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## EDITORIAL

[Issue 116 – June 19, 2008](#)

### **A life in Iraq: An ordinary woman's<sup>1</sup> story<sup>2</sup>**

All of us here in Iraq have difficult lives. The history of Iraq is war and suffering. We aren't sure what will happen here in the future. This is Iraq, we don't have any rest from war and suffering.

My husband and I moved to Baghdad from a village in Northern Iraq when we got married. We lived in Baghdad for 33 years. We have three sons, one daughter and three granddaughters. Before the Iran-Iraq war started in 1980 my husband worked as an electrician for a company owned by the government.

I was pregnant with our third child when army officials took him and everyone who worked there to a special military operation on the border of Iran. During the operation he was captured and taken as a prisoner of war.

He did not see our daughter when she was born. During the next five years I supported myself and the children through providing child care services, sewing and cooking for friends and neighbors. Life was bitter and very difficult.

After five years he came back home totally handicapped. This was in 1986. Because of the torture that he received while he was in prison he came home walking with crutches. He was blind and he could not hear.

In 1987 my father was executed – he was hanged because he had helped the Kurdish militia. He was taken away by the Iraqi police. We didn't know where he was. Three to four years later, his body was found in a mass grave. They used his teeth to identify him. We took him home and gave him a proper burial in the north of Iraq.

<sup>1</sup> All names and locations have been changed.

<sup>2</sup> This story is drawn from a paper published in A Common Place, MCC's bimonthly magazine

In the 1990s there were the economic sanctions and life was difficult. When the first Gulf War happened, the Iraqi currency lost its value in the market and life became very expensive. My husband's pension was not enough so I did all kinds of jobs, plus caring for my husband. I learned how to give injections. I baked bread for the neighbors and sewed. My kids were my hope. I had to keep on going because I had to care for my kids and for my husband.

In 1995 I started working as a cook in Baghdad. After the fall of the Saddam regime in 2003, life was really good for a year. Then our oldest son got a job in the Green Zone – that's the international zone that is the base for the Iraqi government, the U.S. and British embassies and major international companies.

He worked as a driver for the government officials. Life became very dangerous for him. A couple of times he had to run away from militia groups. They were chasing him because he was working in the Green Zone.

Some of the people he worked with in the Green Zone were killed. One time he escaped an ambush. They had already captured him but he was able to escape from the car when they stopped to kidnap other people.

A few days before we left Baghdad a suicide bomber killed 14 people. This happened on the road that my son had to take when he walked to and from work. He saw the bodies on the street and when he came home he had to clean the flesh from his shoes. That's when we knew it was time to leave Baghdad.

We left Baghdad in September 2006. I didn't have a job in the North and I was almost broke when I heard that my former employer was moving here too. And in November 2006 I was once again offered a job as a cook, thank God.

The most rewarding part for me is when I am told that one likes my cooking !

I am so thankful that my husband came back home. He is like the light of a candle in our home. Our youngest son is a student in a seminary and my daughter helps me in the kitchen. Our older son, his wife and their three girls live in our house. My husband's mother also lives with us. Our youngest son lives in Sweden. I haven't seen him for seven years, but we stay in touch through telephone and e-mail.

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*Salaam,*  
NCCI Team

## **HUMANITARIAN UPDATES**

*FROM NCCI, NGOs' REPORTS FROM THE FIELD AND UN AGENCIES*

### **Operational Humanitarian Space**

- [Protocol dealing with kidnapings](#)

**Source:** [EISF](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 11, 2008

**Access:** Open

*XX recognizes that due to the environments in which the organization sometimes operates, that staff or their dependants may be vulnerable from the threat of being taken hostage or being kidnapped. The policy of XX with regard to hostages is based on International Law and conventions. XX maintains that it is the responsibility of the host nation to ease any hostage situation, call for and manage the release of hostages and to take all appropriate measures to ensure their safe, timely release.*

### **Humanitarian Needs and Assistance**

- [Maysan SitRep](#)

**Source:** [NCCI](#)

**Document:** Report

**Date:** June 16, 2008

**Access:** Open

*Situation Report Maysan, June 16, 2008..*

- [Basra Humanitarian Sector Working Group](#)

**Source:** [UNAMI](#)

**Document:** MoM

**Date:** June 4, 2008

**Access:** **Members**

*Minutes of meeting held on June 4, 2008..*

- [United Nations planned response in Sadr city](#)

**Source:** [OCHA](#)

**Document:** Report

**Date:** June 10, 2008

**Access:** **Members**

*Essential service and Reconstruction, June 10, 2008.*

- [OCHA SitRep](#)

**Source:** [OCHA](#)

**Document:** Report

**Date:** June 12, 17&18, 2008

**Access:** **Members**

*OCHA Situation reports June, 12, 17&18, 2008, Amarah.*

- [MAG assists in clearing heavily contaminated district](#)

**Source:** [MAG](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 11, 2008

**Access:** Open

*Khanaqen district, located northeast of Baghdad in central Iraq's Diyala governorate, is of strategic importance and has therefore seen a lot of fighting in the past. As a result the area is heavily contaminated with unguarded small arms and light weapons (SALW) items from past conflicts which are being routinely harvested for explosives to be used in the conflict.*

## Human Rights and Protection

- [Iraq Gender Report](#)

**Source:** [UNHCR](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 9, 2008

**Access:** Open

*Among other things, UNSCR 1325 recognises that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls and effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can contribute significantly to international peace and security. Notwithstanding that the armed conflict is ongoing in Iraq and that there is in fact no peace process, UNSCR 1325 can contribute greatly to informing UN action and programming, especially in the areas of governance and protection. Below are the provisions of the Resolution most relevant to UNCT Iraq;*

- [Army accused of human rights abuse in case of Iraqis held without trial for five years](#)

**Source:** [Independent](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 15, 2008

**Access:** Open

*Britain is accused of holding Iraqi prisoners of war in a legal black hole after it emerged that two men accused of killing British soldiers have been detained without trial for more than five years. The suspects, the last two Iraqis held in British custody, were arrested by UK forces at the end of the war and then moved between three different prison camps in southern Iraq. They claim to have been secretly detained without charge and refused legal representation.*

- [Read the Government Report On Slavery and Iraq](#)

**Source:** [Rinf.com](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 17, 2008

**Access:** Open

*The traffic light turned to red and as cars stopped at one of Baghdad's central intersections, Haider Jassim Mohammed emerged with tissue boxes, urging drivers to buy one. Seconds later, a roadside bomb targeted a US military convoy nearby and Mohammed was arrested. "I was apprehended with seven others by American troops on suspicion of plotting the attack with insurgents and spent nearly six months in two prisons in Baghdad and Basra," Mohammed, 13, told IRIN in Baghdad*

## Health

- [WHO – IRAQ Bi- WEEKLY BULLETIN](#)

**Source:** [UNWHO](#)

**Document:** Report

**Date:** June 8, 2008

**Access:** Open

*Under the leadership of H.E the Minister of Health Dr Saleh Al-Hasnawi, his deputy Dr Amer Alkuzai and WHO Iraq Representative (WR) Dr Naeema Al Gasseer, a 3 day video conference was conducted in which WHO/MoH Iraq technical staff worked on finalizing the first draft of the basic Health Service Package for Iraq. During the meeting H.E gave his policy direction regarding the development , adoption and implementation of the Basic Health Service Package:*

- [Health and Nutrition Sector Outcome Team](#)

**Source:** [UNWHO](#)

**Document:** [MoM](#)

**Date:** May 28, 2008

**Access:** [Members](#)

Minutes of meeting held on May 28, 2008.

**IDPs**

- [IOM June 2008 Governorate profiles](#)

**Source:** [IOM](#)

**Document:** Report

**Date:** June 18, 2008

**Access:** Open

IOM has finalized its **June 2008 Governorate Profiles**, six in-depth reports IOM distributes twice a year that profile the displacement situation in all 18 governorates. Profile information includes origin, reasons for displacement, ethnicity/religion, intentions, security, basic services, legal issues, humanitarian assistance, priority needs, detailed maps, etc.

- [IRAQ: IDPs demand government return them home](#)

**Source:** [IRIN](#)

**Document:** Article (English and Arabic)

**Date:** June 15, 2008

**Access:** Open

Nearly 500 internally displaced persons (IDPs) took to the streets of central Baghdad on 14 June demanding the government secure their return to their homes and pay compensation to those with damaged properties. "We have been displaced for nearly two years now and we don't see any serious action being taken by the government to end our suffering," said Emad Taha Ali, a 39-year-old father-of-two who took part in the demonstration in Baghdad's Jadiriya area.

**Refugees**

- [World Refugee Day: Iraqi musician raises USD 24,000 for UNHCR programmes](#)

**Source:** [UNHCR](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 18, 2008

**Access:** Open

Acclaimed Iraqi oud (lute) player Naseer Shamma has raised more than USD 24,000 for UNHCR's Iraqi refugee programme with a concert at the Damascus Opera House to mark World Refugee Day, which falls on Friday. The take from Tuesday's concert will be used to provide financial support for 150 of the most vulnerable Iraqi families in Syria over a month-long period.

- [Rhetoric and reality: the Iraqi refugee crisis](#)

**Source:** [Amnesty International](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 15, 2008

**Access:** Open

The displacement crisis caused by the US-led invasion of Iraq and the subsequent internal armed conflict has reached shocking proportions. Millions of people at risk – Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, Christians, Mandaean-Sabeans, Palestinians and others – have fled their homes and most are now struggling to survive. The crisis for Iraq's refugees and internally displaced is one of tragic proportions. Despite this, the world's governments have

done little or nothing to help, failing both in their moral duty and in their legal obligation to share responsibility for displaced people wherever they are. Apathy towards the crisis has been the overwhelming response.

- [Iraqi refugee crisis grows as West turns its back](#)

Source: [Independent](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 15, 2008

Access: Open

*The plight of Iraqi refugees is now worse than ever, with millions struggling to survive in desperate conditions and with little hope of finding sanctuary. While the crisis continues, the world community, especially Western countries, have not only failed to help but are also erecting fresh obstacles to prevent the dispossessed men, women and children from settling on their shores, says a new report by Amnesty International.*

- [IRAQ-JORDAN: Government gives UNHCR US\\$8 million to help refugees in Jordan](#)

Source: [IRIN](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 16, 2008

Access: Open

*The Iraqi government has given US\$8 million to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to assist more than 500,000 Iraqi refugees living in neighbouring Jordan, a government statement said on 15 June. "The US\$8 million donation presented today [15 June] to the UNHCR is to help Iraqi refugees in Jordan in the fields of education and health, as we previously did in Syria and Lebanon," Iraqi Finance Minister Bayan Jabr said in a statement. Iraqi officials told IRIN it would be up to the UNHCR to decide how to use the funds.*

## Education

- [Education Sector Outcome Team](#)

Source: [UNICEF](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 18, 2008

Access: Open

*Minutes of meeting May 26, 2008; Agenda Education June 23, 2008; Annex 1 of CAP review.*

- [UNICEF scales up efforts to assist vulnerable Iraqi children](#)

Source: [UNICEF](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 17, 2008

Access: Open

*The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said today it is scaling up its emergency operation in Iraq to address the basic needs of more than 360,000 vulnerable children inside the strife-torn nation. After five years of conflict, more than 800,000 Iraqi children are unable to go to school and only 40 per cent can access safe water, according to the agency. Through its Immediate Action for Vulnerable Children and Family – or IMPACT programme – UNICEF is aiming to assist over 360,000 children this year and ensure they have access to health care and are protected against malnutrition. The programme also seeks to provide safe water, emergency education and specialized care for abused and vulnerable children and women.*

## IRAQ CONTEXT

### **General Overview**

- [Iraq Crisis Report \(IraqHAR\)](#)

Source: [Centre of Excellence on Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance](#)

Document: Weekly report

Date: June 19, 2008

Access: Open

*Political: Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said Friday (June-13), that talks with the US regarding a long-term agreement allowing US forces to remain in Iraq had "reached an impasse" because current US proposals infringed on Iraqi sovereignty. The purpose of this new agreement is to establish a long-term security relationship between the US and Iraq and to provide a legal basis for the presence of US forces in Iraq after the UN mandate expires at the end of 2008. However, the two sides seem far apart on several key issues, including immunity for American soldiers, freedom for US. forces to carry out military operations, control of Iraqi air space and authority to detain suspects. Iraqi lawmakers feel U.S. proposals still fall short of Iraqi demands. As negotiations continue, the US hopes to strike a deal by the July target date. (AP, June-13)*

- [Juan Cole's informed comment's excerpt](#)

Source: [Informed Comment – Juan Cole's Web Blog.](#)

Document: Selection of daily comments

Date: June 15 - 19, 2008

Access: Open

*Juan Cole is a Professor of Modern Middle East and South Asian History at the University of Michigan. As such he brings daily much needed expertise and historical perspective to issues surrounding Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East. Good reading to have a weekly review of the Iraq daily situation.*

- [Life Under Muqtada: Inside Baghdad's Shiite Slums](#)

Source: [Alternet](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 14, 2008

Access: Open

*Five years after a war allegedly launched to liberate Iraq's Shiite majority, American forces have been bombing Shiite neighborhoods in Basra and Baghdad while their snipers and tanks remain on the ground in places like Sadr City. Iraq seems to have emerged from the worst phase of its civil war, but the victorious Shiite factions have turned their arms on one another in a fight over the spoils, battling for political power in advance of the upcoming provincial elections*

### **Iraqi Living Conditions**

- [IRAQ: The Love Stories Are Gone](#)

Source: [IPS](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 14, 2008

Access: Open

*This is the land of the Arabian Nights, and of love stories that became fables far and wide. In these stories, in the traditions of which they were born, the lover thought nothing of giving up his life for a beloved. But no one thought death would come to this land under the present circumstances. All who have died had their own love stories, if not all romantic ones. And that must be a million of them. The figure of 655,000 – of Iraqis who died as a result of the U.S.-led invasion and occupation -- came from the British medical journal Lancet based on a study in July last year. The number would have risen significantly after one of the bloodiest years of the occupation.*

- [Robert Fisk: Snapshots of life in Baghdad](#)

Source: [Independent](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 18, 2008

**Access: Open**

Three bodies lie beside a Baghdad street on a blindingly hot day. The one on the right is dressed in a white shirt and bright green trousers, his hands tied behind his back. Two others on the left lie shoeless, both dressed in check shirts, dumped – how easily we use that word of Baghdad's corpses – on a yard of dirt and bags of garbage. They, too, of course, are now garbage. The wall behind them, a grim barrier of dun-coloured brick, seals off this horror from two two-storey villas and a clutch of palm trees, the normal life of Baghdad just a wall away from the other "normal" life of Baghdad's sectarian killings.

## Blurring the lines

- [Teachers prepare to return to southern Baghdad schools](#)

**Source:** [USA Government](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 16, 2008

**Access:** Open

For schoolchildren in the southern Baghdad area, getting an education has become a difficult and even dangerous prospect in recent years. In some cases, supplies were short and facilities were in disrepair. Sometimes the teachers weren't there. In a few cases, the schools themselves were all but gone. The area where the 3rd Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team arrived in June 2007 had long been an insurgent stronghold, with many villages controlled by al-Qaeda terrorists who kept children, especially girls, from attending school. With no coalition or Iraqi security forces presence, local schools suffered the same fate as many farms and businesses in the area. They were looted and damaged, and even became battlegrounds.

## Violence and (Un-) security

- [Blast in Baghdad Market Kills Dozens](#)

**Source:** [Washington Post](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 17, 2008

**Access:** Open

Dozens of people were killed Tuesday evening when a car loaded with explosives blew up at a crowded market in northwestern Baghdad, the deadliest attack in the capital since March. The attack killed 46 people and wounded more than 80, according to an Interior Ministry official who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The [U.S. military](#) put the death toll at 27.

- [Car bomb kills 51 in Baghdad: security officials](#)

**Source:** [AFP](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 17, 2008

**Access:** Open

A car bomb at a bus stop in north Baghdad killed at least 51 people and wounded 75 others on Tuesday, security officials told AFP. The attack, the biggest in past eight weeks, took place in the mainly Shiite Al-Hurriyah neighbourhood at around 5:30 pm (1430 GMT), they said. Security officials said the victims were taken to several hospitals in the Iraqi capital. The car bombing came hours after a bomb hidden on a motorcycle exploded at a checkpoint in north Baghdad, killing four fighters of a group battling Al-Qaeda militants.

## Reconstruction

- [Securing its oil pipeline, Iraq can increase production and exports](#)

**Source:** [UPI](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 13, 2008

Access: Open

More of Iraq's oil has seen the light of day and exports have realized post-invasion records as measures to stem attacks and other interference have proved successful along the key northern pipeline system. Some who used to target the pipeline -- especially on the link from Baiji north through hot Sunni Arab insurgent territory and to Turkey -- are now paid to protect it, though long-term success is far from guaranteed. "The export pipeline was under attack constantly last year this time," Oil Minister Hussain Shahrastani told United Press International during an interview in his Baghdad office.

## Iraqi Political process

### - [To protect or project ? Iraqi Kurds and their future](#)

Source: ICG

Document: Article

Date: June 4, 2008

Access: Open

Erstwhile kings of the mountains, Iraq's Kurdish parties have become kingmakers in Baghdad. No federal government can be established without them—and they know it. This new role suits the Kurdish parties just fine, as it allows them to advance their agenda: to use a once wide but now narrowing window of opportunity to expand the territory and natural resources (oil, gas and water) under their control, as well as the powers they exercise within that territory. They hope thereby to build the foundations of an independent Kurdish state, an ambition that once and for all would allow them to trade in their barren mountain hideouts for a stable home in the fertile plains. How did the Kurds accomplish this remarkable makeover from hardened maquisards to polished politicians and administrators? What are its implications today for Iraq as well as the Kurdistan region? And what challenges lie ahead?

### - [Kurds upset over U.N. Article 140 report](#)

Source: UPI

Document: Article

Date: June 12, 2008

Access: Open

Kurdish officials expressed dismay over a U.N. report suggesting various scenarios for the Iraqi government to address internal border disputes. The U.N. Assistance Mission in Iraq released a report June 5 on four districts in Iraq to serve as benchmarks for the Iraqi government to reach broader national reconciliation measures as part of the Iraqi Constitution. Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution seeks to reverse ethnic policies implemented by Saddam Hussein.

### - [Iraq's Provincial Elections: Another D-Day Approaching](#)

Source: Historiae

Document: Article

Date: June 16, 2008

Access: Open

Monday 30 June 2008 could be one of those fateful dates in Iraqi politics that will remain mostly unnoticed by the outside world. 30 June is the new deadline set by Iraq's electoral commission for forming coalitions for this autumn's provincial elections. The deadline for registering political parties expired on 31 May; with some 500 entities having registered the main question today is whether any of these parties are capable of amalgamating into larger alliances that could mount a challenge to the established elites represented by the core components of the Maliki government. In the previous local elections in January 2005, it was mainly those elites – the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) and the two biggest Kurdish parties – that excelled in the art of coalition building prior to the elections.

### - [Iraq bans dealings with Iran opposition group](#)

Source: AP

Document: Article

Date: June 17, 2008

Access: Open

The Iraqi government Tuesday banned any dealings with an Iranian opposition group based in Iraq. In an official statement, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's Cabinet accused the Mujahedeen Khalq organization of interfering in Iraq's internal affairs. "The Cabinet decided to ban any dealings with this organization by any Iraqi or foreign individual, organization or party," the statement said. The government said those who violate the order will face charges under the anti-terror law.

## Rule of Law

### - [Iraq's KRG to create new Energy Ministry, Hawrami to head](#)

Source: [UPI](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 30, 2008

Access: Open

*Iraqi Kurdistan's ministries of Electricity and Natural Resources are to be merged, and current oil chief Ashti Hawrami is likely to be named minister. Sources here told United Press International that Hawrami is the front-runner for the soon-to-be-established post of KRG minister of energy. Hawrami, currently minister of natural resources where the hydrocarbons portfolio falls, negotiated and signed nearly all the dozens of deals the KRG has inked with international oil firms to explore for and produce oil and gas.*

### - ['No immunity' for Iraq contractors](#)

Source: [Al Jazeera](#)

Document: Article

Date: May 30, 2008

Access: Open

*A controversial deal on the long-term US military presence in Iraq will not include immunity for US contractors working in the country, the Iraqi foreign minister has said. Speaking exclusively to Al Jazeera, Hoshiyar Zebari said on Monday that the US had accepted the demand and it would be stated explicitly in the agreement. "There would be no immunity whatsoever for private contractors because of what we've gone through with them in the past and because of the sensitivities for the Iraqi people," he said.*

### - [Iraq law on Baathists not being implemented](#)

Source: [Alternet](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 17, 2008

Access: Open

*When the Iraqi parliament passed a law in January aimed at rehiring former members of Saddam Hussein's Baath party, U.S. President George W. Bush praised it as a step towards national reconciliation. The Accountability and Justice Law replaced the deBaathification Law, under which tens of thousands of former Baathists, mostly Sunni Arabs, were purged from government and security posts following the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. But five months later, implementation of the law is bogged down by infighting between politicians, and the committee once tasked with hunting out Baathists in government has found itself in the odd position of overseeing the process of rehiring them or offering them state pensions*

## Policies and Strategies

### - [Revealed: Secret plan to keep Iraq under US control](#)

Source: [Independent](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 5, 2008

Access: Open

*A secret deal being negotiated in Baghdad would perpetuate the American military occupation of Iraq indefinitely, regardless of the outcome of the US presidential election in November. The terms of the impending deal, details of which have been leaked to The Independent, are likely to have an explosive political effect in Iraq. Iraqi officials fear that the accord, under which US troops would occupy permanent bases, conduct military operations, arrest Iraqis and enjoy immunity from Iraqi law, will destabilise Iraq's position in the Middle East and lay the basis for unending conflict in their country.*

### - [Iraqi cleric Sadr to demobilize most of his militia](#)

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 14, 2008

Access: Open

Shiite Muslim cleric Muqtada Sadr appeared to move Friday toward reorganizing his Mahdi Army militia and shifting much of the movement's focus toward peaceful social activities, though he said its military wing would reserve the right to attack U.S. forces. Sadr, in a statement read after Friday prayers in his stronghold of Kufa, said a select number of Mahdi Army cadres would be allowed to bear arms and use them only with authorization.

- [Iraq says it still needs US troops to secure gains](#)

**Source:** [Alternet](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 15, 2008

**Access:** Open

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari said on Sunday his country still needs American troops to help secure progress achieved as a result of what he called a successful U.S. surge strategy. "We need this continued support of the U.S. forces, of the multinational forces, because the gains we have gained, both security, military economic are still vulnerable," he told CNN's Late Edition, weighing into a major issue in the U.S. presidential campaign

- [Iraq prepares new drive against armed groups](#)

**Source:** [Reuters](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 14, 2008

**Access:** Open

Iraq has sent army and police units to the southern city of Amara for a new crackdown on Shi'ite militias, local officials said on Saturday. The operation is the latest stage in Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's drive to stamp his government's authority on areas of the country previously controlled by Shi'ite militias or Sunni Arab insurgents. In a statement read on al-Iraqiya television, Maliki said outlaws and criminals were being given their "last chance" to surrender and hand over heavy and medium weapons and bombs in the next four days.

- [Powerful Iraqi Cleric Recalibrates Strategy](#)

**Source:** [Washiton Post](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 14, 2008

**Access:** Open

The movement of anti-American cleric [Muqtada al-Sadr](#) said Saturday that it would not take part in provincial elections this year, one day after it formed a new paramilitary group to fight U.S. troops. The back-to-back moves suggested that Sadr is trying to bolster his position as the chief opponent of both the American troops in the country and the Iraqi government, following a year in which he ordered his [Mahdi Army](#) militia to observe a cease-fire and moved deeper into the political process.

- [Al-Sadr Followers Warn Against Arrests](#)

**Source:** [ABC](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 16, 2008

**Access:** Open

Followers of anti-U.S. cleric Muqtada al-Sadr signaled Monday that they won't resist a military crackdown in one of their last southern strongholds unless government troops make arrests without warrants or commit other violations. The statements came three days before the expiration of a deadline for gunmen in the Sadrist stronghold of Amarah, capital of Maysan province, to surrender their weapons and renounce violence or face harsh measures

- [There is no Iraqi insurgency, military experts say](#)

**Source:** [Alternet](#)

**Document:** Article

**Date:** June 17, 2008

**Access:** Open

The good news is that there's no insurgency in Iraq. The bad news is that there's something much worse...According to the conventional wisdom, the United States is fighting an insurgency in Iraq. In a classic insurgency, a group of guerrillas is trying to overthrow an otherwise-viable government. For an occupying power, the goal of counterinsurgency is to tip the balance in favor of the state and against the insurgents.

- [Baghdad insists on right to veto US operations](#)

Source: [Guardian](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 17, 2008

Access: Open

*Iraq is insisting on the right to veto any US military operations throughout its territory under a "status of forces" agreement currently being negotiated between Baghdad and Washington, according to a senior member of the Iraqi government. The agreement will last for a maximum of two years and can be terminated by either side with six months' notice, Hussain al-Shahristani, Iraq's oil minister, told the Guardian yesterday.*

- [Iraq forces launch operation in southern city](#)

Source: [Alternet](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 19, 2008

Access: Open

*Iraqi security forces launched a crackdown on Shi'ite militias in the southern city of Amara on Thursday, the latest drive in Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's campaign to restore order to Iraq. "The operation started this morning," Major-General Tareq Abdul Wahab, the commander of the offensive, told Reuters. He declined to give further details. Amara, home to 250,000 people, is a stronghold of the Mehdi Army militia of anti-American Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr*

## Iraq and International policies

- [Sunnis to Baghdad](#)

Source: [The Wall Street Journal](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 13, 2008

Access: Open

*You can tell security is improving fast in Iraq because even some neighboring Arab countries are deciding to send envoys back to Baghdad. The United Arab Emirates announced plans last week to appoint an ambassador, and Bahrain and Jordan have since said they plan to do the same. The Sunni-led Arab autocrats in the region have long been cool to Iraq's new government, not least because it is Shi'ite-led and democratically elected. In withdrawing their ambassadors, or staffing their embassies with junior-level diplomats since 2003, these countries could also point to security concerns. One of the insurgency's first car-bomb targets was the Jordanian embassy in August 2003, and terrorists later killed, wounded or kidnapped officials from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and the UAE.*

- [Iraqi officials talk diplomacy with Turkey](#)

Source: [UPI](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 16, 2008

Access: Open

*Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh met with leading Turkish officials to discuss bilateral relations and security during an economic forum in Istanbul. Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs Hoshiyar Zebari Monday reported the meeting between Saleh, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and President Abdullah Gul during the Third Arab-Turkish Economic Forum in Istanbul. Saleh pressed the Turkish officials for better cooperation on security matters and called on bilateral relations to favor joint interests on economic and political relations.*

- [Iraqi Defense Ministry welcomes Iran-Iraq security agreement](#)

Source: [IRNA](#)

Document: Article

Date: June 14, 2008

Access: Open

*Iraqi Defense Ministry welcomes security memorandum of understanding signed by Iran and Iraq during the recent visit of Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to Iran. The agreement focuses on clearing mine fields, recovering the remains of killed soldiers and setting border lines between the two countries, the Iraqi press on Saturday quoted the country's Defense Ministry spokesman Major-General Mohammed al-Askari as saying.*

- [Brown ready to rain on Bush parade with Iraq troop pull-out](#)

Source: [Independent](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: [June 16, 2008](#)

Access: [Open](#)

*Gordon Brown is ready to override the misgivings of George Bush by going ahead with a major announcement on British troop withdrawals from Iraq. The US President will sit down to talks with Mr Brown today after their dinner at Downing Street last night sparked anti-Bush protests in Parliament Square. Before he arrived at No 10, Mr Bush issued a veiled warning to Mr Brown that now was not the right time to be withdrawing forces from Iraq, saying such a decision depended on success of the allied mission.*

## HUMANITARIAN WORLD PERSPECTIVES & QUALITY OF AID

- [Middle East: Commission to provide e44 million in humanitarian aid to Palestinian and Iraqis](#)

Source: [Europa EU Rapid](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: [June 13, 2008](#)

Access: [Open](#)

*The European Commission has allocated €44 million to address the urgent humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable Palestinians and those populations affected by the conflict in Iraq. More than 1.5 million Palestinians in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, will benefit from €24 million in humanitarian aid. The funds will cover livelihood support, food assistance, the provision of basic health care as well as water and sanitation services. Special attention is being paid to children, particularly for psychological support. The other €20 million are being allocated to provide protection and relief to Iraqi refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable populations affected by the conflict in Iraq, both inside and outside the country.*

This Page is your page

If you have an announcement (training, workshop, etc) regarding your organisation, if you are aware about meetings, events, humanitarian update, if you would like to make known some information, please send them to [webmanager@ncciraq.org](mailto:webmanager@ncciraq.org)

## Weekly Schedule

We encourage you to check regularly our Weekly Schedule on our [Website](#) for updates. We have added on our [weekly schedule](#) some events hold in Iraq or Jordan that concern only specific invited people. They are highlighted as "restricted". This is to give better information on what is going on to our members.

## Upcoming important dates

*June-17 / Jumaada al-Thaany-13*

*Death of Fatima Bint Hizzam (2nd wife of Ali)*

*June-18 / Jumaada al-Thaany-14*

*Destruction of Al-Qaaba and rebuilding by Abdullah Al-Zubair*

*June-20 / Jumaada al-Thaany-16*

*World Refugee Day*

## Updates & Announcements

We would like to introduce to you new [Jordanian visa procedure for Iraqi citizens](#).

UNICEF "Distance Management Training" for NGO Managers of WatSan projects is taking place in Amman. Related information to this workshop you can check it [here](#).

UNICEF is also organizing Emergency Preparedness & Response Workshop on July 5, 2008. The workshop agenda can be checked [here](#).

The International Women's Program of the Open Society Institute is pleased to announce a [2008 call for proposals](#).

His Excellency Omar Al Maani, Mayor of Amman, UNHCR and CARE International are organizing ceremony to commemorate WORLD REFUGEE DAY 2008 on June 21, 2008, at 18:30 City Hall, Amman Municipality.

MSF, ICRC, UPP,MDM- F, IRC and ICS opened new [vacancies](#).