

Members are kindly requested to pay their fees for the January-March period for those who didn't yet. For more information you can contact Giovanna at adminlog@ncciraq.org

EDITORIAL

Issue 95 – January 10, 2008

1 year of supposedly increased response to the humanitarian quagmire in Iraq

Next Monday marks one year since the UN Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-Moon officially recognized the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. Sufficient time has elapsed to assess what was done to respond the crisis.

Last June, we were already assessing the situation, and wondering “*was the International Community so slow to deploy and respond to the Lebanon Crisis or the Tsunami? Is there any more means provided for aid workers on the ground? Is there more support for suffering Iraqis? [...] How long do vulnerable Iraqis have to remain patient? How long do they have to wait before they can expect some concrete support that will make good on promises?*”

So what is the situation today?

The context has evolved. A cease-fire led and called for by some influential leaders has led to an over-reported “lull in violence”. Nevertheless, despite this respite, the generally conservative figures reported by the [Iraq Body Count](#) state about 904 civilian deaths due to violence in December. Not really a peaceful context. Unfortunately, these over-reported auto-congratulations regarding the drop in violence have hidden the humanitarian realities. The humanitarian situation within the country is not getting improving.

There is indeed no lull in the humanitarian crisis. Iraqis are still suffering. Access to drinkable water is not improving. The rate of displacement is stable. Health facilities are not more accessible and doctors are not coming back from their exiles to increase the response capacity. As recently [reported by UNICEF](#) regarding children, the needs of the vulnerable are not being met as they should be.

The psychological pressures are still immense, and over-reporting on better security in Baghdad should be taken with caution as the city is still far from safe. The feeling of inhabitants and the large propaganda that the security situation is more and more under control may have tragic consequences entrench with relaxing and less attention paid to the environment.

The humanitarian situation is even expected to worsen, especially in areas that are under continuous fighting and attacks, or are totally secluded. It is assumed that the [cholera outbreak](#) may be the tip of the iceberg of the failure of reconstruction and the unfolding disaster of the last four years. Accordingly, such eruptions of humanitarian crisis are expected to increase in the next few months. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture is [reporting](#) a drought which is expected to have a strong impact on production, at a time when the Ministry of Trade is [announcing a cut](#) of 5 items (flour, sugar, rice, oil, and infant milk) in the food basket distribution of the Public Distribution System (PDS). Such a cut due to the refusal to allocate enough funds in the 2008's Government budget according to the MoT¹, may have tragic consequences for the more than 12 million people that highly depend on the PDS for their food security².

¹ Which has been contradicted yesterday by the Ministry of Finance that said allocating USD 700 millions for the PDS (on the additional 4 billions needed according to the MoT)

² According to the 2005 figures of the Food Security and Vulnerability report released by WFP and the Central Organisation for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT) of the Ministry of Planning and Development, accessible here: http://www.ncciraq.org/IMG/pdf_Food_Security_and_Vulnerabi.pdf. It is important to highlight that 2 years of humanitarian crisis have followed this estimation, and therefore the figures may be higher today.

Concerning humanitarian space, lines are still blurred by the encroachment of military, political and commercial actors into the humanitarian sphere, and limits have still to be clearly drawn and asserted.. Recent months have brought new strains and attacks for NGOs, demonstrating that the security situation for aid workers is still very risky, in particular in the central and southern areas of the country.

What has happened to the expected responses?

To be sure, implementing the needed humanitarian strategy in Iraq is difficult, accounting for some of the delay. But seldom has another humanitarian tragedy, so prominently covered in the media, taken a year to be meaningfully addressed?

There are some notable developments. A new UN Security Council resolution last August ambitiously called for the expansion of the UN presence and responses in Iraq. Although, it failed to de-link the UN's humanitarian roles from the essentially political mandate of UNAMI, the main noteworthy development in the humanitarian field is the current drafting of a Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) at the request of the new Humanitarian Coordinator.

These last few months, some new responses and programmes have been established and there has been a notable increase in the advocacy of many agencies and organizations. However Iraqis are still suffering and the proposed response is still far from enough. Aid workers on the ground, who are the main witnesses to the needs of the vulnerable, often feel that until now the extraordinary increase in hand-wringing and activities in Amman has not resulted in meaningful changes at field level.

At a glance the majority of the Iraqi population aspires towards peace and is in more of a position to request it strongly in areas where a leader or group might be in position to offer it, while they will not be able to stand for it in areas where the distribution of power is still on balance and is subject to heavy fighting. The civil war in Iraq, and therefore the various conflicts it entails, is reinforced and created by the failure of the State and institutions, and so has made all types of violence possible and sometimes necessary for the actors of this civil war.

Nevertheless, as we were writing 6 months ago: *“there are still few windows of opportunity. There are still some foolhardy Iraqis that are trying to support their compatriots. Don't abandon them. They need our concrete support.”*

The acknowledgement of the humanitarian crisis and the announced will to develop concrete new responses were welcome steps. Every concrete actions that have been developed since were absolutely needed. But there is now a clear need to accelerate this inclusive process and to operationalise it at local level so that real improvements begin to materialize for Iraqis on the ground.

The recurring obstacle to more effective assistance and protection of Iraqis is the interference posed by the politicization of humanitarian action. Therefore the next challenge to continue saving lives in Iraq is to work on genuine humanitarian actions, leaving political considerations aside. That may concretely be implemented answering to the following questions:

Will the Government of Iraq officially recognize the humanitarian crisis and declare a state of humanitarian emergency?

Will the International community fully acknowledge the catastrophe for what it is, and act accordingly providing adequate and neutral funding and responses?

Will the strategies be developed locally and inclusively with all actors that have developed access and expertise over the last four years?

Salaam,
NCCI Team

HUMANITARIAN UPDATES

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

Advocacy

- [New study estimates 151 000 violent Iraqi deaths since 2003 invasion](#)

Source: [WHO](#)

Document: **Report**

Date: **January 9, 2008**

Access: **Open**

A large national household survey conducted by the Iraqi government and WHO estimates that 151 000 Iraqis died from violence between March 2003 and June 2006. The estimate is based on interviews conducted in 9345 households in nearly 1000 neighbourhoods and villages across Iraq. The researchers emphasize that despite the large size of the study, the uncertainty inherent in calculating such estimates led them to conclude that the number of Iraqis who died from violence during that period lies between 104 000 and 223 000.

 [Iraq Mortality Study Published in the New England Journal of Medicine and Q & A](#)

- [The Humanitarian Crisis for Iraq's Children Continues](#)

Source: [Common Dreams](#)

Document: **Opinion**

Date: **January 7, 2008**

Access: **Open**

I imagine I am not alone in despairing at the end of the year. While others look forward, I am haunted by what we did not accomplish in 2007. Particularly devastating is the ongoing war and occupation in Iraq, and the toll it continues to take on all of us, but particularly on the civilian population in Iraq, most especially on children.

- [Karbala organizations threaten civil disobedience over ration card items](#)

Source: [Aswat Al-Iraq](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **December 18, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Civil society organizations in Karbala threatened to start a campaign of civil disobedience if ration card items are reduced, an informed source said on Tuesday. "Local civil society organizations in the province held a conference on Monday evening to discuss an upcoming (government) decision on the removal of some ration card items and threatened to declare a civil disobedience if the decision is not reversed," the head of the Karbala Assembly, a Karbala-based civil society organization, told the independent news agency Voices of Iraq.

- [Iraq: Pass New Law Ending Immunity for Contractors](#)

Source: [Human Rights Watch](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 9, 2008**

Access: **Open**

Parliament Approval Key to Ending Culture of Impunity for Serious Abuses. Iraq's parliament should approve legislation to end immunity for foreign private security contractors, Human Rights Watch said today. The legislation would effectively rescind Order 17 of the now-defunct, US-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), which grants foreign contractors and their non-Iraqi employees immunity from Iraqi criminal prosecution.

Operational Humanitarian Space

- [International aid workers are increasingly at risk](#)

Source: [Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation \(SDC\)](#)

Document: **Press Release**

Date: **December 21, 2007**

Access: **Open**

There has been a great increase in security incidents in crisis regions in the last decade. The international community is faced with a growing challenge in providing security. Between July 2006 and June 2007, the UN alone counted more than three thousand incidents involving breaches of security, including two dozen murders, over 1500 break-ins and thefts, and more than 120 kidnappings.

Blurring the lines

- [In one Iraqi village, a taste of what might be](#)

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 24, 2007

Access: Open

U.S. troops reach out with aid as part of an effort to secure an insurgent stronghold. "Our job is to try and have them like us a little more," said Jones, 20, from Walter, S.C. "We ask them, 'What do you need? How much water do you have? How good is the water?'" "Engaging villages like Owesat is a key part of the U.S. military's strategy to win the hearts and minds of Iraqis. By helping to provide basic services, such as medical aid and humanitarian supplies, the military hopes Iraqis will become more tolerant of coalition forces based in their homeland, begin to provide intelligence on militants and cooperate with efforts to create a stable environment.

- [Radical Christian Missionaries in Iraq](#)

Source: German TV

Document: Article

Date: December 21, 2007

Access: Open

How US Christian Missionaries make proselytism in Iraq

Humanitarian Needs and Assistance

- [Emergency Appeal Update: Assistance to war affected Iraqis](#)

Source: [CWS](#)

Document: Press Release

Date: December 19, 2007

Access: Open

CWS is supporting Action by Churches Together (ACT) International members as well as three other partner agencies working to assist war affected Iraqis. CWS's support to these three agencies is as follows: Emergency medical distribution, Capacity building of Iraqi NGOs, Support to vulnerable children.

- [Annual Activities](#)

Source: Iraqi NGO

Document: Report

Date: December 25, 2007

Access: [Members](#)

Summary of activities run in 2007 by an Iraqi NGO

- [Air Serv International Gives Hope to Children in Iraq](#)

Source: [Air Serv International](#)

Document: Press Release

Date: January 3, 2008

Access: Open

At the request of the Palestine Children's Relief Fund, in November Air Serv International flew three children from Iraq to hospitals equipped to treat their specific injuries in Jordan, in addition to six medical evacuations from Iraq in November.

- [Iraq Situation Operations Update – December 2007](#)

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document: Report

Date: January 4, 2008

Access: [Members](#)

Update relating to UNHCR's activities in the region as well as several maps relating to Iraqi displacement.

- [2008 Iraq situation supplementary appeal](#)

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document: **Appeal**

Date: **January 2, 2008**

Access: **Open**

UNHCR has a limited presence in Iraq with international staff restricted to Baghdad and Erbil. The operation relies on a network of national officers, implementing partners and Government counterparts. The Office has developed innovative mechanisms through which it extends its protection and assistance responsibilities. Nonetheless, securing access to those most in need continues to be a major challenge. Total requirements: US\$ 261,056,000.

Nutrition

- [WFP Launches Operation to Help Feed Over One Million Displaced Iraqis In Iraq and Syria](#)

Source: [WFP](#)

Document: **Press Release**

Date: **January 3, 2008**

Access: **Open**

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) today announced the start of a US\$126 million emergency operation to provide food assistance to more than one million displaced Iraqis who are unable to meet their basic food needs due to the continuing violence in Iraq. The one-year operation will run until December 2008 and assist 750,000 of the most vulnerable Iraqis displaced within the country, as well as more than 360,000 Iraqis who have fled to Syria.

- [Food rationing to continue but with fewer items](#)

Source: [Azzaman](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 4, 2008**

Access: **Open**

The Ministry of Trade is to hand out new food rationing cards covering the whole of 2008 this month but Iraqi families are warned that they will receive much less subsidized food than before. Last year food rationing system was almost in shambles with many Iraqi families going without rations for months.

- [Cutbacks to Iraqi food rations threaten malnutrition and starvation](#)

Source: [WSWS](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 5, 2008**

Access: **Open**

Under conditions of widespread malnutrition, run-away inflation and mass unemployment, the Iraqi Trade Ministry is preparing to slash the provision of subsidised food under the Public Distribution System (PDS). The ministry insists that cutbacks are unavoidable because it has not been promised a sufficient budget for 2008.

- [\\$700 million to increase the ration card items](#)

Source: [Iraq Directory](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 9, 2008**

Access: **Open**

Minister of Finance denied, on Monday, any intention by the government to cancel the ration card, and said that the ministry will allocate \$700 million to increase its items.

- [Parts of Iraq in Grip of Drought](#)

Source: [AFP](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 7, 2008**

Access: **Open**

Parts of Iraq are in the grip of a drought, adding to woes of farmers already battling security problems, poor power supplies, saline soils and lack of machinery, the agriculture minister has warned. Winter rains, which usually begin drenching the country from October, have yet to arrive and seeds planted in the autumn have yet to germinate and have started rotting or are being eaten by birds, Ali al-Bahadili told AFP. "If we get some rain in the coming weeks we will get some germination but it is late. We will have to give seeds to farmers to catch up," he said. "But production will be down. Definitely there will be a great impact on that."

Health & Mental Health

- [Iraq Family Health Survey 2006/7](#)

Source: [WHO](#)

Document: Report

Date: January 9, 2008

Access: Open

The Iraq Family Health Survey (IFHS) 2006/7 is a nationally representative survey of 9,345 households and 14,675 women of reproductive age and covers all governorates in Iraq. This is the second nationally representative health survey since the Family Gulf Survey in 1989, although it is the first survey to disseminate the results. The IFHS 2006/7 was conducted in the central and southern governorates during August and September 2006, in Anbar during October and November 2006, while fieldwork in the Kurdistan region was carried out during February and March 2007.

- [Depleted Uranium Crisis in Najaf](#)

Source: Muslim Peacemakers Team

Document: Report

Date: January 9, 2008

Access: Open

This was not an exhaustive study because of the limits of personnel, resources and equipment. But it did rely on accumulated public data, thorough research, and a major contribution of time and energy. The focus was Najaf, a city of over one million people, and the rural areas in the governorate. The area is about 180 miles from where DU was used in the First Gulf War. Starting in 2004 when the political situation and devastation of the health care infrastructure were at their worst, there were 251 reported cases of cancer. By 2006, when the numbers more accurately reflected the real situation, that figure had risen to 688. Already in 2007, 801 cancer cases have been reported. Those figures portray an incidence rate of 28.21 by 2006, even after screening out cases that came into the Najaf Hospital from outside the governorate, a number which contrasts with the normal rate of 8-12 cases of cancer per 100,000 people.

- [Situation Report on Cholera Outbreak in Northern Iraq #41](#)

Source: [WHO-Iraq](#)

Document: Sitrep

Date: December 16, 2007

Access: Open

During week 51, No report was received from Baghdad, or Sulaymaniyah, therefore, the cumulative number of laboratory confirmed cases remained as reported last week at 127 cases. Data provided from Baghdad are neither complete nor timely; therefore, reported cholera cases may underestimate the real situation. What is reported from Baghdad seems to be the tip of the iceberg. There is a noticeable relaxation in the surveillance system in all affected provinces including Baghdad.

- [Iraqi Health Crisis - Iraqi Medical Association in collaboration with Medact](#)

Source: [Medact](#)

Document: Report

Date: July 2007

Access: Open

Although security remains a serious issue - impeding accurate assessment of the present state of medical services and health needs, and the distribution of medical goods - there are many simple provisions that can be offered by the international community to help dramatically reduce this figure. However, four years following the 2003 invasion many initial efforts to assist the situation have not been pursued. This conference, organised by The Iraqi Medical Association in collaboration with Medact, invited a wide range of individuals and organisations involved in the health sector of Iraq to discuss these issues in a series of talks, plenary discussion sessions and smaller discussion groups.

- [Oil-rich Iraqis face Cholera still](#)

Source: [UPI](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 21, 2007

Access: Open

Iraq's majority Kurdish and potentially oil-rich area in the north has survived a summer of Cholera, but the region's health minister warns of more outbreaks. "That is cleared now, it's almost cleared, we only have one case," said Abdul Rahman Osman Yones, minister of health for the Kurdistan Regional Government. "We're only discovering the cases because of intense surveillance we are taking at the moment." Yones said residents can rest easy now because Cholera germs can't survive the cold winter nights.

- [Clowns help Iraqi refugee children overcome trauma](#)

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **December 26, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Red noses and silliness have popped up in recent months at UNHCR centres across Damascus, bringing some laughter and happiness to young Iraqis suffering from the traumas of life as refugees.

IDPs

- [The IDPs in Iraq – Update 29](#)

Source: [Iraqi Red Crescent](#)

Document: **Report**

Date: **December 27, 2007**

Access: **Open**

The Iraqi RC statistics showed that the number of IDP was 2,179,614 people by end of November 2007. This marked a decrease by 0.5 percent from the end of October. Children less than 12 years comprised 58.7 percent of the total number. The majority of the displaced people (62.8 percent) were in Baghdad governorate. The IDP families continue to suffer from difficulties in most aspects of life.

- [Tough homecoming for Iraqi refugees](#)

Source: [IWPR](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **December 21, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Thousands of Iraqis who fled abroad are heading back - but many don't have homes to return to.

Refugees

- [Iraqi Returnees From Syria – Update 2 – In English and Arabic](#)

Source: [Iraq Red Crescent](#)

Document: **Report**

Date: **December 30, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Period covered: 30 November to 27 December 2007. Estimated number of returnees from Syria to Iraq: 45,913. Many Iraqi families fled their homes in Iraq during the past four years as a result of ethnic and sectarian conflicts. They sought refuge in the neighboring countries- Syria, Jordan, Iran and Egypt. The majority (1.5-2.0 million people) settled in Syria and they were considered externally displaced population. Although there are no restrictions in Syria regarding obtaining residence permits, schooling for Iraqi students and delivering humanitarian aid through the Iraqi Red Crescent - Syria coordination office, Iraqi families faced difficulties in other aspects. For example, the high cost of living and rented apartments and the limited employment opportunities contributed to lack of stability of Iraqi families and increased their passion to return to their country.

- [Iraq Resettlement Statistics](#)

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document: **Worksheet**

Date: **December 26, 2007**

Access: **Members**

Statistics of Iraqis' resettlement by UNHCR for 2007.

- [Second Survey on Iraqi Refugees in Syria – Preliminary Results](#)

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document: **Report**

Date: **January 5, 2008**

Access: **Members**

UNHCR Syria and IPSOS Market Research have concluded the research of 754 families, comprising 3553 family members. This is the second round of research carried out this year, which enables UNHCR to monitor the situation of Iraqi refugees, and plan its response to the problems faced by refugees. The previous research carried out in May highlighted the fact that 75 % estimated that their savings would run out within three months. Based on this research UNHCR has dramatically increased financial assistance, to 7,000 families by end of December. UNHCR and WFP have also established food distribution since September.

- [Iraqi refugees turn to sex trade in Syria](#)

Source: [Alertnet](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 30, 2007

Access: Open

A score of young Iraqi women in tight, shimmering gowns shuffle across the nightclub dance floor under the hungry eyes of Gulf Arabs at nearby tables. The United Nations refugee agency UNHCR calls it "survival sex", a desperate way to cope for Iraqi refugees whose savings have run out since they escaped the violence at home.

- [Starving to survive: Iraqi refugees resort to desperate measures – in English and Arabic](#)

Source: [IRIN](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 2, 2008

Access: Open

Humanitarian workers confirm the increasing desperation of refugees, but say that because much of the information on these illicit practices is anecdotal, the situation is very hard to address directly.

- [Fear was their guide out of Iraq](#)

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 9, 2008

Access: Open

Salam has a target on his back because he aided the U.S. military. A smuggler starts him and his family

- [Letter to President Bush: US Should Lead Response to Iraqi Refugee Crisis](#)

Source: [Refugees International](#)

Document: Open Letter

Date: January 3, 2008

Access: Open

Refugees International, along with 18 humanitarian organizations, sent the following letter to President Bush in advance of his visit to the Middle East, which begins on January 8

- [Admissions of Iraqi Refugees Lagging](#)

Source: [AP](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 2, 2008

Access: Open

U.S. admissions of Iraqi refugees are nose-diving amid bureaucratic in-fighting despite the Bush administration's pledge to boost them to roughly 1,000 per month, according to State Department statistics obtained by The Associated Press. The steady decline -- from 450 in October to 362 in November and 245 in December -- means the administration will have to allow in 10,943 Iraqis over the next nine months, or roughly 1,215 per month, to meet the target it has set for itself.

- [Judge rebukes Home Office over Iraqi boy seeking asylum](#)

Source: [The Guardian](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 20, 2007

Access: Open

A 15-year-old Iraqi asylum seeker deported to Austria is to be returned to the UK after a high court judge condemned the Home Office's "total lack of humanitarianism" in the case. He arrived unaccompanied in Britain a year ago, and was said by his carer to have been terrified when Border and Immigration Agency officials arrived without warning at his home in south-west London at 4am to arrest him last month.

Education – Child Protection

- [UNICEF: Little Respite for Iraq's Children in 2007](#)

Source: [UNICEF](#)

Document: **Press Release**

Date: **December 21, 2007**

Access: **Open**

An estimated 2 million children in Iraq continue to face threats including poor nutrition, disease and interrupted education. Iraqi children were frequently caught in the crossfire of conflict throughout 2007. Insecurity and displacement continues to cause hardship for many in the most insecure parts of the country and further eroded access to quality essential services country-wide. Iraq remains volatile; however conditions begin to allow for more a concerted effort to deliver assistance.

- [A to Z of Child Rights – In Arabic](#)

Source: [CRIN](#)

Document: **Guidelines**

Date: **January 8, 2008**

Access: **Open**

A to Z of Child Rights in Arabic by the Child Rights Information Network

- [Top 10 Reasons Not to Grow up in Iraq as a Child](#)

Source: [Unremarkable politics](#)

Document: **Blog**

Date: **December 23, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Imagine growing up in Iraq which has been dubbed the world's best-known conflict and its least well-known humanitarian crisis.

- [Iraqis resort to selling children](#)

Source: [Al Jazeera](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 4, 2008**

Access: **Open**

Abu Muhammad, who received \$10,000, believes he is now damned by God, but he says his inner turmoil is allayed somewhat by his belief that Fatima will have a better life than many in Iraq. Local officials and aid workers have expressed concern over the alarming rate at which children are disappearing countrywide in Iraq's current unstable environment.

- [Iraqi children share their experience in film about friends separated by conflict](#)

Source: [UNICEF](#)

Document: **Press Release**

Date: **January 3, 2008**

Access: **Open**

Even amidst the security challenges facing children in Iraq every day, a group of young people there have found a way to create a poignant short film about life in Baghdad. UNICEF and Spacetoon – the regional Middle Eastern children's television network – gathered a group of Sunni and Shia'a children from the Iraqi capital to create the film in conjunction with the International Children's Day of Broadcasting.

Human Rights & Protection

- [An End to Female Genital Cutting?](#)

Source: [Time](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 4, 2008**

Access: **Open**

Head of the women's caucus in the Iraqi Kurdish parliament in Arbil, she is on the verge of pushing through a piece of legislation that is the first of its kind in the Middle East — a law criminalizing female genital mutilation (FGM). Affecting up to 90% of women in Egypt, Sudan and Somalia, FGM is widely seen as an African phenomenon. But it also happens to a lesser extent throughout the Middle East, particularly in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iraq. But the real breakthrough came in 2005 when WADI, a German non-governmental organization, published the results of its survey of 39 villages in the German region, east of Kirkuk.

- [Inside Iraq's Only Women's Prison](#)

Source: [CBS](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: **December 22, 2007**

Access: [Open](#)

Imagine women in prison because their husbands are accused of terrorism. Now imagine their infants and children in prison with them. Worst of all, it seems they have no way out. CBS News Correspondent Elizabeth Palmer visited such a place with Iraqi Vice President Tareq al Hashemi, who had come to inspect Iraq's only women's jail.

- [Shame of Imported Labor in Kurdish North of Iraq](#)

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: **December 29, 2007**

Access: [Open](#)

Thousands of foreign workers have come to the Kurdish districts in the last three years, a huge turnaround for a place that had hardly any before, making it one of the fastest-growing Middle Eastern destinations for the world's impoverished. They come from Ethiopia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Somalia, supporting an economic boom here that is transforming Kurdish society. But nearly all foreign workers interviewed over a two-week period here said they had been deceived by unscrupulous agents who arrange the journeys. Unable to communicate, some arrive not knowing what country they are in. Once here, their passports are seized by their employment agencies, and they are unable to go home.

- [The Poetics of Botero's Abu Ghraib Paintings](#)

Source: [Foreign Policy in Focus](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: **December 31, 2007**

Access: [Open](#)

Rose Marie Berger and Joseph Ross co-edited the collection Cut Loose the Body: An Anthology of Poems on Torture and Fernando Botero's Abu Ghraib Paintings in conjunction with an exhibition of the Botero paintings at the American University Museum in Washington, DC. Here, they talk with FPIF's E. Ethelbert Miller about what inspired them to work on this project.

Demining and MRE

- [Women and Cluster Munitions](#)

Source: [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom](#)

Document: [Article](#)

Date: **December 12, 2007**

Access: [Open](#)

Research from experiences with landmines has shown that while men and boys are more likely to be injured by landmines, 43% of women and girls will die of their injuries, as compared to 29% of men and boys (6). There is "growing evidence that it is ultimately women who bear the brunt of the landmine scourge—be it as survivors, or as wives or relatives of those killed or injured by a mine or ERW" (7).

Organisations and Agencies' Communication

- [Iraq Inter Agency Advocacy and Public Information Working Group](#)

Source: [OCHA](#)

Document: [MoM](#)

Date: **January 5, 2008**

Access: [Members](#)

Minutes of the last interagency advocacy and public information working group (IAWG) held in Amman on December 16th.

- [Reconstruction and Development Update](#)

Source: [UNAMI](#)

Document: [Newsletter](#)

Date: **January 2, 2007**

Access: [Open](#)

Newsletter on UNAMI Reconstruction and Development office's activities for November 2007

IRAQ CONTEXT

General Overview

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

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

Document: **Weekly report**

Date: **January 9, 2008**

Access: **Open**

A weekly Iraq humanitarian assistance report Compiled by Pacific Disaster Management Information Network

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

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

Document: **Selection of daily comments**

Date: **December 21, 2007 to January 9, 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.

- **[Top Ten Myths about Iraq 2007](#)**

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

Document: **Article**

Date: **December 26 2007**

Access: **Open**

The US public no longer sees Iraq as a central issue in the 2008 presidential campaign; There have been steps toward religious and political reconciliation in Iraq in 2007; The US troop surge stopped the civil war that had been raging between Sunni Arabs and Shiites in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad; Iran was supplying explosively formed projectiles to Salafi Jihadi guerrilla groups in Iraq; The US overthrow of the Baath regime and military occupation of Iraq has helped liberate Iraqi women; Some progress has been made by the Iraqi government in meeting the "benchmarks" worked out with the Bush administration; The Sunni Arab "Awakening Councils," who are on the US payroll, are reconciling with the Shiite government of PM Nuri al-Maliki even as they take on al-Qaeda remnants; The Iraqi north is relatively quiet and a site of economic growth; Iraq has been "calm" in fall of 2007 and the Iraqi public, despite some grumbling, is not eager for the US to depart; and The reduction in violence in Iraq is mostly because of the escalation in the number of US troops, or "surge."

Non-Violence and Reconciliation

- **[In Iraq, give U.N. diplomacy another chance](#)**

Source: [Des Moines Register](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **December 21, 2007**

Access: **Open**

In short, it may be both too late for political reconciliation - too much accumulated bitterness and bloodshed - as well as too early, because the parties may not yet have exhausted the will to kill one another. But letting a three-way, or yet more fragmented, civil war simply run its course is a horrendous outcome for Iraq, for the region and for the United States. Let us, at least, err on the side of trying.

- **[An Iraqi Solution for Iraq](#)**

Source: [Boston Globe](#)

Document: **Opinion**

Date: **December 27, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Recognizing that Iraqis are largely responsible for the current transformation is vital, because recent developments may point the way to an eventual stabilization of Iraq. The Bush administration's calamitous blunders in Iraq derived mostly from a willful imposing of its own doctrinal notions on a society the occupiers did not understand.

- **Baghdad press promotes unity, decries sectarianism – In English and Arabic**

Source: [Aswat Al Iraq](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 8, 2008

Access: Open

Iraqi press on Tuesday called for promoting unity and curbing sectarianism, with a newspaper highlighting the "conflict" between U.S. politicians over power and its implications for the situation in Iraq.

 **Bilad Al-Yawm: Let's stress what brings us together – In Arabic**

Iraqis Living Conditions

- **Iraq's middle class is languishing**

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 6, 2008

Access: Open

Many skilled professionals have fled, but those who remain find few suitable jobs that pay a living wage. Iraq's government estimates unemployment at 17.6% and underemployment at 38%, but those are considered conservative figures. The problem is seen as one of the major threats to the country's long-term recovery. To make matters more precarious, about 60% of the population is younger than 30 -- and many young people are ripe for recruitment into criminal life if the money is right. "A lot of these people are pretty much stagnant, with low-income wages," said Col. Gabe Lifschitz of the U.S. military's Gulf Region Division, comprised of military and civilian personnel working on reconstruction projects in Iraq. Without middle-class people creating job opportunities for low-wage earners to move up the economic ladder, Lifschitz said, Iraq's economy would flat-line, breeding anger and discontent.

- **Power Supply !**

Source: [Mc Clatchy Inside Iraq Blog](#)

Document: Blog

Date: January 9, 2008

Access: Open

Shortage of Electricity in Iraq is the main problem that Iraqi people suffer from.

- **Iraq Bomber Aimed at Alcohol Sellers**

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 21, 2007

Access: Open

"There are explosions everywhere," said a man who gave his name only as Mr. Ahmed, gesturing to the heavens. "We believe in God." Even as the bomb sent a cloud of black smoke rising into the midafternoon sky, Iraqis kept partying at a social club in Paradise Square a few hundred yards away. Children ran around the lawn while their parents sat at tables listening to the sound system blaring the song "I Want to Know What Love Is." The wreckage came to rest alongside 10-foot-high concrete blast walls that had been brightly painted with tranquil scenes of camels and marshland waterways as part of an American-financed beautification effort.

Violence and (Un-) security

- **In quieter Baghdad, perils still lurk**

Source: [The Christian Science Monitor](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 24, 2007

Access: Open

She shunned the free trip home on government-chartered buses on Nov. 27 that was offered by Mr. Maliki to nearly 800 Iraqi refugees in Syria. Upon return, they found their home in Baghdad Jadida was off-limits. It was being occupied by a Shiite family that had been displaced from Diyala Province because of sectarian violence. The family, connected to local militiamen, refused to vacate or pay rent. The eldest son was told the local police might be able to help. A policeman demanded a bribe of 300,000 dinars (\$295), which the son says he paid. He was later told that there was little the police could do because the squatting family was connected to powerful local militiamen. The bribe was kept. [...] As they entered the vehicle, a car bomb went off nearby. "No one came to rescue us; people started running away. My mother got up and started shouting for help and then she fell down and died," says the eldest son, wounded in the same attack.

- [Attacker Bombs Pro-U.S. Sunnis in Iraq](#)

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 3, 2008

Access: Open

An Iraqi police brigadier, Kudhair Tamimi, acknowledged that many Sunni tribesmen had sacrificed their lives fighting the insurgents in Diyala, but said he still doubted their loyalty and questioned the wisdom of allowing them to serve in the Iraqi security forces.

- [Is this the beginning of the end in Iraq?](#)

Source: [The Independent](#)

Document: Opinion, by Patrick Cockburn

Date: December 29, 2007

Access: Open

The US has had real operational successes on the ground in Iraq this year, but there is little sign yet of Iraq being pacified. Local warlords in Sunni areas have switched from attacking US forces to working with them, but they might easily switch back tomorrow. As with the British in Basra, the Americans lack long-term allies that can stand on their own feet without US assistance.

- [Warnings Unheeded On Guards In Iraq](#)

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 24, 2007

Access: Open

The U.S. government disregarded numerous warnings over the past two years about the risks of using Blackwater Worldwide and other private security firms in Iraq, expanding their presence even after a series of shooting incidents showed that the firms were operating with little regulation or oversight, according to government officials, private security firms and documents.

- [Fallujah, the Information War, and U.S. Propaganda: The U.S. Army's Intelligence Analysis of the April 2004 Fallujah Attack](#)

Source: [ICH](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 27, 2007

Access: Open

Now receded into distant memory for many, the battle for the Iraqi city of Fallujah, accompanied by the al Sadr uprising in the south, was a decisive turning point in the Iraq occupation. These battles demonstrated to much of the world that the occupation was deeply unpopular among many Iraqis, who were willing and able to fight the occupation to a stalemate. These battles both ended in standoffs, as the U.S. forces felt constrained from unleashing their full military capabilities to crush the resistance. New insights into the thinking of the U.S. military are available from a U.S. army intelligence analysis -- by the Army's National Ground Intelligence Center -- of the first Fallujah battle entitled Complex Environments: Battle of Fallujah I, April 2004

- [Iraq death rate belies US claims of success](#)

Source: [The Independent](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 7, 2008

Access: Open

The death rate in Iraq in the past 12 months has been the second highest in any year since the invasion, according to figures that appear to contradict American claims that the troop "surge" has dramatically reduced the level of violence across the country.

- [Christians from Iraq fear for homeland](#)

Source: [AP](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 5, 2008

Access: Open

Will current migration wave mark end of the Assyrian heritage? Now war is again threatening Assyrian culture and language in its native land. Thousands of Assyrians have fled Iraq since the U.S. invasion. Samow's relatives are scattered through Canada, Australia, Denmark, New Zealand, Greece, Holland, England, Sweden and Germany. Other Assyrians are refugees in Syria, Jordan and inside Iraq, not knowing whether they can return to cities and towns carved into Sunni or Shiite enclaves.

"Reconstruction" is not going so well...for Iraqis

- **'Deprogramming' Iraqi Detainees**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 24, 2007

Access: Open

Marine Maj. Gen. Douglas M. Stone, the commanding general in charge of detainee operations in Iraq, is seeking reinforcements from a contractor as he continues to maneuver on what he has called "the battlefield of the mind" and win over the roughly 25,000 Iraqi prisoners under his control. In a proposal put out for bid Dec. 15, the Joint Contracting Command is seeking a team of professionals, including "teachers, religious and behavioral science counselors," who will "execute a program that effectively reintegrates [into Iraqi society] detainees, particularly those disposed to violent, radical ideology through education and counseling," according to the statement of work.

- **"Orascom Telecom" sold its whole share in "Iraqna" to the Kuwaiti Zain**

Source: [Iraq Directory](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 9, 2008

Access: Open

The Egyptian company Orascom Telecom completed the sale proceedings of its whole share in Iraqna Company for mobile communications in Iraq to the company "MTC Atheer" affiliated to the Kuwaiti company Zain. Orascom said in a statement that it had completed the closure of all obligations related to the deal which is valued at approximately \$1.2 billion.

- **Can Iraqi Sites that have Survived Seventeen Centuries Survive the US Military?**

Source: [The Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 22, 2007

Access: Open

American soldiers in Iraq have been issued with thousands of packs of playing cards urging them to protect and respect the country's archaeological sites, in an effort to curb the destruction and plunder of Iraq's antiquities. Each card in the deck is illustrated with an ancient artefact or site, with tips on how to preserve archaeological remains and prevent looting.

- **The Portrait from Iraq: How the Press Has Covered Events on the Ground**

Source: [Project for Excellence in Journalism](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 19, 2007

Access: Open

The findings suggest, among other things, that the bigger question may be not how the press interprets events but what kinds of events get covered, especially by a press corps whose movements are severely restricted in Iraq by the threat of attack and who are most mobile when embedded with U.S. troops. The results of the study of the content of Iraq coverage also correlate to a great extent with attitudes expressed by journalists working in Iraq themselves. In a survey released by the Project in November, most journalists said they felt that the operations of the military were thoroughly covered, but they viewed the lives of ordinary Iraqis and the sense of daily life as the most "undercovered" subject. The findings here about what topics were covered tend to confirm the assessment of the journalists on the ground.

- **Iraq's '08 fate -- Basra, Kirkuk**

Source: [UPI](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 4, 2008

Access: Open

Iraq's crude capital, Basra, and perhaps its most controversial city, Kirkuk, also flush with oil, face a formidable 2008. The futures of both depend on how the post-2003 power vacuum plays out, though the latter could be settled with a political compromise in Baghdad.

- **The state of Iraq as it enters 2008**

Source: [WSWS](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 2, 2008

Access: Open

As the killing continues, various quarters of the US ruling elite are exploiting the very carnage they have produced to argue that American forces must remain in Iraq to establish the conditions for "democracy". Such propaganda is nothing more than a shameless apology for the first great and ongoing war crime of the twenty-first century. The occupation is ruling through the promotion of sectarian divisions and the daily repression of opposition to its presence. The precondition for Iraq's recovery from the social and political catastrophe created by the US-led war is the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all American and foreign troops.

Iraqi Political process

- **As violence ebbs, the next hurdle for Iraq is political progress**

Source: [The Christian Science Monitor](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 8, 2008

Access: Open

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has vowed to capitalize on security gains to revive the political process in the coming year. What will be the barometers of progress? Will Iraqis resolve their bitter differences on how to share oil resources and pass a much anticipated oil law? Can agreement be forged regarding Kirkuk, the oil-rich and ethnically mixed city? Or will it be a trigger for more conflict? Will the promoters of a vision of Iraq that is divided into three main regions soften their approach in the face of greater controversy? Will power transition in the provinces peacefully or will Iraq see more violence as rivals jockey to position themselves favorably ahead of these elections? Can Iraqis resolve their differences over key aspects of their new Constitution? Will Iraq's political leaders agree to meaningful and sweeping concessions that could rally average Iraqis together?

- **Disaffected Iraqis Spurn Dominant Shiite Clerics**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 21, 2007

Access: Open

Two years after helping to bring to power a government led by Shiite religious parties, Iraq's paramount Shiite clerics find their influence diminished as their followers criticize them for backing a political alliance that has failed to pass crucial legislation, improve basic services or boost the economy. "Now the street is blaming what's happening on the top clerics and the government," said Ali al-Najafi, the son of Bashir al-Najafi, one of four leading clerics collectively called the marjaiya. Speaking for his father, the white-turbaned Najafi said he wished that the government, all but paralyzed by factionalism and rival visions, was more in touch with ordinary Iraqis. "We were hoping that it would have been better," he said.

- **Shiite Contest Sharpens In Iraq**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 26, 2007

Access: Open

The competition has its origins in the days when the fathers of Hakim and Sadr, both preeminent ayatollahs, fought to lead Iraq's Shiites. Under Saddam Hussein, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim spent years in exile in Iran. Sadr remained in Iraq, bolstering his street credentials. After the U.S. invasion in 2003, Hakim embraced the Americans, while Sadr went to war against them, launching two major uprisings in Najaf in 2004. This year, Sadr and Hakim have sought to position themselves at the center of Iraq's ideological sphere. To bolster his nationalist credentials, Sadr pulled his loyalists from Iraq's factionalized government and tacitly approved the U.S. surge offensive. Hakim removed the word "revolution" from the name of his political party, suggesting that it was no longer an armed opposition group.

- **Interview: Iraqi Kurds' man at the U.N.**

Source: [UPI](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 26, 2007

Access: Open

There is one Iraq, but there are also two: the northern, potentially oil-rich region controlled by Iraq's Kurds, and the rest of Iraq. That, says the Kurdish liaison to U.N. efforts in Iraqi Kurdistan, is how the international community should view it.

- [Iraqi Kurds delay Kirkuk vote](#)

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **December 27, 2007**

Access: **Open**

The referendum on whether the oil-rich city should join semiautonomous Kurdistan is put off for six months. The delay had been expected because of problems in arranging the vote, which was supposed to have been held by the end of the year. A census to determine who would be eligible to vote, for instance, has not yet been done. But by putting off the issue, the lawmakers highlighted what has become a constant in Iraq: the inability of leaders to settle disputes whose resolution is considered key to ending ethnic and sectarian strife.

Rule of Law

- [Who Are the Insurgents?](#)

Source: [The Progressive](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **December 21, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Dahr Jamail reviews "Meeting Resistance". "Suppose Iraq invaded America. And an Iraqi soldier was on a tank passing through an American street, waving his gun at the people, threatening them, raiding and trashing houses. Would you accept that? This is why no Iraqi can accept occupation, and don't be surprised by their reactions," "The bulk of the people were taking on new information that was a dramatic paradigm shift for them," she says. "To see their enemy as largely fighting for their homeland because of nationalism and religion, rather than being terrorists, is a big deal."

- [A Slap in the Face for Iraq's Parliament](#)

Source: [Alternet](#)

Document: **Article**

Date: **January 4, 2008**

Access: **Open**

The end of 2007 produced a telltale indication of what the New Year seems likely to bring to Iraq. "We the Iraqi members of Parliament signing below demand a timetable for withdrawal of the occupation forces [MNF] from our beloved Iraq," 144 members of the 275-member Parliament, a clear majority, wrote in a declaration April 2007. Despite this, the George W Bush administration and the Iraqi government led by US-installed Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki pushed a resolution through the UN Security Council to extend by another year the legal cover for foreign troops to operate in Iraq.

Policies and Strategies

- [The Five Iraqs](#)

Source: [Truthdig](#)

Document: **Opinion**, by *Scott Ritter*

Date: **December 30, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Five Iraqs, and one Iraq policy ill-suited to the reality of any single situation, yet alone the whole. The success of the surge is pure fantasy, a fancy bit of illusion that would do David Copperfield proud, but not the people of Iraq or the United States. The surge addresses events in Iraq based upon short-term objectives (i.e., reducing the immediate level of violence) without resolving any of the deep-seated, long-term issues that promote the violence to begin with. It is like placing a Band-Aid on a gaping chest wound. The pink, frothy blood may not be visible on the surface, but the wound remains as grave as ever, and because it is not being directly attended to, it only gets worse. For my money, I choose working with the Sunnis and al-Sadr to create a viable coalition, and then cutting a deal with Iran that trades off better relations in exchange for encouraging the current failed Iraqi government to step aside in favor of new elections. And the Kurds? Autonomy or nothing.

- [Leaving Iraq will Make America Safer](#)

Source: [Concord Monitor](#)

Document: **Opinion**, By *Barack Obama*

Date: **December 29, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Surge success can't mask political failure. In recent weeks, I've been asked if the "surge" is working, and if we should continue to fight the war in Iraq. The answer is decisively no. Those who support the surge are making the same mistakes that war supporters have made all along: They fail to understand how the Iraq war sets back our security, and they fail to understand that there is no military solution in Iraq.

- **[The Kurdish Policy Imperative](#)**

Source: [Chatham House](#)

Document: Report

Date: December 20, 2007

Access: Open

Kurds have struggled for decades to mobilize and gain international attention. Now, for the first time, some Kurdish interests are converging with the regional designs of prominent members of the international community. The consolidation of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq is of huge importance. Kurds in Iraq now have an unprecedented opportunity to define their own future and influence other Kurds in the region. Another Turkish incursion into Iraq is likely to be futile but the threat has been raised because of the poor state of Turkish-US relations, the tension between the AK Party and the Turkish military, and Turkish opposition to a successful KRG. Kurdish political demands remain limited, but there has been a notable strengthening of Kurdish self-perception and aspirations at a mass level. The intricate web of relationships between Kurds and regional states means that the future of the Middle East is closely tied to Kurdish futures. Regional and Western policy-makers need to reappraise the role of the Kurds in Iraq and Turkey and how Kurds in Syria and Iran interact with their governments and are influenced by Kurdish developments in neighbouring states.

- **[Apres-Surge: The Next Iraq Debates](#)**

Source: [The Brookings Institution](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 31, 2007

Access: Open

It took a while, but we appear to have finally reached a national consensus that General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker have made progress in Iraq. They have improved security and forged deals among local political leaders in the north, west, and even much of the center of the country (including important parts of Baghdad). This, in turn, has made it possible to start to revive local economies in some of those same areas. But the progress has been uneven. The national economy remains stagnant, with stubbornly high unemployment. Iraq's central government is still locked in the deadening grip of Shia warlords uninterested in compromising with Iraq's other ethnic and sectarian groups or, for the most part, even with one another. And the southern half of the country is deteriorating even as the northern half improves.

- **[The myth of sectarianism](#)**

Source: [ISR - Dahr Jamail](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 3, 2008

Access: Open

An indicator of how things will likely resolve themselves upon the departure of foreign troops may be drawn from the southern city of Basra. In early September, 500 British troops left one of Saddam Hussein's palaces in the heart of the city and ceased to conduct regular foot patrols. According to the British military, the overall level of violence in the city has decreased 90 percent since then. This may or may not be a guarantee of a drop in sectarianism upon the departure of the invading armies, but it does prove that when the primary cause of the violence, sectarian strife, instability, and chaos is removed from the equation of Iraq, things are bound to improve rapidly. Are we still going to believe that the occupation is holding Iraq together?

- **[For U.S., The Goal Is Now 'Iraqi Solutions'](#)**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 10, 2008

Access: Open

Approach Acknowledges Benchmarks Aren't Met. In the year since President Bush announced he was changing course in Iraq with a troop "surge" and a new strategy, U.S. military and diplomatic officials have begun their own quiet policy shift. After countless unsuccessful efforts to push Iraqis toward various political, economic and security goals, they have decided to let the Iraqis figure some things out themselves.

- **[In a Force for Iraqi Calm, Seeds of Conflict](#)**

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 23, 2007

Access: Open

How, when thousands are joining each month, can spies and extremists be reliably weeded out? How can the men's loyalty be maintained, given their tribal and sectarian ties, and in many cases their insurgent pasts? And crucially, how can the movement be sustained once the Americans turn over control to a Shiite-dominated government that has been wary, and sometimes hostile, toward the groups? Despite the successes of the movement, including the members' ability to provide valuable intelligence and give rebuilding efforts a new chance in war-shattered communities, the American military acknowledges that it is also a high-risk proposition.

- **'Awakening' Forces Arouse New Conflicts**

Source: [IPS](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 26, 2007

Access: Open

The controversial move of the U.S. military to back Sunni "Awakening" forces has created another wedge between Sunni and Shia political groups. Following disputes between the tribal groups assembled into Awakening forces and the Iraqi government, the creation of these forces has become also a political issue.

- **Military thinks twice on fortified trucks**

Source: [Los Angeles Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 27, 2007

Access: Open

Gates insisted on the MRAP vehicles. But they're ill-suited to Iraq, some say, and may even be counterproductive if troops don't get out and walk.'

- **A Darker Shade Of Green Zone**

Source: [Washington Post](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 5, 2008

Access: Open

In Baghdad, Low Expectations Have Supplanted High Ideals. The moment was a fleeting reminder of the good times in the war's early days, when the pool patio was the Green Zone's social hub and young conservative staffers, eager to remake Iraq, danced away the cares of nation-building. Those times and people are long gone, replaced by sober diplomats and soldiers with lower expectations, slogging diligently through their duties, collecting combat pay, and envisioning an Iraq where the electricity works and where a trip to the market does not court death.

HUMANITARIAN WORLD PERSPECTIVES & QUALITY OF AID

- **Code of Good Practice in the management and Support of the Aid personnel – In English and in Arabic**

Source: [People in Aid](#)

Document: Guidelines

Date: December 21, 2007

Access: Open

The People In Aid Code is an important resource for the aid community around the world. It grew from the collaborative effort of relief and development agencies committed to improving the quality of the assistance provided to communities affected by poverty and disaster. The intention of the Code is to improve agencies' support and management of their staff and volunteers.

- **A Global Trek to Poor Nations, From Poorer Ones**

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: December 27, 2007

Access: Open

Across the developing world, migrants move to other poor countries nearly as often as they move to rich ones. Yet their numbers and hardships are often overlooked.

- **2007 'one of deadliest years' for United Nations personnel, staff union says: at least 9 peacekeepers, 33 civilian staff members killed**

Source: [New York Times](#)

Document: Article

Date: January 2, 2008

Access: Open

"While we mourn our colleagues and the other civilians killed, we cannot but stress the need for prevention and punishment," said Staff Union President Stephen Kisambira. "Prevention is the task of the Department of Safety and Security, but especially of Member States. Those responsible for such heinous acts must be sought and brought to justice by Member States, who are responsible for national security. Very seldom are perpetrators prosecuted, perpetuating the climate of impunity."

- **[Incorporating civilian protection into humanitarian response](#)**

Source: [ODI-HPG](#)

Document: **Policy Paper**

Date: **December 19, 2007**

Access: **Open**

Protecting civilians from the worst effects of violence and abuse is, more than ever before, an active concern of aid actors. An unprecedented number of humanitarian organisations now undertake protection activities; the response to the Darfur crisis represented a watershed in this regard, with 41 agencies engaging in protection in 2006, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (Pantuliano and O'Callaghan, 2006). The scope of the protection agenda has also changed. No longer primarily related to refugees and civilians and ex-combatants in conflict, protection now includes people displaced as a consequence of all forms of disaster, as well as broader at-risk populations. The situations in which humanitarians undertake protection activities have also changed, to encompass organised armed conflict, ongoing generalised violence, natural disasters and post-conflict situations (Slim and Bonwick, 2005). Expertise and specialisation are increasing, with dedicated programming in areas such as child protection, sexual and gender-based violence and access to justice.

- **[The protection of forced migrants in Islamic law](#)**

Source: [UNHCR](#)

Document: **Report**

Date: **December 2007**

Access: **Open**

Despite Muslim States hosting large numbers of refugees and IDPs, the inherent protection and assistance afforded to forced migrants at Islamic Law has largely been overlooked. There is no readily available particularised fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) on the matter, and it was not until the early 1990s that a few Islamic scholars began delving into the Shariah in the interests of finding Islamic modes of protection. This article seeks to lay the ground work for establishing an Islamic protection framework by consolidating and expanding existing efforts which have identify various yet incomplete modes of protection at Islamic Law. The author seeks to support the development of an indigenous, culturally viable Islamic protection framework which draws heavily upon long-held norms prevalent throughout the Quran and Sunnah while incorporating some general principles of fiqh. The author seeks to review Islamic Law protection mechanisms in and of themselves, and dispel 'Orientalist problematique' myths based on 'Islamophobia' which purport Islamic Law to be defective, particularly as it relates to international law. The paper is thus framed within the context of post-colonialism and self determination discourses.

- **[Civil-Military Cooperation in Multinational and Interagency Operations: Discussion Paper on Operational Terminologies and Assessment for Multinational Experiment 5](#)**

Source: [Norwegian Institute of International Affairs](#)

Document: **Discussion paper**

Date: **May 2007**

Access: **Open**

The third and final challenge to civil-military cooperation concerns civilian and military actors' lack of knowledge about one another's diverging working procedures in the planning, action, and assessment-phases of an operation. Above all, there are large civil-military as well as intra-civilian variations when it comes to defining operational end-goals and establishing a working plan for achieving these. As one humanitarian organisation points out: "there are more and more aid organisations and agencies involved in the business of aid. Many have different values, goals and strategies."¹³ In this context, two particular aspects should be emphasised: On the planning and action level, the lack of convergence between operational terminologies used by civilian and military actors represents a major barrier to civil-military cooperation. On the assessment level, the great differences between how operational processes and outcomes are evaluated and reviewed by civilian and military organisations, cause equally tough headaches. These two challenges are discussed more thoroughly in the following two sections.

- **[International Crisis Watch](#)**

Source: [International Crisis Group](#)

Document: **Monthly Indicators**

Date: **January 1, 2008**

Access: **Open**

CrisisWatch indicators - up and down arrows, conflict risk alerts, and conflict resolution opportunities - are intended to reflect changes within countries or situations from month to month, not comparisons between countries. For example, no "conflict risk alert" is given for a country where violence has been occurring and is expected to continue in the coming month: such an indicator is given only where new or significantly escalated violence is feared.

January 2008 Security Trend Analysis

The January 2008 Security Trend Analysis provided by the NCCI Team is an informational and advisory report to NGOs on possible threats and incidents based on the current trends in violence and armed groups activities.

This trend analysis is only a basic overview and guideline and is targeted for HoM and security specialists as an addendum to their own information sources, analysis and reactions.

The following trend analysis is formatted to inform HoM of possible eruptions of violence or decreasing security. Obviously, in the current context of daily violence and civil war, this monthly trend analysis may lose its strategic impact to forecast events of the coming period in view of the volatile security situation and frequent reprisals.

The NCCI Security Trend Analysis is available for our members only on our website in [the Security Section](#)

January 2008 Significant Dates

<i>January 1st</i>	<i>New Year Eve</i>
<i>January 6th</i>	<i>Anniversary of Iraqi Army Establishment (Former regime)</i>
<i>January 9th</i>	<i>New Year Eve (Hijri Calendar- Muharram 1st – Year 1429)</i>
<i>January 16th</i>	<i>Beginning of the war of 1991 (Operation Desert Storm)</i>
<i>January 18-20th</i>	<i>Ashura (Martyrdom Imam Hussein – Muharram 10th) – please refer to special advisory</i>
<i>January 20th</i>	<i>Al-Taaf Battle - Imam Hussein family taken in hostage</i>
<i>January 21st</i>	<i>Burrying of Al-Taaf Battle martyrs (Muharram 13th)</i>
<i>January 25th</i>	<i>Beginning of Coalition Forces military operations (Muharram 17th 1424)</i>

December 2007

Monthly Prices Indicators

NCCI is following Prices Indicators in Iraq since 2003. The purpose of these indicators is to help NGOs to have a concrete idea of the trend of the prices in Iraq.

The current surveys cover Baghdad and Basra. We also have the aim to cover other areas (North...) in cooperation with other NGOs and partners.

Methodology:

This trend analysis is based on a qualitative compilation of prices (not quantitative). Statistics presented here are collected weekly in wholesale markets and may not reflect real retail prices.

We are interested in the trend and not the real price.

The prices below represent a monthly average.

All prices are in Iraqi Dinars.

*The NCCI Prices Indicators are available on our website **for our members** in [the Indicators Section](#)*

Since March 2006 we have changed the items in order to be more accurate and have more appropriate prices with the Iraqis' reality.

This report is divided in 5 sections: Food; Construction; Transports – Communication; Energy and Living costs.

For Baghdad, we are able to add graphs showing the evolution of these prices. In each table we already added a column showing the monthly evolution. The graphs accompanying these tables are formatted from a base-price (100) as March06 indicator. Regarding Basra prices, it is still too recent to show any evolution.

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

Weekly Schedule

Many meetings related to the CAP in Amman these next few weeks. 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

January 16 th	Beginning of the war of 1991 (Operation Desert Storm)
January 18-20 th	Ashura (Martyrdom Imam Hussein – Muharram 10 th)
January 20 th	Al-Taaf Battle - Imam Hussein family taken in hostage
January 21 st	Burrying of Al-Taaf Battle martyrs (Muharram 13 th)

Updates & Announcements

Recruitments

NCCI is urgently looking for an **Information and Policy Officer** and a **secretary for its Amman office**. ToRs are available [here](#).

An NGO is looking for its Iraq Community-based Conflict Mitigation Program (ICCM) for a **Deputy Chief of Party**, a **Finance Officer** and a **Youth Programme Manager**. Vacancies are available [here](#).

New [CVs](#) are also on our website

Media Requests

IRIN (<http://www.irinnews.org/>) is looking to see if there is any footage out from NGOs that they can use for their website. They are looking for footage filmed on mini DV camera (and not a handycam). Please answer directly to Salma Zulfiqar (Salma@IRINnews.org) if you are interested by their request.

Channel 4 is looking for additional Iraqi NGOs, reconstruction, human rights, civil servants, academics, intellectuals etc to be interviewed in Baghdad or Amman mainly. They are also looking for footage and photographs from Iraq, shot by NGOs, bloggers, anyone which illustrates the problems facing the country. If interested please contact Adam Jessel (Adam.Jessel@blakeway.tv)

NCCI's Contact List