, CX104465.

⁶⁸ Hanley, C., 'Studies dissect Iraq failures', *Associated Press*, 17 Oct 2004, CX104720

⁶⁹ Nadir, T., 'Fallujah's Kurds flee', *Institute for War & Peace Reporting*, 4 May 2004, CX93861.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Rasan, D. & Fawzi, M., 'Inside the Militia Strongholds', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 24 Aug 2004, CX100804.

⁷² CSIS, *Progress or Peril? - Iraq Update*, November 2004, CIS#14223.

International Republican Institute, claimed that up to 22 percent of Iraqi households have been directly affected by violence, which includes death, handicap or significant monetary loss, since the collapse of the previous regime.⁷³ According to a survey conducted by the Centre for Strategic Studies and International Studies (CSIS), crime is on a rise. Data indicated that 53 percent of Iraqis see crime as one of the three most important issues with their lives.⁷⁴ Coalition and government forces are however targeted towards anti-insurgency activities rather than protecting Iraqi citizens, resulting in increased criminal activities despite efforts to increase personnel and resources in the Iraqi Police Service.⁷⁵

Insurgents' activities have also been increasing despite efforts in training and equipping Iraqi forces.⁷⁶ CSIS's data indicates that over the month of September 2004, over 2,300 attacks were conducted by insurgents, directed at both civilian and military targets, in nearly every major population centre outside of Iraqi Kurdistan.⁷⁷ Insurgent activities include sabotage of key targets like Iraq's oil facilities, constant campaign of intimidation, causing disappearance and "mystery killings", all of which have caused widespread civilian casualties or infrastructure damage that has dramatic impacts on civilians' lives.⁷⁸ CSIS quoted US officials that said:

- Some 40-60 towns and cities have been scene of attacks each week since late August. Many are outside the "Sunni Triangle" and Al Anbar Province.
- The most violent city in terms of number of major incidents has been Baghdad, with 20-40 attacks a week.
- Mosul is second with 4-13 major attacks per week.
- The level of attacks in Basra has been relatively low by comparison, but peaks of 7 attacks per week have occurred in Basra and its environs.⁷⁹

Bombings

As Coalition forces took a less public role in the running of Iraq, troops from Coalition countries redeployed to more secure bases. This shift has encouraged insurgents to seek out more accessible targets, namely, the various state institutions and personnel of the new Iraqi government, which are far less well-protected, compared to coalition bases.⁸⁰ This change in tactics is emphasised in the consistent attacks on police stations throughout the country.⁸¹ Furthermore, insurgents have also switched tactics to use more vehicle-bombings rather than improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or road side bombs which was more widely used at the beginning of the occupation.⁸² These more lethal attacks have a significant impact in creating widespread Iraqi casualties among targets and bystanders. The constant attacks on Iraqi Police and National Guardsmen have also diminished their ability to protect the

⁷³ International Republican Institute, *Survey of Iraqi Public Opinion*, September 24-October 4, 2004, Cis#14228

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ CSIS, *Progress or Peril? – Iraq Update*, November 2004, CIS#14223.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid; Cordesman, A., *The Developing Iraqi Insurgency: Status at End-2004*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14262, p.14.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs, *Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge*, 29 July 2004, CX99692.

⁸¹ Ridolfo, K., 'Militants Maintain Focus On Iraqi Police', *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*, 15 Nov 2004, CX107668.

⁸² Wadhams, N., 'Car Bombs Taking Toll Across Iraq', *Associated Press*, 13 Jan 2005, CX111532.

civilian population.⁸³ Amnesty International considers these deliberate attacks that target civilians “constitute crimes against humanity”.⁸⁴

Pipelines and oil terminals are also constantly under attack. The Institute for the Analysis of Global Security reports an average of one to two sabotage attacks a week against Iraq's oil pipelines has crippled the country's oil industry, hindering its ability to export crude.⁸⁵ In addition, there is a direct connection between bombing of pipelines and the health of the population. Without oil, the electrical power stations would not run, shutting down water treatment facilities.⁸⁶

These attacks are designed not only to discourage Iraqis from working for the new state but also to stop the growth of its institutions.⁸⁷ They have undermined attempts of the Iraqi authority to deliver law and order to the Iraqi population and have been effective in spreading terror to the Iraqi population.⁸⁸

More extremist insurgents have also attempted to perpetuate sectarian violence by targeting large crowds of worshippers. Examples include the bombings of worshippers commemorating the Shia festival of Ashura in Baghdad and Karbala in March 2004, the January 2005 attack on a Shia mosque in Baghdad, and the October, November and December 2004 Christian church bombings.⁸⁹ While the attacks on Shia clerics and worshippers have not created a Shia backlash, the bombings of churches have an especially devastating impact on Iraqi Christians. Fear of attacks and intimidation has resulted in widespread emigration of Iraqi Christians and other minority groups to neighbouring countries. The Iraqi ministry of migration reports 40,000 Christians left Iraq in August 2004 alone.⁹⁰

Assassinations

There is a concerted effort on the side of the insurgent to target academics, professionals, perceived collaborators and government officials. Any particular member of Iraqi society that is either working for the government or seen as rebuilding society may be targeted for assassinations.⁹¹ These persons are particularly targeted due to their inherent vulnerability to intimidation as they do not have the protection that government officials do.⁹² More than 1000 leading Iraqi professionals and intellectuals have been assassinated, at least 100 of them doctors.⁹³ Media reports

⁸³ Cordesman, A., *Strengthening Iraqi Military and Security Forces*, CSIS, 22 Dec 2004, CIS#14261, p.77-80; Eisenstadt, M., ‘The Iraqi security forces (Part 1): Background and current status’, *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, 26 Oct 2004, CX106066.

⁸⁴ Amnesty International, *Amnesty International condemns recent attacks against civilians*, 20 Dec 2004, CX110248.

⁸⁵ *Institute for the analysis of global security*, ‘Energy Security’, 14 Jan 2005, CX111809.

⁸⁶ Whitmont, D., ‘After Saddam’, *Australian Broadcasting Cooperation*, 30 Aug 2004, CX101589.

⁸⁷ Dodge, T., ‘Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge’, *House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs*, 29 Jul 2004, CX99692.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs, *Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge*, 29 July 2004; CX99692, CNN, ‘Wedding party attacked’, 22 Jan 2005, CX112640; Ridolfo, K., ‘Iraqi Churches Bombed’, *RFE/RL Iraq Report*, 10 Dec 2004, CX109722.

⁹⁰ Gavlak, D., ‘Iraqi Christians Fleeing to Jordan, Syria’, *Compass*, 6 Oct 2004, CX103946.

⁹¹ Dodge, T., ‘Written evidence submitted by Dr Toby Dodge’, *House of Commons - Foreign Affairs Committee Affairs*, 29 Jul 2004, CX99692.

⁹² AFP, ‘Academic shot dead in northern Iraq’, 28 Aug 2004, CX101586.

⁹³ Janabi, A., ‘Iraqi intellectuals flee ‘death squads’’, *Arab News*, 30 Mar 2004, CX99097; *Al-Mutamar*, ‘Scientific symposium protests violence’, 28 Sep 2004, CX103395.

suggest many thousands Iraqi academics and high-profile professionals have left Iraq recently, resulting in a brain drain.⁹⁴

Gunmen are known to have come to the homes and neighbourhoods of employees of coalition forces or foreign contractors to kill them. The killings, less visible than the high-profile kidnappings, single out Iraqis and send a message not to cooperate with the Americans.⁹⁵ They are crimes that the police, so overwhelmed with daily violence, rarely even bother to investigate.⁹⁶

Other civilians are sometimes accused as collaborators by insurgents if they are seen speaking to foreigners or if they enter their homes. Many Iraqi residents refuse to speak in person to foreign reporters for fear of being labelled as collaborators.⁹⁷

Some Iraqi companies have also been targeted by insurgents. A bus carrying workers for Iraqi Airways have been attacked and its occupants killed.⁹⁸ Company employees have been receiving death threats, accusing them of being collaborators.⁹⁹ Three Iraqi contractors have been killed and their bodies found in a lake west of Samarra. Captain Ahmad Hassan of the Iraqi police said the contractors were shot by one bullet each to the head.¹⁰⁰

As the transitional government and its security services became more active in their public role, there were increased attacks on government officials, public servants and law enforcement authorities.¹⁰¹ Such attacks include the assassination of Ali al-Haidri, the governor of Baghdad province, the assassination of Jassem al-Obaidi, manager of the Iraqi National Accord, and the attempted killing of Prime Minister Allawi in January 2005.¹⁰²

Attacks on Iraqi security forces and police officers - seen as collaborators by militants, have left hundreds of people dead. Brookings Institution reports that 779 Iraqi security forces members were killed in the first 10 months of 2004.¹⁰³ The Iraqi police in particular have been especially targeted in a series of bombings, drive by shooting, beheaded and their family members intimidated, beaten and killed.¹⁰⁴ The most recent high profile police killing includes the assassination of the deputy police chief in Baghdad and the police chief in Samarra in January 2005.¹⁰⁵ Recent statements made by the Tawhid and Jihad group also explicitly mentioned that policemen are apostates, thereby legitimise their killings for insurgents.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁴ Ibid ; Fisk, R., 'Iraqi academics targeted in murder spree', *The Independent*, 14 Jul 2004, CX98024.

⁹⁵ Tavernise, S., 'Caught in Rebels' Cross Hairs', *New York Times*, 25 Sep 2004, CX108258.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Chandrasekaran, R., 'Iraq's Barbed Reality', *Washington Post*, 17 Oct 2004, CX104841.

⁹⁸ Spinner, J., 'Iraqi Aviation Staffers, Aides to the President Killed On Way to Work', *Washington Post*, 21 Oct 2004, CX105165.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Mashriq, 'Iraqi contractors murdered', 10 Jan 2005, CX111244

¹⁰¹ White, J., Orenstein, T. & Sicherman, M., 'Gaining ground - Resistance in Iraq since the transition (Part I): Evolution and status', *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, 16 Sep 2004, CX108203.

¹⁰² *The Economist*, 'Desperate to blow the election off course', 5 Jan 2005, CX111081; *Reuters*, 'Bombing near Allawi party office', 4 Jan 2005, CX110864; *UPI*, 'Party leader assassinated in Iraq', 9 Jan 2005, CX111237.

¹⁰³ *The Economist*, 'When deadly force bumps into hearts and minds', 1-7 Jan 2005, CX111184.

¹⁰⁴ Flynn, S., 'Police training in Baghdad', *New York Times*, 12 Oct 2004, CX104482; *Reuters*, 'Gunmen ambush, kill Iraqi police', 22 Mar 2004, CX91520; *British Broadcasting Corporation*, 'Police chief shot dead, two Iraqis wounded in explosion in Baghdad', 3 Apr 2004, CX92442.

¹⁰⁵ *IcWales*, 'Iraq deputy police chief and son shot dead', 10 Jan 2005, CX111236; *Reuters*, 'Acting police chief killed', 10 Jan 2005, CX111235.

¹⁰⁶ *Al-Jazeera*, 'Fighters Tactics Surprised The U.S.', 25 Jun 2004, CX108255.

Kidnappings

While kidnapping of foreign nationals more frequently makes the headlines, many thousand more Iraqis are kidnapped daily than foreign nationals.¹⁰⁷ Generally, there are two distinct groups of kidnappers; the criminals who abducts hostages for financial gains, as well as extremist insurgents who kidnap victims for political reasons. The later group is more likely to kill their victims to maximise potential unrest locally and internationally.¹⁰⁸

Kidnappers of the criminal kind are more plentiful and more likely to seize local Iraqis. "Those who take the hostages are not sophisticated. They are thugs and gangsters." says Andrew White, director of the Iraqi Center for Dialogue, Reconciliation and Peace.¹⁰⁹ Educated, middle class Iraqis are at particular risk of being kidnapped for ransom due to perceived wealth.¹¹⁰ Women and children are at risk of being trafficked to neighbouring countries as sex slaves.¹¹¹

If criminal kidnappers are unable to make contact with the victim's families or if otherwise unable to obtain a ransom, victims are sold up the criminal chain to mafias or larger criminal gangs, ending up in the hands of extremist insurgents.¹¹² Victims arriving at extremists can be executed as collaborators.¹¹³ The personal nature of the tactic, usually involving video taping of the individual hostages with their captors and the threat of beheading ensures that each incident is given enormous exposure in the international media.¹¹⁴

Families of high ranking government officials are particularly vulnerable to political kidnapping. Victims of such kidnappings include the cousins of Prime Minister Allawi and the three sons of the former governor of Anbar province.¹¹⁵

Vigilantism

The general Iraqi public lacks faith in the capacity of the Iraqi Police Service to effectively maintain law and order. Many crimes are simply never reported to the police.¹¹⁶ In turn, perpetrators generally carry out acts of violence, vandalism and other crimes without particular fear of prosecution or conviction.¹¹⁷ As a result, more and more people have begun to rely on other forms of protection such as tribal links and or vigilante-type justice.

Even pro-government militias tend to blur the distinction between law enforcement and judicial procedures. For example, on 30 July 2004 four Iraqis were arrested,

¹⁰⁷ Anwar, O. & Tosh, S., 'Kidnapping no longer news in Iraq', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 19 Nov 2004, CX108089.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid; Allbritton, C. & Walt, V., 'How to Free a Hostage', *Time*, 19 July 2004, CX98572.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Anwar, O. & Tosh, S., 'Kidnapping no longer news in Iraq', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*,

¹¹¹ Human Rights Watch, *Climate of Fear - Sexual violence and abduction of women and girls in Baghdad*, July 2003, CIS#13941.

¹¹² Allbritton, C. & Walt, V., 'How to Free a Hostage', *Time*, 19 July 2004, CX98572.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Glanz, J., 'Militants use kidnapping as their most powerful weapon in Iraq', *New York Times*, 25 Jul 2004, CX98429.

¹¹⁵ Vick, K., Spinner, J. & Barbash, F., *Washington Post*, 'Gunmen Kidnap Three Members of Allawi's Family', 11 Nov 2004, CX107170; *Xinhuanet*, 'Iraqi governor ready to resign for kidnapped sons' release', 31 July 2004, CX98846.

¹¹⁶ Allbritton, C. & Walt, V., 'How to Free a Hostage', *Time*, 19 July 2004, CX98572.

¹¹⁷ UNHCR, *Country of Origin Information - Iraq*, Sept 2004, CX99690.

interrogated, charged, tried and executed by a militia in Najaf. The four Iraqis were mistakenly accused of involvement in a car bombing, they were instead national staff members of a French NGO, and an implementing partner for UNHCR in the Muthanna governorate.¹¹⁸

Early in the occupation, police and monitoring groups suggested that perhaps several hundred former Baath Party officials have been killed since the fall of President Hussein's government.¹¹⁹ For example, Shiek Kazim 'Ibadi al-Nasiri called in his sermon for vigilante reprisal killings of Ba'athists, referring to a fatwa of Ayatollah Kazim al-Ha'iri.

Some insurgents have also reportedly been dispensing criminal justice and levying taxes in their area of control. For example, in the town of Tal Afar, insurgents have imposed a 25% levy on the price of meat.¹²⁰

In addition, other religious leaders have dictated on what residents can and can't do. In his sermon on May 16, Shiek Muhammad Fartusi said:

"The cinemas in Al-Saadun Street show indecent films. I warn them: if in a week they do not change, we will act differently with them. We warn women and the go-betweens who take them to the Americans: If in a week from now they do not change their attitude, the murder of these women is sanctioned (by Islam). This warning also goes out to sellers of alcohol, radios and televisions. The torching of cinemas would be permitted,"¹²¹

The Mehdi Army is also extremely brutal in carrying out their vigilantism activities. In June 2004, leaders of Al-Sadr's organisation issued an edict allowing the Mehdi Army to enforce a range of anti-social activities.¹²² Among the offences punishable by death were kidnapping, robberies, and collaboration with US government, terrorist activities, prostitution, pimping, pornography, gambling and alcohol sales.¹²³ Following this edict, shops selling alcohol were fire-bombed and entire gypsy villages were destroyed after being accused of taking part in "immoral activities".¹²⁴

Persecution of religious minorities

- Christians

Assyrian Christians, Chaldeans, Sabians / Mandeans have been especially targeted by insurgents in Iraq. The Iraqi government and church officials claimed somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 Christians have left Iraq since church bombings in August and October.¹²⁵ Christians have been particularly targeted in a series of bombings and targeted assassination in an attempt to cause a rift between the Muslim and non-Muslim community.¹²⁶ In addition, many Christians were targeted due to perceived

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ *New York Times*, 'Iraqis seek justice, or vengeance, for victims of killing fields', 4 Nov 2003, CX86288.

¹²⁰ *The Economist*, 'When deadly force bumps into hearts and minds', 1-7 Jan 2005, CX111184.

¹²¹ Cole, J., 'The United States and Shi'ite religious factions in post-Ba'athist Iraq', *Middle East Institute*, Autumn 2003, CX98363; *Middle East Online*, 'Shiite leader in Baghdad warns women, alcohol sellers, cinemas', 16 May 2003, CX104924.

¹²² Schwartz, M., 'The Taming of Sadr City', *Asia Times*, 13 Jan 2005, CX111404.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid; *The Economist*, 'Trying to balance the factions', 22 Jul 2004, CX99383.

¹²⁵ Gavlak, 'Iraqi Christians Fleeing to Jordan, Syria', *Compass*, 6 Oct 2004, CX103946; Ridolfo, K., 'Five churches bombed in Baghdad', *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*, 25 Oct 2004, CX105504.

¹²⁶ Cambanis, T., 'Fear of ethnic conflict charges Mosul unrest', *Boston Globe*, CX108984.

collaboration with coalition forces because coalition soldiers come from western countries.¹²⁷

-Shia and Sunni clerics

More recently, gunmen have also targeted Sunni and Shia clerics across Iraq, giving rise to a fear of sectarian civil war.¹²⁸ Some experts suggest that extremists or foreign jihadists are responsible for these attacks in order to provoke sectarian violence leading up to the election.¹²⁹

In the town of Latifiya, 70 kilometres south of Baghdad, hardline Sunni insurgents have evicted Shia residents out of their homes as well as killing Shia clerics.¹³⁰ On the 4th of December 2004, the Shi'ite Hameed al-Najar mosque was attacked with mortar fire in Adhamiya, in Baghdad, followed by a suicide car bomb that targeted rescuers.¹³¹ Other prominent attacks include assassinations of SCIRI members in Baquba, and Karbala by unidentified assassins.¹³²

Similarly, Sunni clerics have also been targeted by insurgents. At least eight clerics of the Association of Muslim Scholars, a conservative Sunni cleric group, have been killed since February 2004. Most Sunnis blamed such killings on foreign jihadist such as Abu Masab al-Zarqawi, rather than local Shia involvement.¹³³

Persecution of ethnic groups

- Kurds

Kurdish families have been fleeing from their homes in the Sunni Arab cities of Fallujah, Ramadi, Samarra and Baquba in central Iraq for Kurdish-controlled Iraqi Kurdistan.¹³⁴ Kurds in central Iraq claim that they have been accused of being collaborators with Coalition forces and have been intimidated by militias and Arab residents in central Iraq.¹³⁵ Kurds have been executed as spies by insurgents.¹³⁶

-Gypsies

Many Iraqi gypsies make their living through prostitution as well as supplying music and dancers for celebrations and parties. During Saddam's era, many of the leaders were famously fond of the "kawliya" music and dancing of the gypsies. These gypsies in turn enjoyed police protection before the fall of the regime. However after the collapse of the old regime, residents have run the gypsies out of their villages.¹³⁷

¹²⁷ *World Net Daily*, 'Iraqi Christians face persecution', 25 Jun 2004, CX104642; *Washington Post*, 'For Iraqi Christians, A Shadow of Insecurity', 17 Jul 2004, CX104745; *IRIN*, 'IRAQ: Christian community shaken following bombings', 6 Aug 2004, CX104641.

¹²⁸ Blanche, E., 'Iraq killings stir sectarian divisions', *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst*, 1 Jan 2005, CX11551.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid, *IRIN*, 'Iraq: Insurgents throw Latifiya residents out of their homes – ministry', 28 Oct 2004, CX105901.

¹³¹ Blanche, E., 'Iraq killings stir sectarian divisions', *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst*, 1 Jan 2005, CX11551.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ *IRIN*, 'Kurds continue to flee cities of Sunni triangle', 5 Oct 2004, CX103788.

¹³⁵ Hama-Tahir, W. & Khali, A., 'Kurds Find Northern Resettlement Tough', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 15 Nov 2004, CX108092.

¹³⁶ *AFP*, 'Al-Qaeda-linked group claims killing of two Iraqi Kurds', 21 Nov 2004, CX108148; Al-Marashi, I., 'Iraq's Hostage Crisis: Kidnappings, Mass Media and the Iraqi Insurgency', *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, December 2004, CX112611.

¹³⁷ Ali, H., 'Gypsies Seek Government Protection', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 24 Jun 2004, CX97298.

On 12 March 2004, Mahdi Army elements razed Qawliya, a gypsy village near Diwaniyah in southern Iraq. Witnesses said the Mehdi Army killed many of its inhabitants and forced the rest of the villages to flee, followed by the systematic demolition of houses in the village with bulldozers.¹³⁸

Women and children

Violence against women and girls has sharply increased in Iraq compared to the time before last year's war. Many women and girls live under constant fear of being harassed, beaten, abducted, raped or murdered.¹³⁹ Since the beginning of the occupation, there continues to be reports of women and children being kidnapped amid the lawlessness environment.¹⁴⁰ This high level of insecurity had a particularly negative impact on the ability of women and girls to go to jobs, attend school, or otherwise move outside the home.¹⁴¹

In addition, militant clerics have issued fatwas, that women must be veiled, that schools and workplaces be segregated by sex, and that their strict version of Islamic law be enforced, including death-by-stoning for women who have sex out of wedlock.¹⁴² These clerics, supported by their militias, are able to patrol the streets, threatening women who do not cover up.¹⁴³ "You hardly see women without veils in the streets now, and this is very dangerous," said Maha Al-Nuaimy, an Iraqi UN employee.¹⁴⁴

Parents do not send their children to school due to security fears. CSIS found that basic education is regressing as a result of the security situation.¹⁴⁵ Girls are particularly kept away from schools due to the fear of kidnappings. UNICEF reports that there have been nearly twice as many girls as boys out of school due to the security situation.¹⁴⁶ The difficult economic situation caused by the lack of security resulted in many families pulling children out of school to help provide for the family.¹⁴⁷

Health

Due to the constant sabotage of infrastructure by militia groups, electricity continues to be in short supply across the country.¹⁴⁸ The difficulties in re-establishing the power grid adversely affect water supply.¹⁴⁹ Water filtration systems do not run when there are blackouts, contaminating water supplies for residents.¹⁵⁰ One in five urban

¹³⁸ AFP, 'More than 400 Iraqi women kidnapped, raped in post-war chaos: watchdog', 24 Aug 2003, CX104775; Schwartz, M., 'The Taming of Sadr City', *Asia Times*, 13 Jan 2005, CX111404.

¹³⁹ Amnesty International, *Iraq: Violence Against Women Increases Sharply*, 31 Mar 2004, CX95731.

¹⁴⁰ AFP, 'More than 400 Iraqi women kidnapped, raped in post-war chaos: watchdog', 24 Aug 2003, CX104775; Jamail, D., 'Iraqi Women Paying the Price', *Dahr Jamail Iraq Dispatch*, 25 Jan 2005, CX112782; IRIN, 'Parents concerned as child kidnapping increase', 10 Jan 2005, CX11131.

¹⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2005: Iraq*, January 2005, CX112006.

¹⁴² Susman, T., 'Women of Iraq Fear the Future', *Newsday*, 16 Jun 2003, CX104923.

¹⁴³ Amnesty International, *Stop violence against women - Iraq - living with fear*, 12 Oct 04, CX105477.

¹⁴⁴ Susman, T., 'Women of Iraq Fear the Future', *Newsday*, 16 Jun 2003, CX104923.

¹⁴⁵ CSIS, Progress or Peril? - Iraq Update, November 2004, CIS#14223, p. 18.

¹⁴⁶ IRIN, 'Iraq: Focus on back to school efforts despite insecurity', 6 Oct 2004, CX103966.

¹⁴⁷ CSIS, Progress or Peril? - Iraq Update, November 2004, CIS#14223, p. 14.

CSIS, Progress or Peril? - Iraq Update, November 2004, CIS#14223, p.16.

¹⁴⁹ UNICEF, *Draft country programme document - Iraq*, 13 Apr 2004, CX104599.

¹⁵⁰ Whitmont, D., 'After Saddam', *ABC*, 30 Aug 2004, CX101589.

household and three in five rural households do not have access to safe drinking water.¹⁵¹ Iraq's sanitation system is in dire condition. Faulty and broken sewage system has led to serious outbreaks of diseases in some Baghdad suburbs and southern provinces in Iraq.¹⁵² Repair work progresses extremely slowly due to the security situation.

As a result of extensive damage and disrepair due to both decades of neglect and more recent fighting, Iraq's healthcare system is currently incapable of providing adequate basic health care to the majority of the population.¹⁵³ The frequent hijacking and kidnapping of truck drivers by insurgents have caused chronic shortage of available and affordable medicines, especially in places of heavy fighting.¹⁵⁴

In addition, the lack of clean water has led to increase waterborne and water-transmitted diseases. There are outbreaks of Hepatitis E, Measles and Typhoid.¹⁵⁵ CSIS noted that the rate of diarrhoea and malnutrition among children remains high.¹⁵⁶ Doctors say that poor hygiene, malnutrition and a lack of vaccines have spread such ailments into every neighbourhood.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵¹ Laurance, J., 'Iraq: The Aftermath: Iraq Faces Soaring Toll of Deadly Disease,' *The Independent*, 13 Oct 2004, CX107998.

¹⁵² CSIS, Progress or Peril? – Iraq Update, November 2004, CIS#14223; Glanz, J., 'Hepatitis spreads in 2 Iraqi districts', *New York Times*, 24 Sep 2004, CX103133.

CSIS, Progress or Peril? – Iraq Update, November 2004, CIS#14223, p. 20.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 21.

¹⁵⁵ *Pacific Disaster Management Information Network*, 'Iraq Crisis Report', 18 Oct 2004, CX108000, *IRIN*, 'Hepatitis outbreak in capital', 27 Sep 04, CX103097, BBC, 'Cholera outbreak feared in Iraq', 7 May 03, CX77645.

¹⁵⁶ Laurance, J., 'Iraq: The Aftermath: Iraq Faces Soaring Toll of Deadly Disease,' *The Independent*, 13 Oct 2004, CX107998.

¹⁵⁷ McGeary, J., 'Living in Fear', *Time Magazine*, 19 Jul 2004, CX98914

ANNEX 1 PESHMERGA FIGHTERS OF THE PUK AND THE KDP

Peshmerga fighters of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) number around 60,000 men. They operated in northern Iraq but has moved southwards to Kurdish areas, including Kirkuk since the fall of the Saddam regime. Thousands of Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga fighters, supported by US special forces, have also overrun the main strongholds of Ansar Islam during the invasion period.¹⁵⁸

The PUK, headed by Jalal Talabani, is based in Al-Sulaymaniyah. The PUK controls the eastern portion of northern Iraq and has set up a Kurdish parliament, headed by Prime Minister Barham Salih. The PUK joined the Iraqi opposition supported by the U.S. government in the 1990s. Talabani held a seat of the U.S.-installed Iraqi Governing Council.¹⁵⁹

The KDP was founded in 1945 by Mullah Mustafa Barzani, the party has been led by his son, Mas'ud Barzani, since 1979. The KDP joined the Iraqi National Congress and was an active member of the Iraqi opposition that supported the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. KDP (and PUK) Peshmerga forces participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Barzani was assigned a position on the Iraqi Governing Council. Like Talabani, he has actively called for the establishment of a federal system in Iraq that would grant autonomy to the Kurds.¹⁶⁰

The PUK and KDP has undertaken efforts to unite its administration of eastern Kurdistan with the KDP-controlled government in the western area of northern Iraq. These two allied groups form the Kurdish Autonomous Government during Saddam's time and are hence together are the most organised and most experienced in forming government of all the current Iraqi political parties.

The PUK and KDP Peshmerga militia has provided the only armed force in Iraq that the US has been able to rely on before and after the invasion.¹⁶¹ As a result, the Peshmerga units were either allowed to operate as they always had or integrated wholly into police or national guards units. Despite wearing a different uniform, many Peshmerga fighters still pledge allegiance to the Kurds rather than the Iraqi state. Mr. Dolani, a Peshmerga of 25 years said, "If the Arabs try to be in charge of us and try to take our rights," he said, "we will not be silent. We will fight."¹⁶²

As Peshmerga forces swept into central Iraq during the invasion, many Arab residents in Kirkuk claim that they were evicted by the returning Kurdish soldiers from their homes. A spokesman for the PUK calls this claim a "lie."¹⁶³ Seven people were killed and dozens more wounded when violence broke out between Kurds and protesting Arabs and Turkomans in the Iraqi city of Kirkuk on 31 December, 2003. The clashes erupted when about 2,000 Turkomans and Sunni Arabs were demonstrating against a drive by the city's Kurdish majority to integrate the northern oil centre into a future

¹⁵⁸ Muir, J., 'Iraqi Kurds overrun Islamist base', *BBC News*, CX94337

¹⁵⁹ Ridolfo, 'Iraqi political groups, Part I, part II', *Radio Free Europe*, June 2004, CX97153.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Pearce, R., 'Kurds call for autonomy referendum', *Green Left Weekly*, 11 October 2004, CX104543.

¹⁶² Filkins, D., 'US to integrate Iraq militias', *New York Times*, 25 May 2004, CX102376.

¹⁶³ Fahim, K., 'Guilt by Association', *The Village Voice*, 21-27 May 2003, CX104766

autonomous Kurdish province. Police said Kurdish peshmerga fighters opened fire on the demonstrators.¹⁶⁴

In the 12 day assault on Tel Afar that has resulted in heavy civilian casualties, U.S. officials claim that this was an anti-terrorist operation but Turkoman representatives in Tel Afar have claimed that Kurdish Peshmerga forces have launched a campaign in the town as part of a larger program to "ethnically cleanse" Turkomans from northern Iraq.¹⁶⁵

Due to attacks against PUK and KDP offices, as well as the execution of many Peshmerga fighters by insurgents, the Peshmerga has been known to be sensitive about foreigners and Arabs in Kurdish areas.¹⁶⁶ Many residents also claim that Peshmerga act as thugs in area of control.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 'Emergency talks are held in north following violent demonstrations', 9 January 2004, CX104768.

¹⁶⁵ *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 'Turkomans claim Kurdish Peshmerga forces behind Tel Afar massacre', 16 September 2004, CX102778.

¹⁶⁶ *The NewStandard*, 'Smashed windows, intricate webs', 8 June 2004, CX97427.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

ANNEX 2: BADR CORPS

The Badr Corps or Faylaq Badr is the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). The corps was reportedly founded in 1983, just one year after Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim established SCIRI.¹⁶⁸ Following al-Hakim's assassination in August 2003, his brother, Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim took over the leadership of SCIRI.

SCIRI is supported and funded by Iran and its fighters are trained by former Iraqi military officers and commanders.¹⁶⁹ SCIRI claimed to have some 10,000 militiamen inside Iraq.¹⁷⁰ According to the SCIRI website, the corps was organized into units that included an infantry, armored, artillery, antiaircraft, and commando units. Badr Corp maintains a rigid internal discipline and pays great attention to the training of its members.¹⁷¹ Many Badr members have considerable fighting experience, acquired during operations against the Iraqi army. All Badr troops and officers have taken combat training in military camps in Iran and Lebanon.¹⁷² Despite orders by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to disband in spring 2003, the militia remains armed by all accounts and merely had a name change to the Badr Organization for Development & Reconstruction.¹⁷³

In the first days of the occupation, the Badr Brigades took over several cities and hundreds of thousands responded to Al-Hakim's call to converge on Karbala "to oppose the US-led interim administration and defend Iraq's independence." This strong armed tactic earned SCIRI a place on the Interim Governing Council (IGC).¹⁷⁴ Media reports have since indicated that the Badr Corps is actively working with the Iraqi Interior Ministry to "track down terrorist elements" attempting to enter the country.¹⁷⁵ Badr Corp members are also part of Battalion 36, a US organised elite military unit that is made up of Kurdish Peshmerga and Badr Corp members, that was used extensively in Fallujah.¹⁷⁶ Reports indicated that SCIRI runs Basra, with the police taking orders from Badr Corp officers.¹⁷⁷

¹⁶⁸ *Radio Free Europe*, 'A survey of arm groups in Iraq', 4 June 2004, CX95763.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Cole, J., 'The United States and Shi'ite religious factions in post-Ba'thist Iraq', *Middle East Institute*, Autumn 2003, CX98363.

¹⁷¹ Novikov, E., 'Unmasking the Iraqi insurgency', *Jamestown Foundation*, 17 June 2004, CX101147.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Abedin, M., 'SCIRI: An ally to America?', *Jamestown Foundation*, 7 November 2003, CX101141; *Al-Jazeera TV*, 'Iraq: Shi'i group leader discusses resistance', 4 July 2003.

¹⁷⁴ El-Amine, 'The Shia Rise Up', *Left Turn*, 17 May 2004, CX102319.

¹⁷⁵ *Radio Free Europe*, 'A survey of arm groups in Iraq', 4 June 2004, CX95763.

¹⁷⁶ Shahzad, S., 'Fanning the flames of resistance', *Asia Times*, 9 November 2004, CX106918.

¹⁷⁷ *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 'Daily contends that Iranian intelligence running Al-Basrah', 8 October 2004, CX104350.

ANNEX 3: MEHDI ARMY

The Mehdi Army is made out of mostly young, disenfranchised Shi'ites who pledge loyalty to Muqtada Al-Sadr. Al-Sadr is the son of the late Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, who was gunned down, presumably by Saddam Hussein's men, along with Muqtada's two brothers, in 1999.¹⁷⁸ The Mehdi Army has between 6000 to 10,000 men¹⁷⁹, but its numbers had always surged whenever the Mehdi Army or Al-Sadr is under attack by Coalition Forces or the Iraqi National Guard.¹⁸⁰

In August 2003, Al-Sadr announced the formation of the Mahdi Army, a militia which he claimed was for protecting Shi'ite religious shrines.¹⁸¹ Jane's Intelligence Review reported that the Mehdi Army's first serious challenge to Coalition force began on the 4th of April 2004 where it began demonstrations and attacks on Coalition forces and facilities in Sadr City and across southern Iraq.¹⁸² In response to the rising violence, the CPA issues a warrant for the arrest of Sadr in connection with the murder or a rival cleric in April 2003, which only served to increase confrontation between Coalition forces and the Mehdi Army.¹⁸³ Many southern cities were over-run by Al-Sadr's forces, including the holy city of Najaf.¹⁸⁴ While Al-Sadr did finally withdrew his militia from Najaf, Karbala and Kufa in a bid to stave off an American assault, tensions remains high between himself, the US military and the Iraqi government.¹⁸⁵

Sadr City, the overcrowded Shia quarters of Baghdad is the main stronghold of the Mehdi Army. Al-Sadr's organisation has de-facto control over the suburb and replaces the central government from all aspect of public services, including traffic control to apprehending criminals, frequently cooperating with local police to tackle these problems.¹⁸⁶ More recently, the Mehdi Army also plays a role in easing the fuel crisis in Baghdad by organising fuel distribution centres and clamping down on black market fuel sellers.¹⁸⁷ These activities have made the Mehdi Army and Al-Sadr's organisation extremely popular and respected in Sadr City. Sadr's representative there, Sheik Hassan Edhary, is visibly the accepted political authority in the area.¹⁸⁸

¹⁷⁸ *Radio Free Europe*, 'A survey of arm groups in Iraq', 4 June 2004, CX95763.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Jamail, D., 'Mehdi Army Grows as Tempers Rage Over 'Wedding Massacre'', *The New Standard*, 25 May 2004, CX108204.

¹⁸¹ White, J. & Phillips, R., 'Sadrist revolt provides lessons for counterinsurgency in Iraq', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 1 August 2004, CX104275.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ Lanier, A., 'Low Intensity Conflict and Nation-Building in Iraq: A Chronology', *CSIS*, 22 October 2004, CX105838.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ Schwartz, M., 'The taming of Sadr City', *Asia Times*, 13 Jan 2005, CX111404.

¹⁸⁷ Naji, Z., & Ali, H., 'Sadr Eases Baghdad Fuel Woes', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 27 Dec 2004, CX110502.

¹⁸⁸ Schwartz, M., 'The taming of Sadr City', *Asia Times*, 13 Jan 2005, CX111404.

ANNEX 4: ANSAR AL-SUNNAH ARMY

The Ansar Al-Sunnah Army is probably one of the most active Sunni insurgent group in central and northern Iraq. It is reportedly headed by Abu Abdallah al-Hasan bin Mahmud.

Radio Free Europe reports that the group was formed in autumn 2003 by break-away members of Ansar Al-Islam and other radical elements. Ansar Al-Sunna described itself in a statement to London-based "Al-Quds al-Arabi" published on 4 November 2003 as: "A group of mujahedin, people with knowledge, political shrewdness, and military expertise as well as those who have long experience and history in administering the Islamic ideological conflict against the infidels, brought several groups and various jihadist factions together." In a 21 February statement published in London's "Al-Quds al-Arabi," the group claims members from the ranks of clerics, tribal sheikhs, and the former Iraqi military. It claims to have fighters throughout Iraq "implementing a practical non-imported program, based on a clear view of the arena and the instructions of the true shari'a [Islamic law]."¹⁸⁹

Ansar Al-Sunnah claimed responsibility for the February 2004 simultaneous bombings of PUK and KDP headquarters in Irbil, the 14 October 2003 bombing of the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad, the 20 November 2003 bombing of the PUK office in Kirkuk, as well as numerous mortar attacks on coalition forces.¹⁹⁰

In addition to large scale bombings and mortar attacks, Ansar Al-Sunnah Army also targets individual Iraqis for execution. On 8th of October, Ansar Al-Sunnah killed a Turk confessed to be a contractor for US forces.¹⁹¹ On 12th of October, Ansar Al-Sunnah claimed to have captured and beheaded an Iraqi Shi'ite working for multinational forces.¹⁹² Ansar Al-Sunnah also executed three Kurds taken hostage north of Baghdad, claiming that they were "soldiers with the traitor Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)."¹⁹³ Ansar also claimed to have killed nine policemen returning from training in Jordan.¹⁹⁴

Other groups that fall under the Ansar Al-Sunnah umbrella include the Al-Shahid Aziz Taha Squad, Al-Tawhid Battalion, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas Group, Asad Al-Islam Brigade, the Hanifah Al-Nu'man Brigades, the Abdallah bin al-Zubayr Squad, the Mu'ad ibn Jabal Unit, and the Yasin al-Bahr regiment.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁹ *Radio Free Europe*, 'A survey of arm groups in Iraq', 4 June 2004, CX95763.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Associated Press*, 'Two hostages beheaded 'for aiding US'', 12 October 2004, CX104484.

¹⁹² *Radio Free Europe*, 'Ansar Al-Sunna Army claims it beheaded Shi'ite worker', 15 October 2004, CX104707

¹⁹³ *AFP*, 'Three Kurdish hostages beheaded', 20 September 2004, CX102741

¹⁹⁴ Hussein, R., 'Al Qaeda-linked group claims killing of nine Iraqi policemen', *Jordan Times*, 20 Oct 2004, CX105160.

¹⁹⁵ *Radio Free Europe*, 'A survey of arm groups in Iraq', 4 June 2004, CX95763.

ANNEX 5: ANSAR AL-ISLAM

Ansar Al-Islam (Supporters of Islam) is an extremist group purportedly linked to Al-Qaeda. It is an offshoot of Jund al-Islam (Soldiers of Islam, a.k.a. Islamic Brigade) and has been engaged in fighting with the PUK since September 2001. Led by Mullah Krekar (a.k.a. Najm al-Din Faraj Ahmad), the military commander of Ansar al-Islam who is under house arrest in Norway. There were widespread reports that the leadership changed in late 2003 and is now headed by Abu Abdallah al-Shafi'i (a.k.a. Warba Holiri al-Kurdi)¹⁹⁶

US intelligence reported that dozens, perhaps hundreds, of pro-Taliban fighters possibly linked to al-Qaida left Afghanistan and made their way to northern Iraq, where Ansar al-Islam controlled an enclave on the Iranian-Iraqi border.¹⁹⁷ On March 23, 2003 with the war fully underway, PUK fighters attacked Ansar al-Islam's stronghold, with backing from U.S. Special Forces, unmanned aerial vehicles, and aircraft strikes.¹⁹⁸ Ansar al-Islam then dispersed, many heading across the borders to Iran. However, Ansar al-Islam is said to have since been moving supplies and new recruits from Iran into Iraq, say Iraqi Kurdish and Western officials.¹⁹⁹ Newsweek report indicated that "Ansar fighters are joining forces with Baathists and members of al-Qaeda." That report also indicated that Ansar al-Islam structure was morphing such that each "fighting force is said to be reorganized into small units of ten to fifteen members, each headed by an 'emir'."²⁰⁰

The group has been linked to the 19 August bombing of UN headquarters in Baghdad. The group also claimed responsibility for the 1 February 2004 simultaneous attacks on Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) offices in Irbil, and the 17 March 2004 bombing of the Mount Lebanon Hotel in Baghdad. The group also claims to have participated in the April 2004 clashes against coalition forces in Fallujah.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁶ *Radio Free Europe*, 'A survey of arm groups in Iraq', 4 June 2004, CX95763.

¹⁹⁷ *UNAMI*, 'Extremists Moving Across Iran-Iraq Border', 8 November 2004, CX106912.

¹⁹⁸ Schanzer, J., 'Ansar al-Islam: Back in Iraq', *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2004, CX98226.

¹⁹⁹ *UNAMI*, 'Extremists Moving Across Iran-Iraq Border', 8 November 2004, CX106912.

²⁰⁰ Schanzer, J., 'Ansar al-Islam: Back in Iraq', *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2004, CX98226.

²⁰¹ *Radio Free Europe*, 'A survey of arm groups in Iraq', 4 June 2004, CX95763.

ANNEX 6: TAWHID & JIHAD GROUP

The Tawhid and Jihad group led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al Zarqawi is one of the most violent groups in Iraq. Inspired by Salafi ideology, the group has particularly targeted Shias and Christians who Salafis regards as infidels, as well as against whom they deemed as collaborators, Iraqis who works for the government or Coalition forces.²⁰²

Tawhid and Jihad group has been suspected to carry out some of the most high profile attacks in Iraq, including:

- Kidnapping and beheadings of foreigners.²⁰³ Tawhid militants usually videotaped these incidents and distribute them through Arab news networks.²⁰⁴
- Coordinated suicide bombings against high profile targets. Recent examples include the series of attacks that included the bombing against the Australian embassy compound.²⁰⁵
- Mass killing of civilians or Iraqi authorities. These incidents include the killing of 49 National Guardsmen near Baquba and the bombing that killed 34 children in Baghdad.²⁰⁶

Tawhid and Jihad group's publicity campaign has been claimed to be as feverish as their attacks, through the issuing of violent videotaped statements, posting announcements to the Internet, and claiming responsibility for high-profile killings.

Tawhid and Jihad group has undergone a recent name changed to al-Qaeda Group of Jihad in Iraq²⁰⁷

²⁰² *Federation of American Scientist*, 'Text' of Al-Zarqawi Message Threatening More Attacks', 6 April 2004, CX104757.

²⁰³ Lanier, A., 'Low Intensity Conflict and Nation-Building in Iraq: A Chronology', CSIS, 22 October 2004, CX105838.

²⁰⁴ Cambanis, T., 'Zarqawi's role in Iraq overstated, analysts say', *Boston Globe*, 1 July 2004, CX106267.

²⁰⁵ Burns, J.F., 'Bomb Attacks Kill 26 as Vote by Iraqis Nears', *New York Times*, 20 Jan 2005, CX112673.

²⁰⁶ Baker, L., 'Baghdad car bombs kill 34 children', *Reuters*, 30 September 2004, CX103514; Sengupta, K., 'Massacre at Baquba: 49 Iraqi soldiers executed in attack designed to send message to US', *The Independent*, 25 September 2004, CX105495.CX105838.

²⁰⁷ *Center of Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance*, 'Iraq Crisis Report 18 Oct 2004', 18 October 2004, CX108000; *Bloomberg*, 'Iraq Declares State of Emergency to Combat Insurgents (Update2)', 7 November 2004, CX106780.

ANNEX 7: REGIONS OF OPERATION

Baghdad

Militia activities in Baghdad are not homogeneous.

In the Adhamiya district, a former Baathist ghetto, there is visible public hostility to Americans and host many demonstrations appealing for the return of Saddam Hussein.²⁰⁸ A Shiite military man now working for American intelligence, believes that this neighbourhood is the centre of Baghdad's resistance. "Here is where men, money, and weapons arrive from Ramadi, Falluja, Tikrit and Mosul"²⁰⁹

Militia loyal to Al-Sadr operated freely in Sadr city where most of the Shiites in Baghdad stays. Since the weapons deal between the Iraqi government and the Mehdi army was settled, Sadr city has been relatively calm. While there is peace between the Mehdi Army and the security forces, the militia frequently cooperate with the Iraqi police to restore law and order.²¹⁰

Haifa Street, a major artery in downtown Baghdad that is crowded with shops, homes and government offices, is now known locally as "Death Street" because of the constant attacks there.²¹¹

Insurgents fire motars into the Green Zone almost daily. The peripherals of the Green Zone experiences frequent car bombings, and assassinations of people working with the coalition forces and government.

South Baghdad (Doura) witness frequent bombings and sabotage of refineries and pipelines.²¹² This is also the Christian quarter of Baghdad and has witnessed many attacks on Christians due to a perception of collaboration of residents with government and coalition forces.²¹³

Baiji

Baiji is about 200km north of Baghdad, on the main road to Mosul. It is a major industrial centre best known for its oil refinery which is the biggest in Iraq. The Baiji refinery collects crude oil from every well in central and northern Iraq for export to Turkey and hence is a prime target for insurgents. Securing the full 480-kilometer segment of the Ceyhan pipeline has been a priority for the interim government.²¹⁴ Many local tribes being hired to guard the infrastructure but sporadic attacks continue to occur.²¹⁵

²⁰⁸ Ourdan, R., 'Armed Resistance Demonstrators March In Baghdad, Fallujah, Khaldiya', *Le Monde*, 30 Sep 2003, CX108214.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Al-Taie, A. & Jabbar, A., 'Mahdi Army keeps the peace', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 13 Jul 2004, CX98134.

²¹¹ Komarow, S., Soriano, C.G. & Squitieri, T., 'Insurgents in Iraq appear more powerful than ever', *USA Today*, 16 Sep 2004, CX102725.

²¹² Reuters, 'Saboteurs Bomb Iraqi Pipelines to Baghdad', 23 Oct 2003, CX105298.

²¹³ Macintyre, D., 'Baghdad's Christians bear brunt of association with the West', *The Independent*, 3 Aug 2004, CX98991.

²¹⁴ Wong, E., 'Oil Pipeline Blown Up in Iraq; Violence Kills at Least 12', *New York Times*, 2 Nov 2004, CX106249.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

Baquba

Baquba is the capital of Iraq's Diyala province, 50 km to the northeast of Baghdad, within Iraq's so-called Sunni Triangle. Frequent clashes take place in Baquba between Coalition and Iraqi forces and insurgents in the area. In October there was a massacre of 50 unarmed National Guardsmen near the city. Iraqi security forces and SCIRI members are particularly targeted in Baquba.²¹⁶ Banks, kindergartens, primary and secondary schools in Baquba have been threatened by insurgents with bomb threats after the assault on Fallujah.²¹⁷ All three police stations in Baquba have been hit by car bombs.²¹⁸

Basra

Basra is the second largest city of Iraq. It is the country's main port. The city is located along the Shattal-Arab waterway near the Persian Gulf, about 545 km from Baghdad. Most residents in Basra are Shia Arabs. Pipeline bombings remain the most common attack in Basra.²¹⁹ This year saw a dramatic increase in victimisation of local residents by militias backed by religious extremists.²²⁰ British soldiers in the area continue to face daily attacks by insurgent forces.²²¹

Fallujah

Fallujah is a city of about 350,000 inhabitants in the Iraqi province of Al Anbar, located roughly 69km west of Baghdad on the Euphrates. Residents of Fallujah are predominantly Sunni. After the assault on Fallujah in November, the Health Ministry reported that 507 civilians were killed in Fallujah, the majority of whom died during the Coalition assault on the town to root out insurgents.²²² While US claimed to have "broken the back of the insurgency", most of the insurgents have fled early during the military action.²²³ Experts believe many insurgents have since infiltrated back to the city.²²⁴

The United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq reported in January 2005 that residents who return face harsh conditions, which include lack of adequate shelter, electricity, water, and other basic necessities such as access to health care and education.²²⁵ Reports indicated that 40% of buildings and homes have been "significantly damaged", 20% have sustained "major damage", and the remainder are "completely destroyed".²²⁶

²¹⁶ *Agence France-Presse*, 'Iraqi Shiite official killed', 29 Sep 2004, CX103474.

²¹⁷ Kahim, N., 'Bomb Threats Hit Triangle', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, 14 Jan 2005, CX111747.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ Ibrahim, Y., 'Oil serves but also burns', *Middle East Times*, 10 Oct 2004, CX104254.

²²⁰ *IRIN*, 'Female harassment from religious conservatives', 14 Apr 2004, CX92704.

²²¹ Harding, T., 'British envoys under siege in Basra', *The Telegraph*, 27 Aug 2004, CX101406;

Hambel, J., 'An army gone rogue and the tribulations of a journalist in Basra', *Jordan Times*, CX102181.

²²² Barnett, A., 'Fighting kills 135 children', *The Observer*, 30 Jan 2005, CX112882.

²²³ Blanche, E., 'Iraq's tenuous hope for stability', *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst*, 1 Jan 2005, CX110547.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ UNAMI, Fallujah Bulletin Update 18 January 2005, 18 Jan 2005, CX112184.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

UNHCR reports that relief items are not reaching all of those who return to Fallujah, with estimates of only 40% in well-serviced areas of the city receiving assistance. NGOs reported that insecurity and sporadic access due to roadblocks by Coalition forces and insurgent groups continue to impact the provision of humanitarian assistance to internally displaced residents from Fallujah at their current places of displacement.²²⁷

Kirkuk

Kirkuk is a city near the foot of the Zagros Mountains, about 230 km north of Baghdad. Residents are a mix of Kurdish, Arab and Turkomen. It is the centre of the northern Iraqi petroleum industry. PUK and KDP's militias have intimidated and forcefully evicted Turkmen and Arabs from their homes.²²⁸ Al-Sadr sent 2000 men to Kirkuk to protect "Arab interest" and have since raised the level of sectarian tensions in Kirkuk.²²⁹ Led by Barzani of the KDP, Kurds have been pushing for the city to be integrated into Iraqi Kurdistan.²³⁰

Latifiya

Latifiya, south of Baghdad has a potent mix of Sunni and Shiite insurgency, couple with bandits that operate outside the city. Sunni insurgents have been known to attack convoys in Latifiya area, including attacks against Red Cross/ Red Crescent convoys.²³¹ Policemen are constantly under attacked.²³² In early September, at least two Shia clerics - Sheikh Basher al-Jazaeri of the Sadrist movement and Sheikh Kareem al-Bahadlei - were killed in separate incidents.²³³ Recently, Shia residents have been ordered by Sunni insurgents to leave their homes in Latifiya.²³⁴

Mosul

Mosul is situated in the north-western part of the country, on the west bank of Tigris River, some 350km from Baghdad. Mosul has a large Sunni population despite being located in Iraqi Kurdistan. Experts suspect that local fundamentalists, together with foreigners and regional terrorists groups are behind most of the attacks in Mosul.²³⁵ There are constant bombings and assassinations of government officials and many academics²³⁶. "Anyone who advocates freedom and democracy is considered to be publicly for America and a target," says Rooa al-Zrary, a Mosul journalist. Intellectuals have been fleeing the city as academics, professionals and government

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Fahim, K., 'Guilt by Association', Village Voice, 27 May 2003, CX104766.

²²⁹ *Christian Science Monitor*, 'Ethnic divide deepens in new Iraq', 8 Mar 2004, CX90614.

²³⁰ Ridolfo, K., 'Barzani keeps up claim on Kirkuk', *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*, 22 Oct 2004, CX105502.

²³¹ *Xinhua News Agency*, 'Aid convoy attacked south of Baghdad', 25 Aug 2004, CX100881.

²³² *Associated Press*, 'Ten policemen killed in Iraq', 6 Oct 2004, CX103962; Ridolfo, K., 'Policemen targeted in several attacks', *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*, 22 Oct 2004, CX105505.

²³³ Ali, H., Al-Shara, I. & Jihad, S., 'Death Stalks the Road to Latifiya', *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, CX103278.

²³⁴ *IRIN*, 'Iraq: Insurgents throw Latifiya residents out of their homes - ministry', 28 Oct 2004, CX105901

²³⁵ CX104832

²³⁶ Wong, 'U.S. Says It Hit Terror Targets, but Iraqi Civilians Disagree', *New York Times*, 12 Oct 2004, CX104479.

officials are especially targeted.²³⁷ "The situation is bad and getting worse," says a surgeon at Salaam Hospital, the city's largest.²³⁸

Najaf

Najaf is about 160 km south of Baghdad. It is one of the holiest cities of Shi'a Islam and the centre of Shi'a political power in Iraq. In August, there was heavy fighting between the Mehdi Army and Coalition and Iraqi forces in Najaf. Many residents fled during the heaviest bombardment of the city. The Iraqi Health Ministry claimed over 570 were killed during the siege of Najaf.²³⁹

Nasariya

Nasariya is about 360km south-east of Baghdad. It has a mainly Shia population with a large Christian minority. On 13 August 2004, Mehdi Army seized control of the city of Nasiriya. Sources in the Iraqi National Guard reported that Battalion 606 under the command of Major General Hikmat Abd al-Halim in the area of al-Amarah have switched sides and joined forces with the Mahdi Army.²⁴⁰ Nasariya have since been taken back by Iraqi government forces with the support of coalition forces.

There are reports on attacks on Iraqi drivers around Nasiriya. These attacks are said to be entirely criminal in nature, with the purpose of extorting transit payments from the drivers, or to rob them and loot the cargo.²⁴¹

Ramadi

Ramadi is 100 km west of Baghdad. It is the capital of Al Anbar province with a predominantly Sunni population. Fierce fighting takes place between US marines and insurgents in the capital of Anbar province. While U.S. Marines control observation posts around Ramadi, the town is run by insurgents. More recently, U.S and Iraqi forces have launched a series of raids on eight mosques in Ramadi in October 2004, prompting further clashes. A prominent cleric, Shaikh Abd al-Alim al-Saadi, the provincial leader of the al-Anbar Scholars League and his son, Usama, were detained during the raids.²⁴²

Samarra

Samarra stands on the east bank of the Tigris River in the province of Salah ad Din, 125 km north of Baghdad. Samarra is in central Iraq and is within the "Sunni Triangle". Former members of the Republican Guards used to control Samarra and have been launching daily attacks on the US base nearby. The US Army launched an assault in September 2004 but the area is still volatile.²⁴³ Police chiefs in the town are constantly being replaced as policemen are suspected to be helping the insurgents.²⁴⁴

²³⁷ Butters, A., 'Losing Mosul?', *Time Magazine*, 16 Oct 2004, CX104832; Ridolfo, K., 'Journalists remain target of militants in Iraq', *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*, 5 Nov 2004, CX106776; Fisk, R., 'Iraqi academics targeted in murder spree', *The Independent*, 14 Jul 2004, CX98024.

²³⁸ , A., 'Losing Mosul?', *Time Magazine*, 16 Oct 2004, CX104832

²³⁹ *Iranian Al-Alam TV*, '570 dead, over 700 wounded in Al-Najaf clashes', 29 Aug 2004, CX101370.

²⁴⁰ *Al-Basrah*, 'Battalion of Iraqi government troops goes over to Jaysh al-Mahdi in al-'Amarah', 13 Aug 2004, CX108213.

²⁴¹ UNJLC, *Iraq Bulletin No. 6 of 2004*, 27 Aug 2004, CX103384.

²⁴² Al-Jazeera, 'US, Iraqi forces raid Ramadi mosques', 12 Oct 2004, CX104480.

²⁴³ Sengupta, K., 'Civilians bear brunt as Samarra 'pacified'', *The Independent*, 4 Oct 2004, CX103607.

²⁴⁴ *Associated Press*, 'Iraqi Government Fires Police Chiefs', 12 Nov 2004, CX10773.

Over 100 civilians were killed during the latest push by coalition and Iraqi forces to take the town.²⁴⁵

Tal Afar

Tal Afar is 75km west of Mosul. It has a predominantly Turkomen population. US forces initiated a massive bombing campaign, more ferocious than in any other locality in September 2004.²⁴⁶ Local leaders then claim that Kurdish Peshmaga troops then swept through the town killing Turkomen residents. Upwards of 50,000 Turkmen refugee fled the city.²⁴⁷ The city's Turkmen majority, is resentful after what it views as excessive American bombing and ethnic cleansing by Kurds.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Sengupta, K., 'Civilians bear brunt as Samarra 'pacified'', *The Independent*, 4 Oct 2004, CX103607.

²⁴⁶ Schwartz, M., 'America's new strategy in Iraq', *Asia Times*, 29 Sep 2004, CX103382.

²⁴⁷ Recknagel, C., 'Iraq: Turkey warns U.S. over deaths of Turkoman civilians', *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 14 Sep 2004, CX102666.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.