

THE IRAQ COMMISSION REPORT

Lord Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon,
Baroness Jay of Paddington,
Lord King of Bridgwater

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Dr Rosemary Hollis, Sir Paul Lever,
Lt Gen Andrew Ridgway, Maeve Sherlock OBE,
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First published in 2007 by
The Foreign Policy Centre
in association with Channel 4
Suite 14, Second Floor
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London N1 5DL
UNITED KINGDOM
Email: info@fpc.org.uk
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Cover Design © Channel 4, 2007

Foreign Policy Centre website: www.fpc.org.uk
The Iraq Commission website: www.channel4.com/iraqcommission

ISBN-13: 978-1-905833-10-8
ISBN-10: 1-905833-10-5

Acknowledgments

The Iraq Commission and the Foreign Policy Centre are indebted to a number of people for their help with this report and the work of the Iraq Commission.

They include the Co-Chairs of the Commission, Lord Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon, Baroness Jay of Paddington and Lord King of Bridgwater and the members of the Commission, Professor Brian Brivati, Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Dr Rosemary Hollis, Sir Paul Lever, Lt. Gen. Andrew Ridgway, Maeve Sherlock OBE, Asim Siddiqui, Stephen Twigg and Sir Patrick Walker.

We pay tribute to Dermot Kehoe who acted as Secretary to the Commission and the staff of the Foreign Policy Centre, especially Alex Bigham and Diane Fisher for all their hard work.

We are grateful to Alexander Gardiner, Amanda Wolthuizen and the staff at Granada, and Dorothy Byrne, Mark Roberts, Oliver Doward, Gavin Dawson, Nick Stringer, Kate Barr and the staff of Channel 4.

We also want to thank all those who gave up their time to appear as witnesses before the Commission, and who submitted evidence to the Commission, who are named in the appendices. There are many other people who helped in a variety of ways, we're grateful to all of them.

This report would not have been possible without the support of Channel 4 and Granada.

Standard Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of The Iraq Commission and not necessarily those of The Foreign Policy Centre.

Contents

Letter from the Co-Chairs	7
Executive Summary	9
Map of Iraq	13

THE SITUATION IN IRAQ

1. The Security Situation	14
Sources of Insecurity	14
The ‘Surge’	19
The UK Military Presence	20
Iraqi Security Forces	24
2. Politics in Post-Saddam Iraq	26
The Shia	26
The Sunnis	27
The Kurds	28
Secular Parties	29
The Iraqi Government	29
3. Economy	32
The Hydrocarbon Law	34
International Economic Assistance	35
Private Security Companies	36
4. Humanitarian Assistance	39
5. Iraq’s Neighbours	43
Iran	43
Syria	46
Turkey	49
Saudi Arabia	51
Jordan	53
Kuwait	55
6. The Coalition	56

The United States	56
The UK	59
7. International	63
The UN	63
The EU	64

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. International Action	65
2. UK Military Action	70
3. Economic, reconstruction and capacity building	77
4. Humanitarian Action	83

APPENDICES

1. Members of the Commission	94
2. Secretariat to the Commission	99
3. Witnesses	100
4. Submissions	105
5. Remit	112
6. About The Foreign Policy Centre	114
7. Endnotes	117

Letter from the Co-Chairs

The situation in Iraq is the most pressing and serious issue facing the new Prime Minister of our country.

Four years on from the initial invasion of Iraq by coalition forces, that decision remains a deeply divisive and controversial one and the subject of ongoing national debate. The Commission contains individuals from both sides of that argument about the initial decision to go to war, but we all felt that insufficient debate has been focussed on what we do next in Iraq. Therefore we set ourselves the objective of looking analytically at the available evidence and formulating a new approach for British policy in Iraq.

In this report the Iraq Commission offers a set of recommendations for a way forward for the British Government. We believe these proposals offer the best hope for reducing the violence and chaos currently afflicting that country and bringing longer term stability and prosperity to the region. However, there are no guarantees of success, and this course of action will require the United Kingdom actively and urgently to pursue changes of policy from our allies and the wider international community.

We would like to thank all our witnesses to the Commission for sharing their insights, as well as the individuals and organisations who submitted evidence to us. We would especially like to thank the other Commission members for their hard work and the constructive and collegiate spirit they have brought to this endeavour. We'd also like to acknowledge

the support of the Commission Secretariat and the staff of the Foreign Policy Centre, Granada and Channel 4.

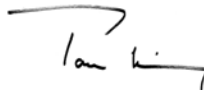
Finally, we wish to recognise the outstanding commitment and courage of all the men and women, military and civilian, who have served and are serving in Iraq. We honour the sacrifices made by British Armed Forces personnel, by our coalition partners and by the many ordinary Iraqis who have sought a better future for Iraq and for us all.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Paddy Ashdown', with a horizontal line drawn underneath.

Lord Ashdown
of Norton-sub-
Hamdon

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Margaret A. Jay', with the first name partially obscured by a large 'M'.

Baroness Jay of
Paddington

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lord King', with a stylized, elongated 'K'.

Lord King of
Bridgwater

Executive Summary

There are no easy options left in Iraq, only painful ones.

The UK has a legal and moral responsibility to Iraq. Under Resolution 1483 and subsequent UN resolutions, the British hold shared responsibility in international law for what happened during and after the invasion of Iraq.

Whilst much has been achieved by the coalition in ending the regime of a brutal dictator and the holding of elections, it is now clear that the initial, over ambitious vision of the coalition can no longer be achieved in Iraq. The UK government needs, therefore to redefine its objectives. In the words of Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the former British Special Representative in Iraq, “We thought we were going to achieve something good, that has not happened. It’s actually time for change. It is time to do something about it.”

It is the view of the Commission that the UK government’s aims for Iraq should now be to:

- Preserve and underpin the territorial integrity of the Iraqi state.
- Support a strongly federal internal structure for the Iraqi state, as envisaged, but not yet implemented, under the present constitution.

- Promote the constructive engagement of Iraq's neighbours in the achievement of the above aims, and support any initiative aimed at stabilising the region.
- Prevent Iraq being a base for al Qaeda attacks within Iraq and beyond its borders.

The UK should also work with the international community actively to urgently promote a wider Middle East settlement, centred on a resolution of the Israel Palestine conflict, which provides the best context in which a long term resolution to Iraq's problems can be secured.

These aims form the necessary political framework within which all the subsequent recommendations in this report are anchored.

If there was one view that was given in evidence to the commission time and again it was that ultimately: only Iraqis can make Iraq better – but they need help.

Therefore, the task for the commission was how the UK should best discharge its responsibilities, commensurate with British interests and enable the Iraqis to better control their own destiny.

After hearing testimony from a wide range of witnesses: Iraqis within and outside Iraq; British diplomats and politicians; humanitarian and international organisations; and others the Commission has put forward the following recommendations:

- The UK should promote an urgent international political effort, under UN Security Council auspices

and involving Iraq's neighbours, to provide international treaty protection for Iraq's territorial integrity and provide support for the building up of a strongly federal internal structure for the Iraqi state based on the current constitution. In parallel a high level new UN envoy should be appointed to facilitate internal political reconciliation.

- The UK should refocus its military activity, progressively ceasing offensive military operations and bringing to completion its programme of training and building the capacity of the Iraqi security forces. As Iraqi forces complete their training, and are demonstrably capable, they will assume responsibility for security. This handover should not be dependent on the prevailing security situation.
- The UK should, with the International Compact with Iraq, develop an economic roadmap for Iraq, with a strong emphasis on the liberalisation of the Iraqi economy and the creation of small and medium sized enterprises so that as the security situation improves on the ground, the economic benefits of peace can take root as soon as possible.
- The UK should give full support to the UNHCR to develop and implement a strategy that addresses the humanitarian and security consequences of the two million refugees from Iraq, the one million refugees expected over the next year, and the two million Iraqis displaced within Iraq. These people represent an

emerging humanitarian tragedy and a longer term strategic security risk for the entire region.

The Commission recognises that these recommendations are in some cases at variance with positions hitherto taken by the US Administration. Nonetheless, we believe that the British Government should make clear both privately to the US and publicly that it believes that this course of action both reflects British and wider interests and is the most likely to reduce the violence and offer Iraqis a more stable future.

The Situation in Iraq

1. The Security Situation

The security situation in Iraq remains grave and has been for some time. Establishing security is a necessary prerequisite for improving the lives of Iraqis and reconstructing the economy. There is currently not one conflict, or one insurgency in Iraq, but several conflicts and insurgencies between different communities and organisationsⁱ. The Iraqi government is not able to exert authority evenly or effectively over the whole country.

Sources of Insecurity

Attempts to categorise the insurgency are difficult as the situation on the ground is complex and constantly changing. The groups exist in spheres of shared objectives and overlapping motivations – political, religious, local and criminal – which defy structured classification. “Even today, many ordinary people do not think in terms of civil war. What they see is not neighbour against neighbour, but armed thugs on all sides brutalising civilians,” as one Iraqi submitted to the Commissionⁱⁱ.

Toby Dodge’s submission to the Commission identifies three broad sets of groups deploying violence for their own endsⁱⁱⁱ. The first are the ‘industrial-strength’ criminal gangs that terrorise what is left of Iraq’s middle class, although there is clear overlap between simple criminality and politically

motivated violence, especially where kidnapping is concerned. The persistent reports that crime is as big a problem for the citizens of Basra as Baghdad indicates that the state's inability to impose and guarantee order is a general problem across large swathes of southern and central Iraq. Crime is driven by profit and primarily non-communal. Going well beyond the government's inability to increase electrical output or stimulate the job market, the continued freedom of criminal gangs to operate is a primary concern for Iraqis.

The second type of organisation comprises the myriad groups making up the Iraqi insurgency. The insurgency was born in a reactive and highly localised fashion creating a number of small fighting groups built around personal ties of trust, cemented by family, locality or many years of friendship. Disparate groups, formed to rid the country of coalition forces, are estimated to comprise between 50 and 74 separate autonomous units, with 20,000–50,000 fighters in their ranks^{iv}. Insurgent activity has been most active in the Sunni dominated provinces of Iraq, primarily in the areas to the North West of Baghdad and between the cities of Al Qaim on the Syrian border to Tikrit, Ramadi, Samarra and Fallujah. As well as their presence in Anbar province, recent intelligence suggests insurgents and Al Qaeda have become more prominent in Diyala province and towns to the South of Baghdad such as Iskandariya, Mahmudiya, Latifiya and Yusufiya.

Over the past three years they have been innovative in the technology they deploy and the tactics they use. These tactics include, but are not limited to, suicide bombings, improvised

explosive devices, kidnapping, rudimentary sniper techniques, mortar attacks, rocket attacks and murder.

Some of the insurgent groups are drawn from the former regime, the Ba'ath Party, the paramilitary Fedayeen and the Republican Guard. However, some are anti-Saddam nationalist groups with no desire to see Saddam restored but resentful of US and Western presence; others are Islamist groups, some members of which have been trained overseas or are foreign nationals. Since 2005, the insurgency has to some degree consolidated around four or five main groups: the Islamic Army in Iraq, the Partisans of the Sunna Army, the Mujahadeen's Army, Muhammad's Army and Islamic Resistance Movement in Iraq. As the names suggest, political violence has been increasingly justified in religious terms.

Over the last year these main insurgent groups have found ideological coherence by fusing a powerful appeal to Iraqi nationalism with an austere and extreme form of Islam known as Salafism. The attraction of the Salafist doctrine for the insurgents is that it allows a distinction to be drawn between those involved in the jihad or struggle (the true believers), and those who are not. This approach has also lent itself to the increased use of sectarian violence.

Foreign fighters, although small in number, have played a disproportionately large role in the insurgency's ideological coherence. Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) aims to overthrow the Iraqi government and establish an Islamic state in Iraq. AQI has pledged its loyalty to Osama Bin Laden. AQI was one of six insurgent organisations to unify under the Mujahadeen Shura Council. As of then, all attacks perpetrated by al Qaeda in Iraq

are claimed in the name of the Council. It is believed that Egyptian-born Abu Ayyub al-Masri is the current leader of al Qaeda in Iraq^v.

AQI has driven the rising influence of Salafist doctrine and claimed responsibility or been blamed for the majority of the violence that has increased sectarian tensions in the country. This dynamic reached its peak with the destruction of the al-Askariyya mosque in Samarra, one of Shia Islam's most important shrines, and an act calculated to outrage Shia opinion. The mosque was attacked again in June 2007.

However, a US National Intelligence Estimate in January 2007 judged that foreign fighters are not likely to be a "major driver of violence."^{vi} Most estimates number them in the hundreds, rather than the thousands. Indeed, the brunt of Iraqi violence appears to be driven by internal factors. Attacks on AQI by Sunni groups have, it is claimed, demonstrated the waning support for al Qaeda in Iraq.

The violence that erupted following the Samarra bombing saw the insurgency combine with a third type of organisation - the plethora of independent militias - to drive violence forward. These militias are estimated to number between 60,000–102,000 fighters and they have overtly organised and legitimised themselves by reference to sectarian ideology.

The militias themselves can be divided into three broad groups, depending on their organisational coherence and relationship to national politics. The first and most disciplined consists of the Kurdish militias, or peshmerga, of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

(PUK). These have been formally incorporated into the legitimate Iraqi security forces^{vii}. The second includes those created in exile and brought back to Iraq in the wake of Saddam's fall. The most powerful of these is the Badr Brigade, the military arm of Supreme Islamic Council of Iraq (SICI), estimated at 15,000 fighters. The Badr Brigade, along with SICI itself, was set up as a foreign-policy vehicle for the Iranian government. Indeed, the Badr Brigade was trained and officered by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, at least until its return to Iraq. It remains comparatively disciplined and responsive to its senior commanders. The Badr Brigade has colonised large swathes of the security forces, notably the police and paramilitary units associated with the Ministry of Interior.

The third group comprises militias created in Iraq since regime change. They vary in size, organisation and discipline, from a few thugs with guns controlling a street or a neighbourhood to militias capable of running whole towns. The largest and most coherent is the 50,000-strong Jaish al-Mahdi, set up by Moqtada al-Sadr. The core of the Mahdi Army is organised around the offices of al-Sadr's religious charity, the Martyr al-Sadr. Each office is run by a cleric appointed by Sadr's headquarters in Najaf, with full-time fighters paid as much as \$300 a week. However, the speed with which the militia was built after regime change and the two prolonged conflicts with the US military have taken a toll on its organisational coherence. Mahdi Army commanders have become more financially independent of Najaf through hostage-taking, ransom and the smuggling of antiquities and petroleum. In spite of al-Sadr's repeated calls for calm, the Mahdi Army was

blamed for the majority of violence in and around Baghdad following the first al-Askariyya bombing.

The casualties of the violence in Iraq are notoriously difficult to quantify. Iraq Body Count produce a tally of violent civilian deaths based on media reports. In their submission to the Commission they suggest that across Iraq there have been, on average, between 61 and 84 civilian deaths a day in 2007. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that the average number killed each day is around 100^{viii}. The picture varies considerably across the country with the vast majority occurring in central Iraq and Baghdad. In the Kurdish region civilian casualties are rare, although there were 2 truck bombs in Arbil province in May. Similarly, in the three southern provinces formerly under British control incidents are less frequent, although in Basrah province civilian casualties have been estimated to be between 7 and 34 a month so far in 2007^{ix}.

The 'Surge'

The Baghdad Security Plan or 'surge' began in mid-February 2007 and it is believed it will end by April 2008. Troop deployments reached their peak during our hearings in June with the number of US soldiers in Iraq topping 160,000. General David Petraeus, commander of Multi National Forces in Iraq and the man responsible for implementing the plan, has repeatedly stated that success will need to be measured in the political not the military arena. Overall victory will be judged on whether the surge can create the space in which Iraq's

divided communities can reach a sustainable political settlement.^x

The new counter-insurgency tactics of ‘clear and hold and build’ championed by General Petraeus mark a sharp change from previous US military practice in Iraq. The US Army has established ‘gated communities’ with concrete barriers to prevent the movement of death squads and car bombs. US forces have overseen the clearing of armed groups from each area, the establishment of identity card systems and an increase in the number of ‘neighbourhood garrisons’ for US and Iraqi troops to operate from as a more permanent coalition presence in such areas.

It is too early to assess its success or failure definitively. There have been successes claimed by the US military. By April the rate of sectarian murders had fallen considerably and a limited number of displaced Sunnis had returned to West Baghdad^{xi}. Sunni tribal leaders in Anbar province, led by Sheikh Abdul Sattar, have also taken up arms against al Qaeda fighters. However, US military casualties have increased sharply since May and there is evidence that insurgent activities may have been merely displaced to areas outside Baghdad^{xii}. A report to the US Congress in mid July is expected to state that the Iraqi government has failed to meet any of the political and economic benchmarks it has been set^{xiii}.

The UK Military Presence

UK forces in Iraq are part of the United States led Multi-National Force (MNF) and present at the formal request of the

Iraqi government. It has a mandate from the UN until the end of 2007 as set out in Security Council Resolution 1723. The Iraqi parliament has recently passed a binding resolution to ensure that it will be consulted on any future extension of the troops' mandate.

The UK is the lead nation within the MNF for the South Eastern area of Iraq, comprising four provinces: Maysan, Dhi Qar, Al Muthanna and Al Basrah which includes Basra, Iraq's second largest city. Three of the four provinces in the UK lead area have been handed over to Iraqi control: Muthanna, Dhi Qar, and most recently Maysan in April 2007.

The security situation in the South East is very different from Baghdad, where 80-90% of the violence in Iraq takes place. 69% of all Iraqis in the South describe the security situation as good or very good compared with 47% for the country as a whole, according to a BBC poll published in March 2007^{xiv}. The Prime Minister stated to Parliament in February this year that in South East Iraq "there is no Sunni insurgency. There is no al Qaeda base. There is little Shia on Sunni violence. The bulk of the attacks are on the MNF."^{xv}

There is however intra-community conflict between the Badr Brigade and Mahdi Army who both claim to represent the same constituency of urban Iraqi Shiites. Their internecine struggle erupted in Basra in April-May 2006, resulting in the deaths of 174 Iraqis, and then again in Amarah in October. Basra is the centre of Iraq's oil export trade and the conflict was primarily concerned with the division of resources. The fighting in Amarah in October was about the dominance of the town once British forces had left. In each case, none of the

groups involved were strong enough to win outright and so the conflict simmers on, erupting periodically, triggered by rival machinations and Iranian interference^{xvi}.

The number of British military personnel currently deployed in Iraq is 5,500 having been reduced from 7,100 at the beginning of 2007. This has declined from a peak of 40,000 during the initial invasion. It is the government's policy to reduce this number to 5,000 by the summer, the bulk of which will be located at Basra Air Station in a supporting role.

As at 8 July 2007, a total of 159 British Armed Forces personnel or Ministry of Defence civilians have died serving in Iraq since the start of the campaign. Attacks on UK-led, multinational forces have risen this year: in the six months until April 2007 there were more than 1,300 attacks, compared with just over 500 in the previous six months^{xvii}.

In March 2007, British forces completed operation 'Sinbad' which was designed to reach a stage where Basra can be secured by the Iraqis themselves. According to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as a result "92% of police stations within Basra city are now assessed at a satisfactory standard (up from 9% in September), whilst in the wider province of Basrah, nearly 90% of stations are now up to standard (up from 38% in September)."^{xviii} Operation Sinbad also completed around 550 projects to improve the local environment, infrastructure and agricultural development. The British forces also sit on and maintain the major supply route from Kuwait to Baghdad.

According to International Crisis Group, Operation Sinbad was a qualified success; "Criminality, political assassinations and

sectarian killings, all of which were rampant in 2006 receded somewhat and - certainly compared to elsewhere in the country - a relative calm prevailed.” However, they suggest these gains were temporary and by April 2007 “renewed political tensions once more threatened to destabilise the city with relentless attacks against British Forces.”

The British Forces that remain in Iraq have the following tasks:

- Training the Iraqi forces
- Securing the Iraq/Iran border
- Securing supply routes
- Conducting operations against extremist groups and support the Iraq Army when called upon.

In addition to leading the MNF (SE), UK forces also operate in other areas of Iraq. According to General Petraeus in an interview to the Times, the British forces provide “at least two other huge contributions. One is the diplomatic contribution. It is a smaller contingent than the US but it is a very important diplomatic mission thanks to the sheer quality of the people who have been here.”^{xix}

The UK military also support the counter-insurgency campaign. Lt General Graeme Lamb, the commander of British forces in Iraq, and the second in command of the MNF is the head of the ‘Force Strategic Engagement Cell’, which is responsible for holding private talks with insurgent groups, some of whom are said to be now working in co-operation with coalition forces, especially in Anbar province. Some of these

groups are reported to be supported militarily by the coalition^{xx}.

The UK government's future intentions are that: "Over time and depending naturally on progress and the capability of the ISF, we will be able to draw down further, possibly to below 5,000 once the Basra Palace site has been transferred to the Iraqis in late summer. We hope that (Basra) ... can be transferred to full Iraqi control in the second half of the year. The UK military presence will continue into 2008, for as long as we are wanted and have a job to do. Increasingly our role will be support and training, and our numbers will be able to reduce accordingly."^{xxi}

Iraqi Security Forces

The coalition have been training and equipping Iraq's own security forces. As of June 2007 the operational Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) numbered 353,100, consisting of 158,900 in the Army and 194,200 police and police commandos^{xxii}. As mentioned above, reports persist that some police forces, for example those of the Ministry of Interior, have been infiltrated by sectarian interests.

Transition from MNF to ISF control has occurred in seven provinces to date and since January 2007 the Iraqi Ground Force Command has assumed command of the Iraqi Army.

In the South, a Divisional Training Centre for the Iraqi Army is already up and running and a joint Leadership Academy for Iraqi soldiers, police and border guards is planned. The UK

also trains police and soldiers in the UK so that they can return to Iraq and train others.

The 10th Division of the Iraqi Army took part in Operation Sinbad and are now planning and leading security operations in Basrah with minimal or no coalition support. Two 10th Division battalions have also been deployed in Baghdad where they arrived “in full strength and performed well.”^{xxiii}

Sufficient numbers of police stations within Basra are now assessed as at a satisfactory standard by the MoD to enable the handover of Basrah province later this year.

2. Politics in Post-Saddam Iraq

Iraq is a constitutional democracy with a federal system. A government of National Unity was formed in May 2006 with Jalal Talabani as President and Nouri al-Maliki as Prime Minister. Iraq has a constitution ratified by a referendum, which is currently undergoing a process of review.

The Iraqi Assembly is composed of a large number of parties who have coalesced into broad groupings for electoral purposes largely along sectarian lines. The main groups represented are:

The Shia

The United Iraqi Alliance (UIA), the largest list in the assembly, is a coalition of Shia parties. They secured over five million votes, a 41% share and 128 seats at the last set of elections. The two most important groups within the alliance are the Islamic Al-Da'wa Party and Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). The Al-Da'wa party is led by current Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. SCIRI recently changed its name to the Supreme Islamic Council of Iraq which according to some analysts was an attempt to distance the party from Iran by dropping the word "revolution"^{xxiv}.

The UIA also includes supporters of Moqtada al-Sadr. In April of this year he pulled his six cabinet ministers out of the government for an indefinite period, although his parliamentary bloc has not left the governing coalition.

The Grand Ayatollah Sistani is the most widely respected religious figure in Iraq, and although he is not involved in the day-to-day politics of the country he has endorsed and encouraged a unified Shia coalition and wields considerable influence outside government.

Although they were all elected on the same list, there is considerable competition and conflict within the alliance for power. Shia politicians have been criticised internationally for their reluctance to share power with the Sunnis and for their unwillingness to disarm the Shiite militias.

The Sunnis

The Sunni population did not participate in the first election in significant numbers and were therefore marginalised in the drawing up of the constitution. Following assurances that the constitution would be subject to review there was a much higher turnout amongst Sunnis in the most recent poll. The coalition gaining the majority of the Sunni vote was the Accord Front, with 16% of the vote and 44 seats. A more radical grouping, the Iraqi Dialogue Front, took 4% and 11 seats.

The main party in the Accord Front is Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi's Iraqi Islamic Party. The Front has stressed the importance of ending the occupation, boosting Iraq's national identity and setting up a committee to review the new constitution. They oppose the break-up of Iraq as Sunnis would be left with the resource poor central region and want to repeal laws relating to de-Ba'athification and the dissolution of Iraq's armed forces.

The links between Sunni insurgents and political parties is unclear. Sunni politicians do not enjoy the same level of support from their communities as their Shia counterparts and their influence in government is not strong.

The Kurds

The Kurdish Alliance, a union of the KDP and PUK along with several other smaller Kurdish parties, holds 53 seats in the Assembly. They have achieved a prominent role within the government. Jalal Talabani, leader of the PUK, currently holds the presidency of Iraq, whilst Massoud Barzani is the President of the highly autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq and leader of the KDP.

Kurdish leaders prefer to live in a democratic federal Iraq because an independent Kurdistan would be surrounded by hostile neighbours. Bayan Rahman, the Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the UK told the Commission, “Despite the suffering inflicted on the people of Kurdistan by Saddam and various previous regimes, we remain committed to remaining part of Iraq - a federal, democratic and pluralistic Iraq.”

The Kurdish political leaders are highly respected internationally and due to the relative stability of their region and their active participation in elections they are influential within the government. They want Iraq to develop as a federal state, for the referendum to be held on the future status of Kirkuk as envisaged in the constitution and for the KRG to be

able to develop new oil fields found in their region themselves, whilst being prepared to share the revenues from such fields with the central government.

Secular Parties

The Iraqi National List, a coalition of secular political parties, currently holds 25 seats in the National Assembly with both Sunni and Shia members. The leader of its main party, Iyad Allawi, of the Iraqi National Accord, came to prominence during the transition period, and was Prime Minister until the 2005 elections. Perceived as a moderate Shia, Allawi enjoyed support from the US and the UK, but his party came a distant third in the January 2005 elections, with just under 14% of the vote.

The Iraqi Government

The Iraqi Constitution was approved by 78% of voters in a referendum on 15 October 2005. However, voting was heavily polarised. The two provinces dominated by Sunni Arabs, Salahadin and Anbar, voted “no” to the constitution by 82% and 97% respectively.

A commitment to review the constitution to reflect Sunni Arab concerns enabled greater Sunni participation in the subsequent elections. The duly elected National Assembly established a Constitutional Review Committee and it agreed that amendments to the Constitution would have to be ratified by a another referendum.

The major clauses of the existing constitution include provisions to ensure a federal and democratic government, establishing Islam as the official state religion, and the basis of legal authority as well as protecting the rights and freedoms of minorities. It also establishes the structures of the Iraqi state, and the basis of regional federal arrangements. Article 117 relates to the disputed issue of oil revenues, stating that “Regions and provinces shall be allocated an equitable share of the national revenues sufficient to discharge their responsibilities and duties, but having regard to their resources, needs and the percentage of their population.”

The Iraqi government and cabinet are dominated by the political parties undermining its coherence and capacity and weakening the position of the Prime Minister. Although Nouri al-Maliki has committed himself to rooting out wrongdoing and ending sectarianism within the government, many ministries have become personal or party fiefdoms, staffed by followers and faction members and corruption is endemic.

The government is not yet the ultimate political authority over a recognised territory. Furthermore, the Iraqi government does not have, to use Weber’s definition, a ‘monopoly on the use of force’. It is unable to effectively protect its citizens from attacks by insurgent groups and foreign fighters. The lack of both power and legitimacy of the Iraqi state has led to overt challenges to its authority, the decline of national forms of identity and the corresponding rise of sectarian and communal forms of identification.

In addition, there are a number of other sources of political power outside of the state – for example, Moqtada Al Sadr’s

Mahdi army, which is responsible for both militia activity and welfare services, and Ayatollah Al Sistani, who despite not having an official government or elected role, remains one of the most powerful political figures in Iraq.

3. Economy

“Iraq is an oil rich country, it has a potential income of hundreds of millions of dollars a day, it’s a largely urbanised country, it ought to be in the perfect position for a rapid reconstruction.” Simon Maxwell, Director of the Overseas Development Institute told the Commission^{xxv}

The Iraqi economy relies heavily on the oil industry. Presently, oil production and sales are responsible for 70% of GDP and more than 95% of government revenues. Iraq holds the fourth largest proven oil reserves in the world (115 billion barrels; 10% of global reserves). However its potential reserves are unknown and Iraq is widely believed to have the world's second largest reserves of oil after Saudi Arabia. Its high dependency on oil makes the economy vulnerable to fluctuations in the oil price and also to sabotage attacks on the oil infrastructure. Current estimates are that oil production is consistently above 2.0 million barrels per day (mbpd), and that oil exports have been hovering above 1.5 mbpd, still below pre-war levels.

The twelve-month rate of inflation remained relatively stable (though high) at roughly 31.6% through 2004 and 2005. In 2006, however, inflation began to rise quite rapidly, with twelve-month inflation currently estimated at 77%. This swift rise in the rate of inflation is largely attributable to the ongoing insurgency, which has caused shortages of certain goods (especially petroleum) and slowed the growth of the non-oil sector. The Central Bank of Iraq (CBI) has attempted to combat the rising rate of inflation by raising interest rates in July to 12%. Unemployment stands at between 25–40%.

Despite its abundant land and water resources, Iraq is a net food importer. Under the UN Oil-For-Food program, Iraq imported large quantities of grains, meat, poultry, and dairy products. A Ba'ath regime policy to destroy the “Marsh Arab” culture by draining the southern marshes and introducing irrigated farming to this region destroyed a natural food-producing area, while concentration of salts and minerals in the soil due to the draining left the land unsuitable for agriculture.

According to Oxfam and the World Food Programme up to 4 million Iraqis are “food insecure”^{xxvi} and agriculture in Central and Western Iraqi is significantly disrupted by the insecurity and violence. Agriculture in the Kurdish region has increased significantly in recent years and Marsh Arabs have returned to some areas in the South which have been rehabilitated.

Iraqi Airways has restarted commercial flights after 14 years of being grounded. Baghdad International Airport, Basra Airport, Arbil Airport and Mosul Airport have begun commercial flights. There has been a significant increase in telephone and internet subscribers and a new mobile phone network with over 10m subscribers.

The ability for international companies to do business in Iraq varies across the country. The Kurdistan Regional Government has received trade delegations from some European countries and signed significant contracts with foreign companies. In the South, Iran and Iranian businesses are particularly active and according to one witness from an European oil company operating in the South, he considered it necessary to talk to both Baghdad and Tehran before investing in projects. In Baghdad and the central provinces the security situation makes

inward investment extremely difficult and even small local enterprises find it difficult to stay open.

The Hydrocarbon Law

Negotiations over the Hydrocarbon Law have been highly politicised and protracted. Approval of the Hydrocarbon Law by early this year was one of the key milestones proposed by the ISG and has not been met.

For the Sunni Arab negotiators the oil resources of Iraq are for the benefit of all Iraqis and, as such, should be administered by the Ministry of Oil in Baghdad, with the revenue also distributed centrally. In this model, there is no room for the involvement of regional governments such as the KRG, or a Basra-centred entity.

The Kurdish position follows quite closely the stipulations outlined in the Constitution of Iraq. Central government is to maintain responsibility for administering the resources already established (including the Kirkuk and Basra fields), and also for distributing revenue across the state. However, according to the Kurdish interpretation of the constitution, regional governments are responsible for the management and administering of 'new' fields within their territory, and for then undertaking the distribution of revenue within the region and, by agreement, to the Iraqi government.

However, the details of how this will work have not been agreed and Sunni negotiators remain adamant that the distribution of oil revenues is one area of the Constitution that

has to be renegotiated in order to ensure their cooperation in the National Assembly. Emphasising their strength, the Kurds have proceeded to negotiate exploration contracts with international oil companies. Several have already been signed, with small, risk-taking companies, much to the consternation of Baghdad.

A draft Hydrocarbon law has been approved by the cabinet but is yet to go before the Iraqi Assembly, where it faces criticism from all sides.

The proposed Hydrocarbon law has also been criticised by some international NGOs for; having too much involvement by UK and US governments and multinational oil companies; for putting too much control over Iraq's oil wealth in private hands rather than being state owned and because, with foreign forces stationed in the country, the timing is not right to enter into long term contracts about the nations natural resources.

International Economic Assistance

Foreign assistance has been an integral component of Iraq's reconstruction efforts. At a Donors Conference in Madrid in October 2003, more than \$32 billion was pledged to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq. Out of that conference, the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank launched the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) to administer and disburse about \$1.4 billion of those funds. The rest of the assistance is being disbursed bilaterally.

At the Madrid Donors' Conference the UK Government announced a total pledge of £544m towards the reconstruction effort in Iraq up to March 2006. The Chancellor announced an additional allocation of £100m bringing the total UK commitment to £644mn.

The Government of Iraq has also made an agreement with the Paris Club to reduce some of its debt service obligations. This three-stage agreement will allow for the reduction of over \$34 billion in Iraqi debt. Also, in December 2005, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to extend a stand-by agreement (SBA) to the Government of Iraq in the amount of SDR 475.4 million (about US\$685m).

In July 2006, the Government of Iraq and the UN launched the International Compact with Iraq, a five-year joint initiative that seeks to build a framework for Iraq's economic transformation and integration into the regional and global economy. The Compact operates under the idea that Iraqi reform efforts must be underpinned by international support in order to produce meaningful changes in the Iraqi economy and in the lives of ordinary Iraqis. As Iraq implements tough reforms that will change its political economy, the international community will step forward to help through debt reduction, technical assistance, new investment, and project support, among other things.

Private Security Companies

Post-invasion Iraq has seen a rapid growth in the use of Private Security Companies (PSCs) with British companies among the

most prominent. Estimates vary between 20,000 and 40,000 private security employees in Iraq carrying out a variety of duties, from close protection work to “static protection” of premises such as embassies, and escorting supply convoys. On either estimate, PSCs collectively constitute the second largest armed force in Iraq after the US.

The vast majority of PSC employees are Iraqis, with around 5,000 “First World” nationals - Britons, Americans and Commonwealth citizens - and about twice that number of “third country” nationals. Some are Gurkhas and Fijians trained in the British Army, but an increasing proportion comes from countries which were or are conflict zones, such as Colombia or Serbia^{xxvii}.

In Iraq, Private Security Companies are regulated by a memo drawn up by the Coalition Provisional Authority which is still legally binding. They include “binding rules on the use of force” and guidelines which say guns and mortars must only be fired using “aimed shots”. The rules allow employees to “use deadly force” in self-defence and in defending people they are hired to protect. They are also given the right to “stop, detain, search, and disarm civilian persons” if the contract says they should. They must co-operate with coalition and Iraqi security forces but not join them in combat operations, unless it is to protect their clients. But the document adds: “Nothing in these rules limits your inherent right to take action necessary to defend yourself.”^{xxviii}

PSCs are not subject to any form of regulation in the UK. In 2002 the British Government published a Green Paper, *Private Military Companies: Options for Regulation* that outlined the

full range of possible approaches. However this has not been followed up by legislation. Since 2003 the UK government itself has been using PSCs to sustain its reconstruction efforts and protect UK government personnel in Iraq.

The British Association of Private Security Companies, a trade association, which gave evidence to the commission, recognises that “the sphere where most concerns regarding the activities of private security and military companies ... involves the provision of full military employment and procurement. This area of activities is extremely difficult to monitor and proves a likely field of criminal and unlawful behaviour. Moreover, it is virtually inviting accusations of war-profiteering and unethical behaviour in that it is supposedly capitalises on human suffering. This point is stressed a great deal in the academic literature on private security as well as (in) more journalistic accounts.”

Concerns were made from some NGO witnesses about the use of PSCs and all parties, including witnesses from PSCs recognised the need for greater regulation and accountability.

4. Humanitarian Assistance

The scale of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq is vast. The UN estimates around 100 people are killed every day. Two out of five adults are traumatised. One in three is in need of humanitarian assistance. One in six Iraqis has been displaced. Up to 50% of the working population is unemployed. 54% live on less than a dollar a day. Many schools have closed, and thousands of doctors, teachers and other professionals have been murdered or have fled the country^{xxix}.

The Department for International Development (DfID) has disbursed over £367m towards strengthening public administration, providing basic infrastructure and to improving international aid effectiveness. This includes a £70m contribution to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, divided between £40m to the World Bank Trust Fund, and £30m to the United Nations Trust Fund.

DfID currently provides between 17% and 19% of European Community funding for Iraq. The European Community has committed over €500m for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Iraq and more than €600m for reconstruction assistance in 2004/06. DfID staff in Baghdad and Basra are working with the Iraqi authorities, with the UN, World Bank and other donors.

The health situation was tenuous before the invasion of 2003 following eight years of war with Iran, the first Gulf War and more than twelve years of UN sanctions. Considerable work has taken place across Iraq to improve the quantity, quality and reliability of medical supplies. Routine vaccination restarted in

mid-2003 and continues to be carried out effectively. There has been a decline in the prevalence of polio, measles, mumps, rubella, leishmaniasis, and malaria. UNICEF and WHO have achieved a 90% vaccination rate for MMR amongst under-fives^{xxx}. Nevertheless violence, corruption, poor infrastructure and the lack of qualified professionals means that health provision in large parts of Iraq remains poor and supply chains for the provisions of medical supplies are sporadic and dysfunctional.

Problems in generating adequate electricity supplies persist. Although over \$3.5bn has been spent on electricity by the international community this has been largely offset by increased sabotage. Many Iraqis now rely on small private generators operating at an individual or street level. Access to safe water is now better than pre-conflict, and sewage and wastewater treatment plants are now operating again, but access is still inadequate.

Despite the large sums of international money involved, large scale reconstruction projects have been hampered, not only by the insurgency, but also by corruption and poor construction and maintenance. The US Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), who is responsible for oversight of the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF), has been highly critical of the long term success of many projects. Blaming ongoing unrest and spiralling corruption he reported that most were falling apart within as little as six months.

From 2004, many international NGOs have been unable to operate inside Iraq due to the security situation. While some

international NGOs, such as the Red Cross work with partner organisations on the ground, many international staff feel unable to travel to Iraq, and have relocated their Iraq operations to elsewhere in the region, such as Jordan. The United Nations Assistance and Monitoring Office (UNAMD), for example, is currently located in Amman.

Some NGOs and humanitarian agencies have said that they are deliberately targeted by insurgents in Iraq. Iraqi teachers, doctors and other professionals have also been targeted resulting in a severe shortage of qualified personnel on the ground. The distinction between military and non-military humanitarian actors is not recognised. In evidence to the Commission, some NGOs have ascribed this problem to the role that coalition forces have played in reconstruction, blurring the lines between military and development actors in the eyes of some Iraqis.

Women and children, as is always the case in conflict zones, are especially vulnerable. Women have been kidnapped for ransom, sexual abuse or sale into prostitution, and those with a public profile have been threatened and targeted for assassination^{xxxix}. Concerns have been expressed in submission to the commission about the rise in repressive attitudes, honour killings^{xxxix} and Sharia law in parts of Iraq. According to UNICEF, conditions for displaced children and the communities hosting them can be grave. The professional brain-drain from Iraq leaves many schoolchildren without access to education and basic health care.

Finally, the scale of the refugee problem continues to grow. The number of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is over four million, representing the biggest urban refugee caseload the UNHCR has ever dealt with^{xxxiii}. An estimated two million Iraqis have fled the country, with up to one million refugees in Syria and 750,000 in Jordan. There are also estimated to be up to two million Internally Displaced Persons within Iraq^{xxxiv}.

While Jordan has all but closed its border, Syria continues to accept new arrivals from Iraq. Refugees suffer from poor shelter, poor sanitation and difficulty accessing food. Many do not have official documents, which are necessary to obtain rations. Such poverty and isolation can provide a long-term breeding ground for terrorism. The Iraqi government points out that by September, Iraqi schools will return from holidays, and displaced children will miss valuable education^{xxxv}. Return is not unimaginable - between 2003 and 2005, 325,000 refugees returned to Iraq. Between 2005 and 2006, however, returns virtually stopped^{xxxvi}.

5. Iraq's Neighbours

The world's attention has increasingly looked to Iraq's neighbours to see what role they might play in easing the conflict. While Iran, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia all have their own individual interests, they all have a strong interest in Iraq's territorial integrity and in ensuring that groups which threaten Iraq, do not also threaten the stability of their own governments and the wider region. Unlike the US, the UK has diplomatic relations with all of Iraq's neighbours.

The ISG report urged the US administration to open a dialogue with all Iraq's neighbours, including Iran and Syria. A March 10th conference in Baghdad brought regional powers, including Syria and Iran, together with American, British and Western diplomats. It was the most significant diplomatic gathering in Iraq since 1990 and the first US-Iranian encounter since November 2004.

The UN sponsored International Compact with Iraq was agreed at the Sharm el-Sheikh conference in Egypt in May this year. The conference involved not only the UK, US and Iraq but also all Iraq's neighbouring states, the Arab League, the G8 and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

Iran

Predominantly Shi'ite Iran emerges from the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's fall with considerable regional power and influence. Iraq's major Shia political parties have historical and ongoing ties to Iran. Iraq's elected leaders make visits to

Tehran and negotiate on substantive issues, including border security and joint energy projects. Iranian businessmen are investing in Iraq's overwhelmingly Shiite southern regions, and Iran's intelligence operatives are deeply embedded throughout Iraq's nascent security forces and within the Shiite militias that have tremendous street power in the South, especially in the city of Basra^{xxxvii}. Iraq is the centrepiece of Iran's regional strategy, as it provides a source of leverage over US and UK policies. Testifying to the Commission, Dr Ali Ansari used the term 'near abroad' to characterise the way he believed Iran saw Iraq.

Iran's internal politics is complex, factional and diverse and the Commission received conflicting evidence as to its intentions and interests. Iran clearly faces a number of dilemmas with its Iraq policy that cannot, in the last resort, be decoupled from the broader challenges it faces in the region, especially its relations with the United States.

Iran has reason to fear chaos in Iraq. The Iranian provinces, such as Khuzestan, which border Iraq have suffered from terrorist attacks against Iranian security forces. These are predominantly Arab areas, rich in mineral resources, with local hostility to the government in Tehran. No Iranian government wants to see the break-up of Iraq, because of implications for Iran's Kurdish and other ethnic populations. However, Tehran also has reason to worry about an eventually successful US policy that leads to the establishment of a secular, democratic state. In the short run, Iran's primary concern is that the nuclear standoff with the United States and Europe could lead to further deterioration with the United States that at some

point could lead to the use of force. Iran has US forces stationed to its West and its East.

Iran has pursued a number of policies simultaneously in Iraq. It has forged links and embedded itself within a range of Shia organisations, both political and militias. This has enabled it to 'hedge its bets' and ensure Tehran has influence however the security situation resolves itself. It has also allowed Iran to help ensure the US remains 'bogged down' tackling the insurgency in Iraq and reduces its capacity to threaten Iran militarily. Both the UK and US have accused Iran of arming Shia militias, especially the Mahdi army, with weapons such as RPG launchers and shaped IEDs, that have attacked American and British forces, a claim Iran denies.

As tensions have continued over Iran's role in the region, there has been the increasing use of asymmetric threats between Iran, the US and the UK. Pressure on Iran increased after the arrest of six Iranians in Arbil, in Iraqi Kurdistan, and with the deployment of a second aircraft carrier strike force and Patriot anti-missile systems in the Persian Gulf. US Defence Secretary Robert Gates said that the Iranians believed that the US was mired down in Iraq and that this meant that "they are in a position to press us in many ways". On 23 March 2007, Iran seized 15 British naval personnel from the Shatt Al-Arab waterway, holding them hostage for 13 days.

However, Iran also has a strategic interest in a stable neighbour. It would like to see a "secure, stable, democratic, federal Iraq in control of its own security, at peace with its neighbours"^{xxxviii}. To this end Tehran has supported the Iraqi government diplomatically. Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim, the leader of SICI, Iran's

main ally in Iraq has indicated that his objective is to create a federal Iraq, and he has asked the US to support a strong counter-insurgency campaign. Iran's Foreign Minister, Mottaki has indicated that Iran may favour the creation of a federal Iraq, but primarily as a means to maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity. As pressure on President Ahmadinejad and Ayatollah Khamenei increased following the UN resolution on Iran's nuclear programme, influential voices such as former President Khatami have argued for the formation of a grand coalition in Iraq, compromising Sunni, Shia and Kurdish groups.

Relations between Iran and the US have also demonstrated some movement recently. In May, Iran's ambassador in Baghdad Hassan Kazemi-Qomi held talks with US envoy Ryan Crocker focused exclusively on Iraq's security.

Syria

Syria's alleged "blind eye" to the funnelling of insurgents and arms across its border into Iraq is a key issue dividing the two countries. However, whilst this flow of insurgents from Syria to Iraq has been given significant attention, the flow of refugees from Iraq to Syria is equally destabilising.

Insurgents crossing to Iraq from Syria generally fall into two categories: 1) pro al Qaeda jihadists transiting from the Gulf and 2) former Ba'athists and other Iraqi Sunni elements. Damascus and Baghdad have a shared interest in preventing the first category, the al Qaeda elements, from gaining momentum in Iraq and the Syrians have reportedly arrested up to 2,000 suspected jihadists^{xxxix}. However, Damascus has not

been helpful in preventing the second category from crossing into Iraq. Gulf Arabs do not require a visa to enter Syria, and they provide a source of foreign exchange to the strapped Syrian economy. To date, Syria has not undertaken serious measures to monitor foreigners arriving from the Gulf.

Last December, Syria and Iraq did sign a security cooperation agreement, but Syrian measures, primarily implemented before the agreement, remain largely limited to creating additional border posts and building a four-metre high earthen berm. For its part, the Syrian government emphasises the difficulties inherent in patrolling the long, porous border, and has asked for greater assistance in safeguarding the border. For example, it has made requests to both the United States and Britain for night vision equipment.

While the magnitude of the insurgent threat emanating from Syria is difficult to gauge, a US National Intelligence Estimate in January 2007 on Iraq judged that external actors are not likely to be a “major driver of violence.”^{xl} Indeed, the brunt of Iraqi violence appears to be driven by internal factors. Thus, even if Damascus provides full cooperation in preventing insurgent and arms traffic across its border, the overall impact on Iraq's conflict, while positive, would not significantly improve Iraq's internal stability.

Movement of refugees in the opposite direction, from Iraq to Syria, is also a major and growing concern. There are currently estimated to be more than one million Iraqi refugees in Syria triggering widespread inflation and severely straining Syria's already insufficient public services and infrastructure. The UN High Commission for Refugees is now warning that its

resources have been stretched to capacity, and that it may be forced to establish refugee camps within the borders of Iraq's neighbours, including Syria. The situation is described by Antonio Guterres^{xli}, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees as the “biggest movement of displaced people in the Middle East since the 1948 Palestinian crisis”.

Syria, although not as involved as Iran, has ties with all of Iraq's key political players – Shiite, Sunni and Kurd. In particular, Damascus has exploited its longstanding ties to key Iraqi government figures, many of whom sought refuge in Syria during Saddam's regime. For example, Iraq's Shiite Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki lived in Syria for 20 years, while Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, spent several years in Syria and even held a Syrian passport until 2004. By some estimates, 17 of the 25 top leaders of the Supreme Islamic Council of Iraq (SIC) lived in Syria. Syria's ties to key elements in Iraq's Sunni community are also well-established.

Like Iran, Syria initially favoured the “managed chaos” that characterised Iraq in the months following the US invasion because it kept US troops “pinned down” and therefore unlikely to invade Syria. Moreover, Iraqi chaos provided a powerful argument against Syrian reformers demanding democratic change. However, the dramatic escalation in sectarian violence, coupled with fears of Iraq's potential disintegration, has impelled Syria to seek greater stability in Iraq. In particular, Damascus has signalled its displeasure with Iraqi Kurdish autonomy, which has emboldened Syria's Kurdish population, estimated at 1.7 million.

For Syrian foreign policy Lebanon looms larger than Iraq. Israel and Syria are officially at war, and Israel has occupied the Golan Heights since 1967. In June Israel's Prime Minister announced his willingness to reopen talks with Syria.

With the costs of Iraq's chaos—massive refugee flows and heightened sectarianism—outweighing its short-term benefits, Syria wants to do what it can to help restore a measure of stability in Iraq by improving security and intelligence cooperation with Baghdad. It is also seeking additional international aid and support for its growing Iraqi refugee population.

Syrian policy favours the establishment of an authoritarian government in Baghdad. However, the Syrian Ambassador told the commission they favoured a “Turkish model” – a secular state built round a strong national army. Specifically, Damascus would seek a strong Iraqi government which could keep violence in check and prevent the establishment of a breakaway Iraqi Kurdistan.

Syria will be likely to continue to engage in various regional and diplomatic initiatives, in the hopes of staving off any additional refugee flows, seeking greater assistance in dealing with its current refugee population and ensuring that a stable government favourable to Damascus takes hold in Iraq^{xlii}.

Turkey

The unpredictable set of events unleashed by the invasion of Iraq has unnerved both Turkish decision makers and the

public alike. Currently Turkey's fundamental interests in Iraq are to:

- Prevent the division of Iraq along sectarian or ethnic lines that would give rise to an independent Kurdish state (with the oil-rich city of Kirkuk as its capital), thus supporting aspirations for a similar entity from Turkey's own extensive Kurdish population.
- Protect the Turkish-speaking Turkmen minority, which resides primarily in northern Iraq.
- Defeat the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the Turkish Kurdish insurgent movement, which has sought refuge in the northeast of Iraq following its defeat in 1999.
- Prevent the emergence of a potentially hostile non-democratic fundamentalist Iraqi state.

Turkish concerns reflect the deep anxiety it harbours regarding the demonstrative effect Kurdish independence or robust autonomy in Iraq would have on its own domestic Kurdish population. Turkey has found itself with limited influence in Iraq and Turks perceive that Iraqi Kurds have achieved a position of privilege as a result of their unconditional support for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and occupation of the country by coalition forces.

Turkish attitudes and foreign policy toward Iraq are complicated by the uneasy relationship between Ankara's ruling Justice and Development Party government and the traditional secularist elites, both military and civilian. The latter's suspicions of the ruling party are driven mainly by the

“concessions” made to obtain an invitation from the European Union to open accession negotiations. One of the “concessions” was to adopt a tempered policy toward Iraq^{xliii}.

Following rising violence within Turkey from the PKK, Turkey established “temporary security zones” in June of this year near its border with Iraq and shelled mainly Kurdish areas in northern Iraq. This led to official protests from Iraq and highlights the mounting tensions between the two states.

The Kurdistan Regional Government told the commission that it is not able to prevent the activities of the PKK who are based in a remote mountainous area of the region. Such an explanation is seen as insufficient by Ankara and is unlikely to reassure the Turkish public.

Nevertheless, Turkey wants to see a unified, prosperous, and democratic Iraqi state that can become a counterweight to Iran in the future.

Saudi Arabia

From Operation Desert Storm in 1990 until the overthrow of Saddam Hussein’s regime in 2003, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was the United States’ key Arab partner in confronting the problems to international stability emanating from Iraq. Over that decade and more, however, the demands associated with containing Iraq and Saddam Hussein began to place unprecedented strains on the US-Saudi relationship, and ultimately Saudi Arabia opposed the 2003 US led invasion of Iraq. The abnormal situation that bound Saudi Arabia to the

United States in having to face a common threat from Iraq has now given way to a more normal situation in which the two countries' interests and approaches toward Iraq have converged or diverged, depending on the issue concerned^{xliv}.

Riyadh's policy toward Iraq is dominated by four key objectives: maintaining domestic stability, preventing foreign interference, oil production policy, and Iraq's political evolution (especially the role of the Shia). Of these, far and away the most important to Riyadh is stability.

Saudi Arabia has not welcomed or assisted - but also did not interfere with - coalition efforts to introduce a democratic form of government into Iraq. Saudi leaders have done their best to live with Shia domination of Iraqi politics, but they do not like it, and this discomfort has erupted into public view from time to time. The Saudi public and the traditional establishment are even less circumspect in expressing their misgivings. Depending on how the kingdom's own Shia population responds to political developments North of the border, those misgivings could find expression through anti-Shiite actions within Saudi Arabia or attempts to meddle in Iraq by means of the Sunni Arab population, a population that has become increasingly attuned to its religious identity and thus, perhaps, more susceptible to Wahhabi influences.

Oil is always near the top of the Kingdom's foreign policy agenda. With demand high and production going full blast, there is no basis for contention between Saudi Arabia and Iraq over oil policy, but this is a situation that will not continue forever. It is quite likely that the Saudi interest in moderate prices and preserving market share will clash with the Iraqi

need for maximum production at high prices to fund national reconstruction.

Iraqi officials have said that private Saudi citizens are providing millions of dollars worth of funding for Sunni insurgent groups to buy weapons on the black market. However, the Saudi authorities are at pains to stress that the Kingdom has worked with all sides to reconcile Iraq's warring factions, including holding talks in Saudi Arabia with Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, whose militia is accused of killing Sunnis. Saudi Arabia has also provided valuable intelligence information to coalition forces operating inside Iraq^{xlv}.

Under King Abdullah, Saudi Arabia values its ties to Washington and has gone out of its way to demonstrate willingness to cooperate on matters, such as Iraq, that the United States considers important. But its ability to cooperate will be limited by regional and domestic pressures. Meanwhile, there will be strong tendencies in the Kingdom, particularly on religious issues, that could make Saudi-Iraqi interactions problematic.

Jordan

Jordan wants a strong, stable, moderate, and unified Iraq. Having wrestled with the dilemmas of an assertive Iraq for many years, Jordan—like Iraq's other neighbours—now faces a myriad of challenges presented by a weak Iraq. Jordanian leaders worry that Iraq is becoming a haven for terrorist groups, a fear dramatically heightened by the November 2005 suicide bombings in Amman. Jordan also has an interest in the

development of an Iraq that does not inspire radical Islamist politics in Jordan. Moreover, the Kingdom is anxious about growing Iranian involvement in Iraqi politics, and - more broadly - increasing Iranian and Shiite influence in the region^{xlvi}.

Despite periodic crises of confidence and lingering Iraqi resentment over Jordan's close ties with Saddam Hussein, the two countries have managed to forge deep ties; in fact, Jordan has taken the lead among Arab states. In the face of repeated attacks and threats, Jordan has maintained a strong diplomatic presence in Baghdad. The kingdom has also played a positive, if modest, role in stabilisation and reconstruction efforts.

The economic impact of the Iraq crisis in Jordan has been mixed. Jordan has benefited greatly from serving as a “gateway” to Iraq for governments, aid workers, contractors, and businesspeople; its real estate and banking sectors are booming, and it stands to reap more benefits from increased trade and transport should the situation in Iraq improve. However, with the fall of Saddam Hussein, Jordan lost the sizeable oil subsidies and customary shipments it received from Iraq. One of Jordan's principal economic interests in the new Iraq is securing future energy assistance.

Unlike many of Iraq's other neighbours, Jordan can claim only modest influence over developments in Iraq. Although some Jordanians highlight cross-border tribal and family connections with Iraqi Sunni Arabs, they pale in comparison to those of Iran, Turkey, and Syria. Jordan's most significant means of influence is its hosting of a large and ever-changing Iraqi expatriate community, composed mostly, but not solely, of

Sunni Arabs. The kingdom also has notable intelligence capabilities vis-à-vis Iraq.

For Jordan, “the Palestinian Question” looms larger than Iraq. Jordan's leaders have been disappointed with what they see as inaction on the Middle East peace process. Moreover, given the turmoil in both Iraq and the Palestinian territories, Jordan must contend with the twin prospects of violence to its East and West.

Kuwait

Kuwait supported the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, which was launched from its territory. UK and other foreign forces have been partly sustained from Kuwait ever since. Kuwait's current concerns centre on economics and security. Kuwaiti firms are already gearing up to exploit trade opportunities and want to participate in developing Iraq's oil sector. The Kuwaiti government and Kuwaiti companies still claim at least \$69 billion in compensation is owed to them from Iraq's 1990 invasion and occupation, and Iraq's regular debt to Kuwait is an additional \$17 billion. But any prospective payments to Kuwait will rely on the swift and successful rebuilding of the Iraqi economy. Kuwait also remains concerned about Iraq's potential to re-emerge as a regional power and expects close American attention to the size and structure of Iraq's new military^{xlvi}.

6. The Coalition

There are 22 countries contributing to the coalition in Iraq: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Countries which had troops in or supported operations in Iraq at one point but have pulled out since are: Nicaragua (Feb. 2004); Spain (Apr. 2004); Dominican Republic (May 2004); Honduras (May 2004); Philippines (2004); Thailand (Aug. 2004); New Zealand (2004); Tonga (Dec. 2004) Portugal (Feb. 2005); The Netherlands (Mar. 2005); Hungary (Mar. 2005); Singapore (Mar. 2005); Norway (Oct. 2005); Ukraine (Dec. 2005); Japan (2006); Italy (Nov. 2006); and Slovakia (Jan 2007)^{xlvi}.

The United States

The US is the lead, and by far the largest, component of the MNF constituting 95% of all its forces compared to the UK contribution of around 3%. The US commits \$200 million a day to Iraq. Their sacrifice, both in terms of the lives of their servicemen and women and in public money, to bring security and stability to the people of Iraq has been immense. No programme for the future of Iraq in the short term can succeed without the active support and involvement of the United States.

The UK has long claimed a special relationship with the US, and the transatlantic bond has been central to UK foreign policy and British interests for many years. Maintaining the closeness of this relationship is a major part of the UK government's support for the invasion of Iraq and continued involvement in the MNF which has proved particularly contentious at home.

President George W Bush made removing Saddam Hussein a central plank of his international War On Terror and was successfully re-elected in 2004 on a platform of protecting national security and winning the war in Iraq.

The US's current strategy is based on The Baghdad Security Plan or 'surge' which began in February 2007. General David Petraeus, commander of multinational forces in Iraq has repeatedly stated that success will need to be measured in the political not the military arena. Overall victory will be judged on whether the surge can create the space in which Iraq's divided communities can reach a sustainable political settlement.^{xlix}

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates speaking in Baghdad in June reinforced the message to Iraqi leaders that the "surge" was buying them time to pursue national reconciliation and that Washington wanted to see greater efforts: "Frankly, we're disappointed with the progress so far, and hope that this most recent bombing (of the al-Askariyya mosque) by al Qaeda won't further disrupt or delay the process," he said^l.

However, public support for the war has declined as US military casualties have increased and the security situation in

Iraq has deteriorated. One of the tracking polls for Newsweek suggests that the proportion of Americans that disapproved of the President's handling on the situation in Iraq was 73% in June, up from 26% at the time of the invasion, and 62% a year ago.

The Iraq Study Group, known as the Baker/Hamilton Commission, reported in November last year and recommended an "External Approach" to solving the problems of Iraq. It argued for the US to launch a new diplomatic offensive, emphasising the need for national reconciliation between Iraq's rival groups, the setting of milestones for the Iraq government and the building up of the Iraqi security forces. Initially it was not well received in the White House, but gradually its recommendations have been appearing in American foreign policy.

Politically, Congress, newly dominated by the Democrats, is in conflict with the White House over future strategy in Iraq and on whether to set a timetable for the withdrawal of American forces. Congressional support for the President's policies in Iraq has been declining, on both side of the aisle.

Funding measures will go before Congress in July and by September political and military assessments of the surge and the overall situation in Iraq are due. A presidential election will be held next year a new President will be inaugurated in January 2009. Candidates have still to be selected, but it is clear that Iraq will be a major, if not the overriding issue in the primaries and subsequent election.

The UK

The UK has the second largest force in the coalition. Support for the initial invasion of Iraq amongst the British public has generally declined as the security situation has declined: according to YouGov from a peak of 66% supporting the US and UK invasion in 2003 down to 30% in 2007.

As part of their evidence to the commission, YouGov asked the public about future policy in Iraq.

Which of these policies do you favour most now?	
Britain should keep troops in Iraq as long as is necessary to help Iraq build a peaceful democracy	15%
Britain should set a time limit within the next 12-18 months for withdrawing all its troops from Iraq	40%
Britain should withdraw all its troops from Iraq as soon as possible, and certainly within the next six months	37%
Don't know	7%

In his last budget the Chancellor announced a further £400m for overseas military spending. The increased allocation to the government's 'Special Reserve' brings the total set aside to cover the UK's 'international obligations', including Iraq, to £7.44bn.

The Conservative Party has placed great emphasis on a full inquiry into the initial decision to go to war in Iraq, and argued for the government to take a more “robust” approach to Iran over the nuclear issue. In his evidence to the Iraq Commission, Conservative MP and former Defence and Foreign Secretary Sir Malcolm Rifkind said that: “I would be strongly against any rigid timeline deadline indicated at this stage both because it would send the wrong message to terrorists and insurgents and other enemies of British forces. That they only have to hang on to a particular date and make life as difficult as possible and we will then be gone. But also circumstances might change over the next few weeks and the next few months which would make a particular date no longer the most sensible date. So I would have maximum flexibility within a broad understanding that the objective is to continue the drawdown, and to expect to have it largely completed by the end of the year. But to expect to have it, not to be totally committed to a formal date.”^{li}

Furthermore, he stated that there is an argument even when the drawdown is largely complete that there should remain a British training presence in Iraq.

In evidence to the Commission the leader of the Liberal Democrats, Sir Menzies Campbell presented their policy: “that there should be an immediate announcement of the withdrawal of British forces from Iraq. Iraqi authorities need to be informed and logistics prepared.” Also that: “The UK should aim to achieve a series of limited withdrawals, in parallel with the United States, as and when milestones in the stabilisation and reconstruction process have been achieved, and Iraqi

forces are capable of taking on greater responsibility for security.”

The Liberal Democrats place a strong emphasis on internationalising the situation, involving the UN and a regional contact group to provide a context for national reconciliation within Iraq.

Tony Blair set out the government’s policy approach in a statement to Parliament in February: “Since the outset our plan, agreed by Iraq and the UN, has been to build up Iraqi capability in order to let them take control of their own destiny. As they would step up, we would, increasingly, step back.”

There are three elements to the current plan, he said. First, there is the Baghdad Security Initiative, drawn up by Prime Minister Maliki and currently underway; second is a massive effort to gear up the capability of the Iraqi Forces, to plug any gaps in command, logistics, training and equipment; third there is a new and far more focussed effort on reconciliation, reconstruction and development.

Incoming Prime Minister Gordon Brown made a one day fact finding mission to Iraq in June. He recognised that the war in Iraq had been a highly divisive issue at home but has yet to make a detailed statement on future government policy.

The Commission’s remit included looking at “domestic political considerations in the UK including the impact on community cohesion”. The wealth and breadth of evidence that the Commission received on the situation in Iraq and the time constraints have meant the Commission has been unable

to consider all the issues raised by the ongoing situation in Iraq for domestic cohesion. However, the war in Iraq has undoubtedly been used as a recruiting tool which has contributed towards the radicalisation of some individual Muslims in the UK. The government needs to recognise the impact on community cohesion of foreign policy decisions and in the future needs to engage more widely with all sections of the UK public in assessing the impact of foreign policy. Domestic community cohesion is an important area where lessons from Iraq need to be learnt and more work needs to be done.

7. International

The UN

In August 2003 a massive bomb attack in Baghdad killed twenty-two people, including UN envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello, and injured more than 150 others. Since then the UN has had a limited presence in Iraq, assisting in holding elections, organising the government and helping build institutions. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) coordinates a family of 16 UN agencies and programmes involved in Iraq including UNICEF, UNHCR, UNESCO and WHO. Most of these bodies operate out of Amman in Jordan. Ashraf Qazi of Pakistan is the current UN Special Representative for Iraq.

Security Council Resolution 1723 authorised and extended the presence of the MNF in Iraq until 31 December 2007.

The most recent initiative to involve the UN has been the International Compact with Iraq, run out of UN Headquarters rather than UNAMI. In charge of its preparation was Mark Malloch-Brown, the British former Deputy Secretary General, now a Foreign Office Minister of State in the Gordon Brown government. The initiative was launched in May 2007 at Sharm al-Sheikh in Egypt.

Several witnesses from NGOs recognised that the UN, through UNAMI, has a vital role to play, and could be enabled to do more, in the provision of humanitarian assistance through co-ordinating needs assessment and delivery, mobilising resources and advocating enhanced civilian protection. The Strategic

Framework for Humanitarian Action in Iraq, approved in April 2007 provides a mechanism to expand and better coordinate humanitarian assistance, which needs urgent implementation. Similarly, the UN Security Council could have a more active role in involving Iraq's neighbours and promoting regional security.

The EU

The elements of the EU's engagement with Iraq are set out in the European Commission's 2004 Communication "A framework for engagement with Iraq." This was enhanced by a further Communication in July 2006. Since 2003 the EU, through the Commission has contributed €720m to Iraq for reconstruction and will contribute a further €100m during 2007. Additionally, in the Spring of 2005, an ESDP mission (EUJUST LEX) was launched to provide rule of law training; in September 2006 the Commission opened a Delegation Office in Baghdad; and negotiations for an EU-Iraq Trade and Co-operation Agreement started in November 2006.

The original decision to invade Iraq bitterly divided European Union member states. Since then the premiers of the EU's largest nations; the UK, Germany, France, Spain and Italy have all changed, opening the possibility of greater rapprochement and leading to the possibility of a more active role for the EU in helping to solve Iraq's problems.

Recommendations

1. International Action

UK policy on Iraq must be framed within an overall political context, served by a co-ordinated diplomatic and military strategy. The situation cannot be improved by military means alone.

What is now needed is an urgent and energetic international political effort under the auspices of the UN Security Council, whose aim should be to engage the neighbours and the wider international community in securing the territorial integrity of Iraq, bolstering Iraq's internal structures, based on the present constitution paying special attention to the federal nature of the Iraqi state. This requires an intensive and well-coordinated joint effort of the United Nations with the United States, the UK and the European Union, working with a wide range of international partners.

The UK has an important role to play as the only permanent member of the UN Security Council which is also a member of the coalition, a member of the EU and has diplomatic relations with all of Iraq's neighbours. The UK has a long historical involvement and long standing relations with states in the region along with expertise gained through the peace process in Northern Ireland.

There are many reasons why a political and diplomatic initiative as set out below could fail. Since the murder of its envoy, Sergio Vieira de Mello, there has been a wariness on the

part of the UN to get deeply involved. There is also a reluctance on the part of many Iraqis to accept the impartiality of the United Nations. Nevertheless, the Commission believes only the United Nations has the established structures, expertise and international credibility to deliver this political process. There is scepticism in some quarters about whether Iran could ever be brought to play the sort of positive role required for this approach to succeed. Nonetheless, the Commission concluded that the Iranians could co-operate if they saw such an international effort as a means of regionalising the issues and ultimately leading to the complete withdrawal of American and other coalition troops from Iraq.

Finally, achieving a lasting peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians provides the best context for stability in the region and must be an urgent priority for the international community. The UK should add new momentum to The Quartet's peace efforts in the Middle East.

Recommendations

1. The UK should, in concert with the US and EU, initiate a “diplomatic offensive”^{lii} with the aim of achieving, through an international treaty, a workable stabilisation of the relations in and around Iraq. Such an initiative will need the active support of the US to be successful. The EU could have a significant role to play in brokering such an initiative, but ultimately it should be conducted under the auspices of the UN and with the backing of a Security Council Resolution.

The process has two interlocking dimensions; internal reconciliation and external regional security, both of which must proceed in parallel.

2. This external process should be endorsed by the foreign ministers participating in the International Compact with Iraq. A credible and reconfigured UN initiative should direct the international effort to stabilise the whole region and involve all of Iraq's neighbours. Under the UN, Iraq and key external players – Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, the EU, UK and the US – will need to form a contact group to manage the process. The UK should use its influence with the UN, US and EU to form such a contact group. A wider circle of countries and organisations, such as the Arab League, Gulf Co-operation Council, Organisation of the Islamic Conference, China, India and Russia will also need to be engaged.
3. All non-Iraqi participants in the negotiations should commit to;
 - securing a deal protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq,
 - exerting pressure on all Iraqi factions to participate.

All participants in the process, Iraqi and international, must commit beforehand to their opposition to al Qaeda in Iraq. There needs to be a clear international and national message that al Qaeda serves no Iraqi interest.

4. The long term political objective should be the establishment of a regional organisation consisting of Iraq and its neighbours with legal commitments to non-interference, economic cooperation and confidence building measures. The first step would be to agree an international treaty recognising the territorial integrity of Iraq. All participants would need to make it clear that none of them sought a permanent military presence in Iraq. The UK should make it clear from the outset that they do not seek permanent bases in Iraqi territory and should urge the US to do likewise.
5. At the same time and in parallel, the Prime Minister should seek the appointment of a high level new UN envoy to lead the internal part of the process. Reporting to the Secretary General and working in close partnership with the Iraqi government and the new regional organisation, this envoy would operate at a political rather than military level.

The envoy would help to facilitate political reconciliation among the main political groups in Iraq,

just as the United Nations brokered first an agreement on the timing of elections and then the Interim Government for Iraq in 2004.

Based on the existing democratic constitution, the remit of the envoy should ensure the Iraqis make rapid political progress on all the main outstanding political issues in particular:

- federal-regional relations;
 - sharing of oil revenues;
 - political inclusion (including a review of de-Ba'athification);
 - minority rights and human rights;
 - provision of humanitarian assistance;
 - amnesty for some combatants;
 - and the disarmament and reintegration of militias.
6. Such a multilateral initiative should be supported by vigorous UK diplomacy. The United Kingdom should undertake intensive bilateral diplomacy with all regional actors and interested international parties, especially with those who do not have formal diplomatic relations with the US, to support such a political process.

2. UK Military Action

Current Policy

The current government policy was restated by the outgoing Prime Minister during his last parliamentary appearance: “The numbers of UK forces in Iraq depend on the conditions in Iraq. The numbers of forces have come down from 9,000 to 7,000 to 5,500. When, in the next few weeks, we are able to complete a further phased withdrawal, they will come down even further, but they must come down as and when the security conditions allow.” However, the Commission believe that this dependence on the prevailing security conditions is ill defined and the troops should only remain as long as they have a job to do.

Their current range of tasks includes; training the Iraqi forces, securing the Iraq/Iran border, securing supply routes and conducting operations against extremist groups and supporting the Iraqi army when called upon. Thus, when the security situation allows, responsibility for Basrah Province will be handed over to the Iraqi authorities and UK troops will go into operational over-watch from the camp at Basra airport.

However, the problem with this is that the security situation is not improving in Basra and UK forces on the streets are often a target for insurgents. Dr Ali Allawi, former Iraqi Minister for Finance indicated to the Commission that international forces are not significantly suppressing the violence but that they are suppressing a capacity to be able to grow home-grown institutions that will deal with the issue. The Commission was concerned that the current policy has stalled, has no clear end point and the objectives and length of time for over-watch are

unclear. The policy also effectively cedes decision making on drawdown to the insurgents. If decisions are dependent primarily on the prevailing security situation then insurgent groups could manipulate the situation to advance, delay or disrupt withdrawal plans.

Furthermore, the US has embarked on a different course of action involving a major surge in and around Baghdad and so there is a divergence of policy within the coalition. The argument was put for increasing UK troops – our own surge to match what is happening in Baghdad. The Commission found this argument unconvincing as it would result in significant overstretch for the army, would be unlikely to achieve its goal and would probably lead to an upsurge in violence and UK military casualties.

Withdrawal Options

The case for immediate withdrawal, or announcing a timetable for withdrawal, was put forcibly by a number of witnesses, including Jonathan Steele, Senior Foreign Correspondent of the Guardian who submitted that “British troops no longer provide a necessary service in Basra and South Eastern Iraq ... They should be withdrawn immediately.” Sir Menzies Campbell, leader of the Liberal Democrats outlined his party’s policy as “a programme for phased security transfer and withdrawal of coalition troops ... beginning on 1st May, with a gradual drawdown, with a target but not a deadline, of the end of October.”

The argument for immediate or timetable based withdrawal is based on the fact that attacks in the remaining southern province under MNF control, Basrah, are mainly directed at the MNF itself. It was confirmed by the Secretary of State for Defence in a parliamentary answer that 80% of such attacks are indeed targeting the British led force. Thus, it is argued, British armed forces are seen as an occupying rather than a liberating force and so are aggravating the security situation rather than improving it. Furthermore, the troops on the ground are no longer delivering any practical benefit.

However, other evidence convinced the Commission that a withdrawal that was immediate or based on a short timetable would lead to an increase in violence both in the short and medium term. For example Toby Dodge, Senior Fellow at International Institute for Strategic Studies, stated that “I’m vehemently against what is quickly becoming the conventional wisdom, which is to pull troops out, run away and hope for the best ... pulling out, drawing troops down would do two things, both in Basra and in Baghdad. It would take ... a brake off the violence, it would be a free for all ... and lead, I suspect, to the evolution of warlordism.”

In such a context there is still a major and important job for the MNF to do, in training and equipping these forces and to secure the main supply route through the South to Baghdad. In evidence to the Commission Adnan al-Dulaimi, party leader of the General Council for the People of Iraq, a component of the Sunni Iraqi Accord Front in the Assembly said “The existence of UK troops especially in Basra and other parts of the South is useful and helps with stability...I think the troops

should stay in the region until there is a strong Iraqi army capable of controlling the security situation and protecting borders.”

Similarly, a timetable for rapid withdrawal would face the same problems. According to General Sir Michael Jackson, former Chief of the General Staff, “I really believe that setting a date would be probably about the worst thing we could do ... we must also take into account the reaction of others to whatever we do, others in Iraq, others further afield and to say nothing of al Qaeda.”^{liii} Bayan Rahman, the Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the UK told the Commission “I think a sudden and let’s say untimely withdrawal from Iraq would send completely the wrong message to al Qaeda and to other terrorist organisations. It would be seen as weakness and defeat.”

Furthermore, a precipitate withdrawal would allow the instability to widen, engulfing Iraq’s neighbours and drawing them into conflict with Iraq and each other.

An immediate withdrawal would also go against the wishes of the Iraqi government and damage relations with the US. If the UK is committed to a genuine political and international process for Iraq, “cutting and running” would undermine that commitment as well as our credibility and chances for success. However, while these political considerations weigh heavily, they are not sufficient on their own to keep British forces on the ground without a military objective and political process to support.

A staged run down of the UK's commitment was also proposed through a series of stepped reductions with an announced timeframe, until the entire force is withdrawn. However it takes a certain core number of troops, in terms of logistics, medical, local defence and so on, to service almost any force structure. We are just about at that level now. Any further piecemeal reductions would mean that the force would have no real operational capability at all and progressively would be unable to sustain itself.

The area where UK forces continue to make a very valuable contribution is in the training and capacity building of Iraqi security forces. This training has been the long term aim of the British, and previously for the whole coalition, and has been underway now for some four years. As General Sir Michael Jackson, former Chief of the General Staff told the Commission; "with the Iraqi security forces there may come a point when we can say, well we can do no more, we've trained you, we've equipped you, we've advised you, we've done everything that we can think we can possibly do." The UK should therefore finalise the current training and bring the programme to closure. As Iraqi security forces complete their training and demonstrate their competence, so security responsibility should be handed over and the troops involved in the training withdrawn.

Experience from other provinces where responsibility has been handed over when the Iraqi security forces are ready shows that when challenged by violence they have shown the political will to confront it – if they have their own security muscle to back that political will.

Recommendations

7. The UK should progressively cease offensive operations, including border security and framework patrolling. The UK's military focus should become the completion of the current training programme for the Iraqi security forces.
8. There should be an immediate review of all aspects of Iraqi capability that are still receiving support. An assessment would then be made of the necessary level of achievement possible and the resources needed to achieve it, based on experience in other provinces where responsibility has already been handed over and in coordination with the US and Iraqi governments.
9. The UK forces involved in the training of the Iraqi security forces should be withdrawn as their training tasks are completed, initially into over-watch, and subsequently from theatre.
10. Responsibility for security should be handed over to Iraqi forces as and when they are capable to undertake operations, even if the security situation remains poor.

11. During the transition period UK forces should only conduct offensive operations in self defence or at the specific request of the Iraqi authorities so as to assist in the maintenance of order.
12. A date or timetable for drawdown should not be set, but will happen as a consequence of the completion of training activity.
13. Therefore drawdown will take place when either;
 - A formal request for withdrawal is made by the Iraqi government.
 - Successful handover of responsibilities to the Iraqi security forces are completed.
14. The UK military is also present in other areas of Iraq outside the South East, including Baghdad, undertaking a number of roles including intelligence and counter insurgency. The same principles should apply to them that they stay as long as there is a job for them to do. Any changes in these areas would need close coordination with the United States.

3. Economic, Reconstruction and Capacity Building

“One of the remarkable things about Iraq ... is that it has gone from being a middle income country to something that looks like a failed state, in an extraordinary short space of time”, Simon Maxwell of the Overseas Development Institute.

Iraq has the potential to be one of the wealthiest countries in the region. The long term objective of the UK government should be to assist the Government of Iraq to reconstruct and develop its infrastructure and economy to enable Iraq's future self-sufficiency.

The UK has valuable insights from Northern Ireland on the role of economics in peacemaking. As economic conditions improved in Northern Ireland in the 1990s and levels of unemployment narrowed, the violence ebbed and the prospects for peace lifted. The situations in Northern Ireland and Iraq are clearly very different. However, work has already been done on applying the lessons from Northern Ireland to help the Palestinians' situation by the Portland Trust and the G8's Middle East Economic Roadmap. Work should be done to bring those lessons to bear on the Iraqi situation too.

As James Wolfensohn, former president of the World Bank, told the Commission the long term answer to the conflict is giving the young people of Iraq hope and the opportunity to work; “if you're to have peace you must try to give economic opportunity to younger people (otherwise) if you withdraw it's not surprising that someone will come along to them and hand them a gun and say the situation is no good, go out and kill those people. And they will because they have nothing to lose.”

When the security situation improves on the ground in Iraq, it must be an urgent priority to encourage the economic benefits of peace to take root as soon as possible.

Experience in other conflict zones, such as Bosnia, has shown that the way to regenerate the economy is to strip away the barriers to setting up businesses, encouraging and supporting small and medium sized enterprises and economic liberalisation.

Oil is central to the Iraqi economy and to its future national wealth. It is imperative that oil production and export is maintained and increased. The UK should not seek to directly intervene in Iraq's sovereign affairs including the drafting of the Hydrocarbon law. However, it should recognise that a fair distribution of revenues to all the people from Iraq's primary national resource will be essential to facilitate national reconciliation.

Despite the violence, there are still ways in which communities have found creative methods to adapt. In some areas, local communities still have significant capacities and resources that could be better utilised. "If you look around the world" according to James Wolfensohn "you'll find many Iraqi entrepreneurs throughout the Middle East and indeed throughout the western world. So it's not that the Iraqis lack capability."

Finally, one of the biggest problems that development and reconstruction faces, is the cancer of corruption. Without an effective legal system or clear administrative frameworks corruption is endemic. However, it is not just corruption; the

costs of management, security and technical assistance also radically reduce the amount of cash that actually reaches projects.

The UK may raise legitimate questions in diplomatic discussions, but the UK government should not seek to intervene directly in the sovereign affairs of the Iraqi government, the passage of legislation in the National Assembly or in discussions on the Iraqi constitution.

Recommendations

15. UK reconstruction funding and assistance to Iraq should be conditional on the Iraqi government making progress on national reconciliation, security and improving essential services to their population. Humanitarian assistance, however, should always be provided on the basis of need.

16. The UK should push for an integrated Economic Roadmap for Iraq, involving all the international players drawing on the International Compact but including training programmes for young people, reducing unemployment and micro credit arrangements. The Roadmap should aim to stimulate the private sector economy going and encourage Iraqi businesspeople to invest in their own country.

17. As it withdraws from the South East of the country the UK, with the International Compact, should establish a provincial development agency to encourage local economic growth and activity.
18. The UK should encourage the Iraqis to consider the idea of an escrow fund, managed by the World Bank, to be set up with oil revenues to be used to support the health and education systems of the poorest regions of Iraq and to invest in non-oil based enterprises.
19. The UK government should follow up on its Green Paper *Private Military Companies: Options for Regulation* by bringing forward legislation, at the earliest opportunity to regulate Private Security Companies (PSCs).
20. The UK Government should support those parts of Iraq that currently work and those institutions that currently function, for example in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The UK should sponsor a trade mission to the KRG and encourage direct flights to Arbil from Heathrow.

21. The UK government should continue to provide democracy building and governance capacity training to Iraqi politicians and officials. The Iraqi Government should not be charged for such assistance, while it continues to need international development assistance.
22. There is a significant amount of training and capacity building work that the UK government has been doing and should continue to do and indeed the scope of which should increase as the military presence reduces. This is especially the case with non-sectarian civil society organisations like trade unions. In addition to the security and policing training that will help in the transfer of security operations to the Iraqi army and police, there are contributions to be made in areas such as:
- civil society, democratic practice, audit and anti-corruption systems;
 - local governance;
 - judiciary and policing practices, including in respect to human rights compliance in sectarian conflict situations;
 - post-genocide and post conflict rehabilitation and reconciliation;
 - and training for government employees to help change attitudes acquired during years of dictatorship.

23. A free media is a vital component of a democratic Iraq and essential to expose abuses of power and corruption. Independent journalists have been targeted by insurgents for intimidation and murder. UK capacity building should include support and training for journalists using the expertise of NGOs like the BBC World Service Trust.

4. Humanitarian Action

“Back in the eighties life expectancy in Iraq was a bit better than the rest of the region, and similar to what it was in Europe. Now the life expectancy is on a par with sub Saharan Africa. Men don’t live to more than 49.5 years (on average).” Dr Heba al-Naseri from the UK Iraqi Medical Association

The Commission heard evidence from a number of sources about the scale of the humanitarian needs of the two million refugees from Iraq, the one million refugees expected over the next year, and the two million Iraqis displaced within Iraq. Vulnerable groups highlighted by witnesses include Palestinians, because they were seen as favoured by the previous regime and Christians, facing persecution because of their religion. Such groups are at particular risk of persecution if they return to Iraq, entitling them to the protection of the Refugee Convention.

These displaced people represent an emerging humanitarian tragedy and longer term strategic security risk for the entire region. The large numbers of people entering Jordan and Syria in particular is placing a heavy strain on public services and threatening the stability of both countries. According to George Graham of the International Rescue Committee “our over arching point, is the need to acknowledge the sheer scale of the refugee crisis in the Middle East. It’s the largest displacement since 1948.”

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, presented to the UN in 1998, describe the rights of the internally displaced at all stages of their displacement, right up to their

safe return or resettlement. Although not legally binding, the principles of the guidelines directly reference obligations in international law and provide valuable practical guidance for governments, authorities, intergovernmental organisations and NGOs in their work with the internally displaced.

Despite the violence, there are still ways in which communities are helping themselves and ways in which they are being assisted by NGOs and institutions external to the community. Some have found creative methods to adapt to the constraints of insecurity. Whilst the security situation remains a major barrier to an increased humanitarian and development presence in Iraq, according to a survey of NGOs/INGOs conducted by Oxfam in April 2007, over 80% would be able to expand levels of humanitarian work if they had increased access to funds.

The UN has recognised that the security situation is not uniform across Iraq and that some areas of the country are more accessible for humanitarian activities than others. In addition, in some areas, local communities still have significant capacities and resources that could be better utilised. The UN should build upon this information in order to develop a more flexible approach to security and the movement of UN staff. This should differentiate between constraints in different areas and be more independent of the MNF-I, thereby allowing needs assessment, co-ordination, and service delivery.

The Iraq Government should decentralise the delivery of assistance as well. This would include giving power to local authorities to distribute emergency supplies within their own

governorates, together with a more extensive system of warehouse storage for supplies throughout Iraq.

Iraqi professionals have been particularly targeted by insurgents, adding to the difficulties of delivering humanitarian assistance. As with all issues in Iraq, hard data is difficult to come by, but a wealth of reports highlight the extent of the problem. For example Zainab Salbi founder of Women for Women International told the Commission that “I know more than 20 women who have been assassinated, all professionals”.

Recommendations

24. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) should be at the centre of a regional and international process with Iraq, all Iraq's neighbours, the United States, the EU, and other international organisations to develop and implement a strategy that addresses the humanitarian consequences of refugees and IDPs. This process should build on the results of the International Conference on Addressing the Humanitarian Needs of Refugees and IDPs inside Iraq and in Neighbouring Countries, convened by UNHCR in April 2007.
25. The UK government has a moral responsibility and should increase funding to the UNHCR to address the

serious humanitarian needs of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons.

26. The UK government and all parties in Iraq, including the Government of Iraq, the MNF-I, the ISF, and other non-state actors, should adhere to the UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement in their dealings with IDPs in Iraq.
27. The long term aim is to bring stability to Iraq so that refugees will be able to return to their homes, rather than to incentivise people to leave. In order to facilitate this, refugees must retain the rights to property, where they have them, and be able to reclaim ownership. The UK government has a particular responsibility to those Iraqis who have worked for the British government and armed forces, for example as translators, some of whom as a result have faced intimidation and death threats and been forced to flee the country. These people should be considered for resettlement in the UK.
28. While the vast majority of refugees will be settled in the region, international resettlement is also an established element in the response to refugee crises. Working with UNHCR, the UK should urge those

countries which have refugee resettlement programmes to expand them to include a number of Iraqi refugees. The British government should lead the way by significantly increasing the capacity of its embryonic Gateway Protection Programme so that a number of the most vulnerable refugees from Iraq can be resettled in the UK.

29. The UK working with her international allies should build upon what already exists and promote more alliances and coordination. There is already a UN Development Assistance Strategy, a Joint Priority Action Plan for 18 months (specifically in the areas of essential social services), and an International Compact with Iraq (with a 5-year macroeconomic perspective); and a Strategic Framework for Humanitarian Assistance and an Operational Plan.

30. The UK should support Iraqi Government ministries through the provision of technical assistance and advice in order to develop the capacity of the Government to supply basic services for its people. To do this the Iraqi Government should establish a proper legal framework for civil society organisations that formalises registration procedures and gives them a legal status that is recognised by others. This would greatly assist non-government relief efforts. The Iraqi Government cannot fulfil these responsibilities without

support from international governments with capacity and influence in Iraq.

31. Since many humanitarian organisations will not accept money from governments that have troops in Iraq, on the grounds that this could jeopardise their own security and independence, it is particularly important that donors from countries which do not have troops there, such as Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland, agree to increase their budgets for humanitarian action in Iraq. The United Kingdom should contribute to neutral funding sources, for example the European Commission humanitarian aid department (ECHO).

32. The position of women and minority groups is particularly vulnerable. The effects of decades of violence have resulted in a significant increase in the numbers of Iraqi widows and wives of the “disappeared”. The UK Government should encourage the regions emerging in Iraq to include protection for these groups in their constitutional arrangements and target funding to humanitarian assistance to include their needs.

33. The UK should promote the mainstreaming of human rights, including the rights of women, children and religious and ethnic minorities, throughout Iraqi institutions, by offering training for civil servants and police.

34. The UK should provide greater funding to UNICEF to support vulnerable women and children in Iraq, Jordan and Syria. UNICEF has requested US \$42m for its humanitarian relief effort, including education, health, water and sanitation, of which only \$7m has been received from internal UNICEF resources.

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Appendices

1. Members of the Commission

Co-Chairs

Lord Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon

Lord Ashdown served as an officer in the Royal Marines from 1959 to 1972. He then worked for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, before being elected Liberal MP for Yeovil in 1983. He was leader of the Liberal Democrats from 1988 to 1999. After leaving the Commons Lord Ashdown was appointed High Representative for Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2002.

Baroness Jay of Paddington

Baroness was formerly Lord Privy Seal, Leader of the House of Lords and Minister for Women. Previously, she was Minister of State at the Department of Health. She was a founding director of the National AIDS Trust and a governor of South Bank University. She is currently Chair of the Overseas Development Institute.

Lord King of Bridgwater

Lord King was elected to Parliament at in 1970. He held the posts of Employment Secretary and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. He also served as Defence Secretary under Prime Minister John Major during the Gulf War in 1991. After retirement to the back benches, he became Chair of the Intelligence and Security Select Committee.

Members

Professor Brian Brivati

Brian Brivati is Professor of Contemporary History at Kingston University and runs the human rights programmes at BA and MA level. He was recently part of a panel of leading Ministers, MPs and thinkers who came together in the Houses of Parliament at the end of April this year to discuss the future of humanitarian intervention, after the conflict in Iraq. He has published extensive work on contemporary British politics. His research and teaching has recently extended to comparative work on genocide and human rights. His next book, *The End of Decline: the Blair-Brown Governments and Contemporary British History*, will be published by Politico's later this year.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick

A British diplomat, Lord Hannay entered the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1959, and was initially posted to positions in Tehran and Kabul. He held various positions in the Foreign Office in London during the 1970s and 1980s. He was a minister at the British Embassy in Washington, DC in 1984-1985, and was then promoted to Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the EEC from 1985 to 1990. He then spent the next five years as Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Most recently he has taken on specialised roles such as Special Representative for Cyprus between 1996 and 2003 and a member of the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, reporting to the Secretary-General in December 2004. He is also the Chair of the United Nations Association UK.

Dr Rosemary Hollis

Dr Rosemary Hollis is Director of Research at Chatham House (the Royal Institute of International Affairs). Previously, she was head of the Middle East programme at Chatham House. The focus of her own research and writing is foreign policy and security issues in the Middle East, particularly European, EU, UK and US relations with the region and transatlantic differences over the issues. From 1990-95, she headed the Middle East Programme at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies. From 1980-89 she was a lecturer in Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University in Washington, DC, where she also gained a PhD in Political Science.

Sir Paul Lever

Sir Paul Lever KCMG is Chairman of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies and Global Development Director at RWE Thames Water. He retired from the British Diplomatic Service in 2003 as Ambassador to Germany. His previous postings included Head of Security Policy Department and Assistant Under Secretary for Defence at the Foreign Office; Leader of the British Delegation to the Negotiations on Conventional Forces in Europe in Vienna; Head of the Defence and Overseas Secretariat in the Cabinet Office; and Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee.

Lt General Andrew Ridgway

Lieutenant General Andrew Peter Ridgway, CB, CBE, became Lieutenant Governor of Jersey from 14 June 2006 after a long military career. He was born in 1950, educated at Hele's School, Exeter, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and St

John's College, Cambridge. In 1982 he attended the Army Staff College at Camberley, before taking command of the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment and the 7th Armoured Brigade (the 'Desert Rats'). In 1994 he was appointed UN Commander in Central Bosnia and Herzegovina, and became Chief of Staff for the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps for NATO's entry into the Kosovo War in 1999. Most recently, for 2003 to 2006, he was Chief of Defence Intelligence, although he was not directly involved in producing the controversial intelligence reports that led to 2003 invasion of Iraq and Operation Telic.

Maeve Sherlock OBE

Maeve Sherlock is a former Chief Executive of the Refugee Council. Before joining the Refugee Council in 2003, Maeve was a Special Adviser to Gordon Brown, MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer, where her brief spanned child poverty, welfare reform and the voluntary sector. Before moving to the Treasury, Maeve was Chief Executive of the National Council for One Parent Families and, prior to that, Director of UKCOSA, a charity focusing on overseas students and international education. She is currently a member of the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration and a Visiting Fellow of St Chad's College, Durham University.

Asim Siddiqui

Asim Siddiqui is chairman of the City Circle, a network body of mainly young Muslim professionals. In addition to local grass root community work, Asim and his team organise weekly public discussion forums providing an outlet for debate on issues of mutual concern between British Muslim communities and wider society. Asim is a member of the International

Institute for Strategic Studies, and sits on the Guardian's Muslim Youth Forum.

Stephen Twigg

Stephen Twigg joined the Foreign Policy Centre as Director in August 2005. He was involved with the FPC from its conception in 1998 and since then as a Member of the Board from 1998 to 2006. After being General Secretary of the Fabian Society from 1996 to 1997, Stephen was elected as an MP for Enfield Southgate in 1997, which he represented until 2005. He was Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the House of Commons, the Rt Hon. Robin Cook MP, from 2001 to 2002 and then a junior minister in the Department for Education and Skills between 2002 and 2005, reaching the post of Minister of State in 2004. Stephen also contributes to the Aegis Trust in their work.

Sir Patrick Walker

The 12th Director General of MI5 (1987-1992), Sir Patrick joined the Security Service in 1963, following a period of service in the pre-independence government of Uganda. He became Director General in 1987, overseeing the Service's transition through the end of the Cold War before his retirement in 1992.

2. Secretariat to the Commission

Dermot Kehoe, Foreign Policy Centre

Alex Bigham, Foreign Policy Centre

Amanda Wolthuizen, Granada

3. Witnesses

- Sir Christopher Meyer, Chair of the Press Complaints Commission & former British Ambassador to the United States
- Rt Hon Denis MacShane MP, Labour MP for Rotherham & former Minister for Europe
- Greg Mutitt, Co-Director of PLATFORM
- Dr Bassam Fattouh, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies
- Mohamed Bali, Country Desk Manager for Iraq and Lebanon, Muslim Aid
- Oliver Burch, Iraq Programme Manager, Christian Aid
- Professor Amitai Etzioni, Director of the Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies, George Washington University
- Andrew Bearpark, Director General of the British Association of Private Security Companies
- David Horowitz, Editor-in-Chief, The Jerusalem Post
- Marion Birch, Director of MedAct
- Dr Heba Al-Naseri, Member of the UK Iraqi Medical Association
- Tom Porteous, Director of Human Rights Watch
- Noaman Muna, Chairman of Iraqi Al-Amal Association

- Dr Ismail Jalili, Chairman of National Association of British Arabs
- Adnan Al-Dulaimi, General Council for the People of Iraq
- Dr Toby Dodge, Senior Fellow for the Middle East at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London
- Dame Pauline Neville-Jones, Shadow Security Minister in the Shadow Cabinet and National Security Adviser to Conservative Party Leader
- Dr Ali Ansari, Reader in Modern History at the University of St Andrews, Scotland
- Sir Richard Dalton, Former British Ambassador to Iran
- Jan de Wilde, Chief of Mission at the International Organisation for Migration London
- Thanaa Al Kinani, Lawyer and human rights activist
- Sir Jeremy Greenstock, Former British Ambassador to the United Nations in New York and Her Majesty's former Special Representative in Iraq
- Peter Bergen, Schwartz Senior fellow at the New America Foundation
- Andrew Alderson, Gulf Capital
- Professor Fred Kagan, Resident Scholar of American Enterprise Institute
- David Horgan, Managing Director of Petrel Resources

- Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind MP, former Foreign Secretary and Conservative Member of Parliament
- Lt Gen (Ret) Jay Garner, Retired US Army General
- HE Dr Sami Khiyami, Syrian Ambassador to the UK
- Duncan Bullivant, Chief Executive of Henderson Risk Group
- Ammar Al Shahbender, Country Director for the Institute for War and Peace Reporting
- Sir Menzies Campbell, Leader of the Liberal Democrats
- Ghassan Attiyah, Executive Director of the Iraq Foundation for Development and Democracy
- General Sir Mike Jackson, Former Chief of the General Staff
- Dr Barham Salih, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq
- Peter Kellner, Chairman of YouGov
- Mike Gapes, MP for Ilford South and Chair of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee
- Professor Sir Lawrence Freedman, Professor of War Studies at King's College, London
- Zainab Salbi, CEO and Founder of Women for Women International

- Houzan Mahmoud, UK Head of the Organisation of Women's Freedom in Iraq and co-founder of the Iraq Freedom Congress
- Dr Ali Allawi, former Minister of Defence and Minister of Finance in the Iraqi Government
- Professor Salama Al Khafaji, Independent Iraqi MP and former member of the Interim Iraqi Governing Council
- Simon Maxwell, Director of the Overseas Development Institute
- Verena Fritz, Research Fellow, Poverty and Public Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute
- James Darcy, Director of Humanitarian Programmes, Overseas Development Institute
- Tom Hardie-Forsyth, Co-Founder and Non Executive director of the Kurdistan Development Corporation.
- Bayan Rahman, High Representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq to the UK and Chair of the Kurdistan Development Corporation
- Roger Wright, UNICEF Representative for Iraq
- Rachel Briggs, Head of Identity Programme, Demos
- Tim Finch, Director of Communications, Refugee Council
- George Graham, the Advocacy and Policy Officer, International Rescue Committee (IRC) UK.
- Richard Fenning, CEO of Control Risks

- Salam Pax, the ‘Baghdad Blogger’
- Patrick Seale, British author and expert on Syria and the Middle East
- Dr Gareth Stansfield, Reader in Middle East Politics at University of Exeter and Associate Fellow, Chatham House.
- Professor Brendan O’Leary, Lauder Professor of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania
- Dr Kahled Salih, Spokesman for the Kurdish Regional Government of Iraq
- Abdul Samad Rahman Sultan, Minister for Migration and the Displaced, Government of Iraq

4. Submissions

Abdullah Muhsin

Abdullah Muhsin is the International Representative of the General Federation of Iraqi Workers (GFIW), formally known as the IFTU.

Labour Friends of Iraq

Labour Friends of Iraq (LFIQ) was formed in 2004 to seek to unite those in the labour movement who took different positions on the 2003 invasion of Iraq but who believed that support for Iraq's new democratic institutions and its new civil society.

Hassan Al-Damluji

Submission by the Civility Programme.

Kurdish Human Rights Project

Kurdish Human Rights Project is an independent, non-political human rights organisation dedicated to the promotion and protection of the human rights of all persons in the Kurdish regions of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and elsewhere.

Elahe Mohtasham

Senior Research Associate at the Foreign Policy Centre in London acting in a personal capacity.

Justice Not Vengeance

Justice Not Vengeance (JNV) is an anti-war group which has developed out of ARROW (Active Resistance to the Roots of War).

Iraq Occupation Focus

Campaigners against human rights abuses in Iraq, plunder by US corporations and the death toll inflicted by the occupying military forces.

Sir James Craig, Sir Richard Dalton, Bill Fullerton & Oliver Miles

Former UK Ambassadors to Saudi Arabia, Iran, Morocco/Kuwait & Libya/Greece respectively.

Alan Johnson

Editor of Democratiya & Professor of Democratic Theory and Practice at Edge Hill University.

Paul Hilder

Middle East Advisor, Oxford Research Group.

Professor Richard Rose

Professor Richard Rose, University of Aberdeen, is author of 'The Post-Modern President and The Prime Minister in a Shrinking World'.

UNICEF

UNICEF works in 190 countries to support children by providing health care, nutrition and education and to protect those affected by crises including war, natural disasters and HIV/AIDS.

RJ Spencer

Defence and Security Analyst, specialising in the Islamic World.

Serene Communications

Serene Communications is a training and consultancy company that specialises in inter-personal communications especially to do with women and diversity.

Ashti Hawrami

Minister of Natural Resources, Erbi, Kurdistan, Iraq.

Mina Al-Oraibi

Iraqi-British Journalist working for Asharq Alawsat Newspaper.

Mr Falah Mustafa Bakir

Minister Bakir is the Head of the Kurdistan Regional Government Department of Foreign Relations.

Mr Karim Sinjari

Mr Sinjari is the Kurdistan Regional Government Interior Minister.

Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA)

Since its inception in 1933, the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA) has assisted university lecturers and researchers who have been forced to become refugees due to political, racial, ethnic, religious or other oppression or discrimination.

Chris Doyle

Chris Doyle, Director of the Council for Arab-British Understanding (CAABU).

All Party Group on Women, Peace and Security, Iraq Sub Group

The Associate All Party Group on Women, Peace and Security was set up in 2006 to raise awareness on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Avaaz

Avaaz is a community of global citizens who take action on the major issues facing the world today.

Church of England's Mission and Public Affairs Council

The Mission and Public Affairs Council is part of the Archbishop's Council of the Church of England.

Action for UN Renewal

Action for UN Renewal supports the radical vision of the UN founders and to realise that every child has the same chance of growing up healthy, educated and in peace.

Dr A O Yones

Dr Yones is the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Minister for Health.

Forced Migration Review

Forced Migration Review is the "leading practitioner journal on refugee studies".

Garth R A Wiseman

Garth Wiseman is a Strategic Business Development Director/Consultant in the UK

Basil Eastwood

Basil Eastwood is a Board member International Institute for Sustained Dialogue

Friendship Across Frontiers**International Rescue Committee**

The IRC serves refugees and communities victimised by oppression or violent conflict worldwide.

Matthew Page

Gender Justice

International Coordination for Gender Justice in Iraq.

Iraq Body Count

A human security project which maintains an independent public database of media-reported civilian deaths in Iraq that have resulted from the 2003 military intervention by the USA and its allies.

Medact

Medact is a global health charity tackling issues at the centre of international policy debates.

Muslim Aid

Muslim Aid is a UK based charity which provides emergency relief and ongoing support for the most needy in over 60 countries.

Oxfam

Oxfam GB is a development, advocacy and relief agency working to put an end to poverty world-wide.

Paul Rogers

Professor of Peace Studies, Bradford University and Global Security Consultant to Oxford Research Group.

PLATFORM

Interdisciplinary organisation working on development, environment and human rights issues, and specialising in the impacts of the international oil industry. PLATFORM has been monitoring and researching Iraqi oil policy since 2003.

Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain

Hizb ut-Tahrir is a global Islamic political party that was established in 1953.

Brendan O'Leary

International constitutional advisor to the Kurdistan Regional Government and Professor of Political Science at Pennsylvania University.

Margaret Owen

Chair, Widows for Peace through Democracy.

Sir Harold Walker

Former member of the Diplomatic Service, Ambassador to Iraq 1990-91.

Denis MacShane MP

Labour MP for Rotherham and former Minister for Europe.

Peter Kellner

Chairman of YouGov presents the latest poll results on the UK presence in Iraq.

Professor Daryl Glaser

Department of Political Studies University of Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Dr Glen Rangwala & Dr Eric Herring

Lecturer in Politics, University of Cambridge & Senior Lecturer in International Politics, University of Bristol.

Chris Abbott

Oxford Research Group.

Sir Menzies Campbell

Leader of the Liberal Democrats.

Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch is dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world.

Dr Toby Dodge

Senior Consulting Fellow for the Middle East, International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Andrew Bearpark

Director General, BAPSC.

Jonathan Steele

Senior Foreign Correspondent, The Guardian.

5. Remit

Britain stands at a crossroads. With a new Prime Minister in office, we have a unique opportunity to examine the future of our commitment to Iraq.

This is not a sterile argument about the rights and wrongs of going to war. This is the beginning of a historic public debate about the future of Iraq, about the future of security in the Middle East and beyond, and about Britain's role in the world.

The Foreign Policy Centre was delighted to have the opportunity to partner with Channel 4 in facilitating a UK Iraq Commission – the British equivalent of the US Iraq Study Group.

Remit of the Commission

In coming to its conclusions on the scope and focus of Britain's future involvement in Iraq, the Commission took into account the impact any actions will have on:

- Iraq's internal security dynamic, and approaches to improving stability
- The political and economic situation in Iraq
- The role of UK troops in Iraq, and the strategic objectives of their deployment
- UK's wider Middle East strategy including Iran and Syria.
- Domestic political considerations in the UK including the impact on community cohesion
- Cost implications of ongoing commitments in Iraq and effects on the UK economy
- The war on international terrorism

- Consequences for key strategic alliances - the transatlantic relationship, EU and the UN
- Reconstruction and development in Iraq and the role of UK NGOs and other agencies
- Long term support for Iraq, including budgetary, policing, social services, democracy and civil society support

Issues expressly outside the scope of the Commission and the Report include:

- The merits and legality of the UK decision to intervene militarily in Iraq.
- Specific allegations of war crimes by British Forces, or corruption or wrong doing by individual organisations

Commission Membership

The UK Iraq Commission will be made up of a small number of distinguished politicians, officials and independent experts with an understanding of the issues concerned. They will hold regular, televised hearings to seek independent testimony from a range of international experts and leaders, as well as members of the public. The panel will have a balance of party affiliation, as well as a number of non-affiliated members. There will be 3 co-chairs – Lord (Paddy) Ashdown, Baroness (Margaret) Jay and Lord (Tom) King.

6. About The Foreign Policy Centre

The Foreign Policy Centre (FPC) is a leading foreign affairs think tank, established in 1998 by the late Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook. We operate as a global network, with our diverse range of projects and programmes covering every continent. The aim of the FPC, carried out through research, publications and events is to develop innovative policy ideas which promote practical solutions to global challenges. The work is entirely focused on influencing the way foreign policy is made and carried out.

The aim of the Foreign Policy Centre is to develop a vision of a fair and rule-based world order. Through our research, publications and events, we aim to develop innovative policy ideas which promote:

- Effective multilateral solutions to global problems
- Democratic and well-governed states as the foundation of order and development
- Partnerships with the private sector to deliver public goods
- Support for progressive policy through effective public diplomacy
- Inclusive definitions of citizenship to underpin internationalist policies.

Over the past 9 years, the FPC has hosted numerous events, featuring high-profile speakers from the world of politics, journalism, academia and civil society. Some notable names include Tony Blair, David Cameron, Paddy Ashdown, Hilary Benn, Peter Mandelson, Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan and former Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov.

The FPC has also produced many influential and ground breaking publications by key thinkers, on subjects ranging from the future of Europe and international security to identity and the role of non-state actors in policymaking. They include *After Multiculturalism* by Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, *The Post-Modern State and the World Order* by Robert Cooper, *Network Europe and Public Diplomacy* by Mark Leonard, *Brand China* by Joshua Cooper Ramo, *Preventing the Next Cold War: A View from Beijing* by Andrew Small and *A Global Alliance for Global Values* by Tony Blair.

The organisation is led by the Director, Stephen Twigg. Stephen joined the Foreign Policy Centre as Director in August 2005. He was involved with the FPC from its conception in 1998 and since then as a Member of the Board from 1998 to 2006. After being General Secretary of the Fabian Society from 1996 to 1997, Stephen was elected as a Member of Parliament for Enfield Southgate in 1997, which he represented until 2005. He was Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the House of Commons, the Rt Hon. Robin Cook MP, from 2001 to 2002 and then a junior minister in the Department for Education and Skills between 2002 and 2005, reaching the post of Minister of State in 2004. Stephen also contributes to the Aegis Trust in their work against genocide.

The FPC is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, funded via support from charitable institutions, business and personal donations. A percentage of our income comes from our individual and corporate membership schemes and through government grants.

Further information about the FPC can be found at www.fpc.org.uk or by speaking to any member of our team in London on + 44 (0) 207 729 7566

7. Endnotes

- ⁱ (Stansfield, 2007)
- ⁱⁱ (Khalidi & Tanner, 2007)
- ⁱⁱⁱ (Dodge, The Cuases of US Failure in Iraq, 2007)
- ^{iv} (Dodge, The Cuases of US Failure in Iraq, 2007)
- ^v (Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2007)
- ^{vi} (National Intelligence Estimate, 2007)
- ^{vii} (O'Leary, 2007)
- ^{viii} (UNHCR, 2007)
- ^{ix} (Sloboda & Dardagan, 2007)
- ^x (Dodge, 2007)
- ^{xi} (Dodge, The Bagdad Surge, 2007)
- ^{xii} (Sloboda & Dardagan, 2007)
- ^{xiii} (BBC, 2007)
- ^{xiv} (BBC, Iraq poll 2007, 2007)
- ^{xv} (Blair, 2007)
- ^{xvi} (Dodge, The Cuases of US Failure in Iraq, 2007)
- ^{xvii} (Moore MP, 11 June 2007)
- ^{xviii} (Foreign & Commonwealth Office)
- ^{xix} (The Times, 2007)
- ^{xx} (The Times, 21 June 2007)
- ^{xxi} (Blair, 2007)
- ^{xxii} (The Brookings Institution, July 5, 2007)
- ^{xxiii} (Ministry of Defence)
- ^{xxiv} (BBC, 2007)
- ^{xxv} (Maxwell, 14 June 2007)
- ^{xxvi} (Oxfam Great Britain, June 2007)
- ^{xxvii} (Johnson, Woolf, & Whitaker, 18 June 2007)
- ^{xxviii} (Johnson, Woolf, & Whitaker, 18 June 2007)
- ^{xxix} (UNHCR, 2007)
- ^{xxx} (UNICEF evidence to the Iraq Commission, 2007)
- ^{xxxi} (Refugee Studies Centre, 2007)

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- xxxii (Owen, 2007)
- xxxiii (Feller, Tuesday 19 June 2007)
- xxxiv (Finch, 2007)
- xxxv (Bayati, 2007)
- xxxvi (Feller, Tuesday 19 June 2007)
- xxxvii (Kemp, 2005)
- xxxviii (BBC, 2007)
- xxxix (Yacoubian, 2007)
- xl (National Intelligence Estimate, 2007)
- xli (BBC, 7 February 2007)
- xlII (Yacoubian, 2007)
- xlIII (Barkey, 2005)
- xlIV (McMillan, 2006)
- xlV (Associated Press)
- xlVI (Lasensky, 2006)
- xlVII (USIP Press release, July 30, 2003)
- xlVIII (GlobalSecurity.org, 2007)
- xlIX (Dodge, 2007)
- ¹ (BBC, 2007)
- ^{II} (Rifkind MP, 2007)
- ^{III} This term is taken from the US Iraq Study Group report which made a similar proposition (Baker & Hamilton, 2006).
- ^{IIII} (Jackson, 2007)