

## Winning the Peace in Iraq

The success of any U.S.-led effort to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and drive Saddam Hussein from power will be judged as much by the commitment to rebuilding Iraq after the conflict as by the military phase of the war itself. Indeed, recent experience in Haiti, the Balkans, East Timor, Afghanistan, and elsewhere has demonstrated that “winning the peace” is often harder than fighting the war.

So far, however, signs of military buildup and humanitarian contingency planning have not been matched by visible, concrete actions by the United States, the United Nations, or others to position civilian and military resources to handle the myriad reconstruction challenges that will be faced in postconflict Iraq. This asymmetry of effort gravely threatens the interests of the United States, the Iraqis, the region, and the international community as a whole.

Attempting to define what a future Iraq should look like would detract from what must be a primary goal, namely, engaging Iraqis early and fully to run their country post-Saddam and to make key decisions about its future. That said, the following guideposts would point toward a promising future for a prosperous Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbors:

- Providing a safe, secure environment for Iraq’s people, free from government-led intimidation, while protecting Iraq’s borders and securing oil production facilities;

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- securing and eliminating Iraq's WMD;
- creating the opportunity for Iraqis to participate in governing Iraq and to shape their political future;
- beginning to develop a rule-of-law culture in Iraq; and
- disencumbering Iraq of the financial obligations of the Saddam Hussein regime to maximize the potential for a viable, self-sustaining Iraqi economy.

To avoid the pitfalls of past experiences, the United States and the UN should take 10 steps now to prepare for the postconflict challenges in Iraq.

The stakes are enormous. For much of the Middle East, Iraq will be a test case for judging U.S. intentions in the region and the Islamic world. The outcome of a war with Iraq and any postconflict reconstruction efforts will be critical for Turkey, a major U.S. ally; for future relations with other friends and allies in a strategically important region; for world oil flows; for Iran; and for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The United States has declared a commitment to a democratic, economically viable Iraq. Now, it is time to match rhetoric with action.

### **Efforts: Insufficient and Incomplete**

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Recent press reports suggest that the Bush administration is formulating a plan for the postconflict reconstruction of Iraq that involves pairing a U.S. military commander who would provide security while the U.S. military presence is maintained with an international civilian administrator who would be tasked with rejuvenating the economy, restarting the flow of oil, reopening schools, rebuilding political institutions, and administering assistance programs. The UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has been cited as a potential model for the civilian administration. The U.S. Department of State has also sponsored a series of working groups, drawing on Iraqi opposition groups and others in the diaspora, on issues such as judicial reform, public finance, and local governance in a post-Saddam Iraq.

Similarly, the UN is doing some contingency planning, mostly on humanitarian issues, for which it has asked donors to contribute \$37 million. Although a UN task force has identified major areas that UN humanitarian agencies will need to address if a conflict with Iraq occurs, its recently released report only lists "the need to give early consideration, regarding the role, if any, of the United Nations regarding the post-conflict administration."<sup>1</sup> UN Secretary General Kofi Annan recently noted that UN experts

are “doing some ‘preliminary thinking’ about a possible post-conflict political organization and administration in Iraq.”<sup>2</sup> The UN’s Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) reportedly is planning to create an office that could help administer humanitarian assistance and an Iraqi government, but there is no sign of more detailed planning for postconflict reconstruction needs.<sup>3</sup>

These are all positive signs of advance thinking about postconflict needs, but talking about planning is not enough. To turn preconflict aspirations into successful postconflict action, money and manpower must start moving now.

### **Challenges and Opportunities in Iraq**

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Iraq presents unique challenges and opportunities. Evidence suggests that Iraqis are desperate for a return to normalcy after a quarter century of war and economic suffering. This will not, however, mean their passive acceptance of whatever the international community may seek to impose.

In contrast to Afghanistan, Iraq is far from a failed state. It has a centralized government with a functioning bureaucracy. Nor is Iraq a haven for religious fundamentalism. Its government is secular, and although the rule of law and respect for human rights will have to be reestablished, Iraq does have a workable constitution and salvageable legal codes.

Iraqi society is divided among Shi’i Arabs, Sunni Arabs, and Kurds, as well as other small minority populations, and is largely educated, sophisticated, and urban. The Sunni minority has traditionally ruled, although the Shi’a comprise more than 55 percent of the population. Scattered revenge killings and reprisals are likely post-Saddam, but Iraq has little history of interethnic or communal violence. Some fear that the Shi’a are potential allies of their co-religionists in Iran, but this seems unlikely given that Iraqi Shi’i soldiers fought hard against the Iranians during the Iran-Iraq War.

Iraq’s army, secret police, and intelligence services must be disbanded and, to the extent necessary, restructured or reintegrated into society. These services currently “permeate[] every aspect of Iraqi life” and have been “instrumental” in the survival of Saddam’s regime “despite two costly wars plus numerous internal insurrections, coup attempts and crippling international sanctions.”<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, available information indicates that Iraq’s rank-and-file police officers are used largely for routine law-enforcement functions. Stripped of those officers with close political and historical ties to Saddam’s regime, much of the lower tiers of the existing civilian police will be available and should be used; regular police officers will be crucial in maintaining security in the postconflict period.

Although Iraq has extensive oil wealth, it will not be able to cover all its own postconflict needs. Whether or not a retreating Iraqi force razes the oil fields, the oil infrastructure will have to be largely rebuilt; it will be years before Iraq's natural patrimony can fully be brought to bear on the reconstruction effort. Even then, the pace of Iraq's recovery will be determined by the international community's ability and willingness to renegotiate Iraq's enormous foreign-debt burden and enforce a grace period that will give Iraq time to get back on its feet.

In the interim, it will be critical for the international community to commit funds and other resources to address urgent humanitarian needs and begin efforts to promote Iraqi social and economic well-being. The UN is making plans to satisfy the basic humanitarian needs of the Iraqi population for as long as a year, but the bulk of the citizenry may require assistance for much longer. Sixty percent of Iraqis currently depend on government handouts for their most basic needs.<sup>5</sup> The agricultural sector has steadily declined over the past decade, and most Iraqis have long since used up their financial and material assets. Absent the existing oil-for-food program, Iraqis will lean heavily on humanitarian relief organizations, donors, and a future government to provide the basic foodstuffs, clean water, energy, and limited health care to which they are accustomed. Moreover, there will be an immediate need for reconstruction projects such as rebuilding bridges and ports; reopening schools; and rehabilitating the oil industry infrastructure, power grids, and water distribution and sewage systems.

Finally and crucially, Iraq possessed and may still possess significant WMD stockpiles. Halting proliferation of Iraq's WMD will mean not only finding, securing, and destroying such weapons and materials but also containing the skilled scientific and technical community involved in their development.

## **Recent Postconflict Reconstruction Lessons Learned**

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Although the record from Haiti to Afghanistan shows that some postconflict reconstruction efforts have been successful, the United States and the international community have faced persistent problems. The following lessons learned must be heeded to avoid these pitfalls in Iraq:

- *Ensure advance planning for civilian missions.* In 1999, one dedicated UN DPKO employee was responsible for simultaneously recruiting more than 4,000 civil servants to serve in the UN missions in Kosovo and East Timor.<sup>6</sup> Both missions experienced security, authority, and law enforcement vacuums as a result of severe delays in full deployment of the civilian missions.

- *Do not underestimate postconflict security needs.* In Afghanistan, the viability of President Hamid Karzai's government has been undermined by a lack of adequate security, due in part to the failure to extend the international security force outside Kabul. In Kosovo, the initial NATO Kosovo Force was not properly prepared for a major degree of score-settling violence, which led to a dangerous security vacuum.
- *Appropriately prioritize assistance for the justice sector.* UNMIK's early missteps in choosing what law would apply and its delay in bringing in international judges and prosecutors continue to plague the reconstitution of Kosovo's judiciary and have hampered efforts to instill in Kosovars trust and respect for the rule of law.
- *Deploy better international civilian police faster.* The UN has repeatedly lagged in recruiting adequate numbers of international civilian police (CIVPOL), and CIVPOL have tended to be poorly trained and equipped, undermanned, and undersupplied.
- *Ensure sufficient funding for and focus on long-term development needs.* About 75 percent of the \$1.5 billion spent on assistance in Afghanistan thus far has been devoted to short-term humanitarian assistance rather than longer-term reconstruction assistance, limiting the government's ability to deliver benefits to its people and damaging Karzai's legitimacy. In Kosovo, three-and-a-half years into UNMIK's mission, there is no sign of a job creation plan despite an unemployment level greater than 50 percent and the youngest population in Europe.

**Iraq must be freed from its overwhelming debt burden to help pay for reconstruction.**

## Ten Recommendations

John J. Hamre, president of CSIS, and Gordon R. Sullivan, president of the Association of the United States Army, recently identified four broad categories under which a variety of postconflict reconstruction tasks must be performed: security, governance and participation, justice and reconciliation, and social and economic well-being.<sup>7</sup> Within these categories, this article focuses on the 10 critical recommendations U.S. policymakers and international organizations must pursue if the postconflict reconstruction of Iraq is to succeed.

These recommendations do not cover the entire spectrum of necessary actions. For example, they do not address planning and preparation for humanitarian needs in Iraq, as U.S. and international agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have proven adept at planning and implementing emergency relief programs. Nor do the recommendations proposed here address the issue of Iraqi officials accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or serious human rights abuses. Although clearly central issues, the U.S. government has been building cases against Saddam and a dozen or so of the most notorious members of his inner circle, and the Bush administration has indicated that these individuals will be prosecuted. These recommendations do not advocate a particular type of “truth and reconciliation” mechanism for Iraq, as any such process must be Iraqi driven, perhaps as part of the national dialogue that is proposed below.

## **SECURITY**

1. *Create a Transitional Security Force that is effectively prepared, mandated, and staffed to handle postconflict civil-security needs, including the need for constabulary forces.*

To avoid a dangerous security vacuum, it is imperative to train and equip forces for the postconflict civil-security mission in addition to planning for combat. Prior to beginning combat operations, a U.S.-led coalition force should complete detailed preparations for the organization and command structure of a Transitional Security Force that would focus primarily on the mission of civil security: augmenting and overseeing civil policing efforts, working closely with the civilian transitional administration, and supporting the security requirements of humanitarian and emergency relief efforts.

Swift deployment of security forces dedicated to constabulary duties is essential to avoid a civil security vacuum after regime change in Iraq. The United States must immediately identify and train a core force of U.S. military troops to perform constabulary (i.e. joint military and law enforcement) duties in Iraq. Working with its coalition partners, the United States should also immediately identify and ready other constabulary forces—such as the Italian Carabinieri, the French Gendarmerie, and appropriate regional forces—to ensure their timely arrival in Iraq.

To minimize any gaps in routine law-enforcement functions, it is equally imperative that coalition leaders begin plans for using the existing Iraqi police force. There should be a significant number of Iraqi police officers who could be used by coalition constabulary forces to help maintain law and order in the immediate postconflict period.

2. *Develop a comprehensive plan for securing and eliminating WMD.*

WMD pose a grave threat to allied forces, the Iraqi people, and regional and global security. A collapsed Iraqi regime could lead to a massive proliferation disaster if Iraq's WMD and their delivery systems and scientific and industrial infrastructure are not immediately secured. A task force involving all relevant U.S. government agencies—the Departments of Defense, State, and Energy and the intelligence community in particular—must develop comprehensive plans for tracking down WMD; securing WMD storage and production facilities; ensuring that Iraqis involved in the weapons programs are contained and prevented from fleeing the country; and destroying or removing WMD from Iraq.

**In contrast to Afghanistan, Iraq is far from a failed state.**

3. *Plan and train for other critical postconflict missions necessary to lay the foundation for a peaceful and secure Iraq that will enhance regional security.*

U.S.-led coalition combat forces should plan and train for at least six other major missions necessary to secure Iraq and enhance regional security.

- *Parole, retraining, and reintegrating the regular army.* Coalition forces should begin the extensive preparations necessary for the parole (return to civilian life) and/or retraining of the Iraqi army. Soldiers should be returned to their garrisons, fed, clothed, and possibly transported home. Their arms and equipment must be collected. Civil retraining and reintegration programs to promote former combatants' reintegration into a legitimate security organization or their return to civilian life will be needed to avoid long-term difficulties for reconstruction and development efforts and serious security problems.

Long-term security challenges and requirements for defensive self-sufficiency are too great in Iraq to justify completely demobilizing the military. If a coherent, credible Iraqi army is not quickly re-created, the United States will bear the burden of defending the borders indefinitely. It will be imperative to instill a new, apolitical culture within Iraq's restructured military as part of the effort to break the political and leadership role the military has traditionally played in Iraq.

- *Protecting Iraq's oil infrastructure.* Iraq's petroleum industry could be harnessed over time to fund much of the reconstruction effort and provide

capital to a postconflict government. Saddam must therefore be prevented from destroying the country's oil infrastructure as he attempted to do in Kuwait in 1991.

- *Protecting Iraq's territorial integrity.* Coalition leaders must obtain credible border guarantees from Iraq's neighbors, particularly Turkey and Iran, and be prepared to use combat forces in a deterrent role. Similarly, guarantees must be obtained from the Kurdish opposition parties that they will not declare an independent state of Kurdistan in the wake of regime collapse. Such guarantees would protect against the risk that Turkey would intervene militarily if the Kurds declared independence—as Turkey has threatened to do—or that Iran would attempt to install a Shi'i regime in Baghdad, intervene to protect the Shi'a in southern Iraq, or move on Iraq's southern oil fields.
- *Demilitarizing and eliminating the Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard.* The Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard—distinct entities created to protect Saddam—have received enough funding and training to be a threat to a new government. Moreover, these services have carried out numerous and serious human rights abuses under Saddam, effectively rendering them unusable as a viable and legitimate security force in the future. It is imperative that this force be demobilized quickly and thoroughly.
- *Securing Ba'th Party headquarters and Saddam's palaces.* Coalition forces must prepare in advance to stop the destruction of Ba'th Party headquarters and presidential palaces and to secure these premises after Saddam falls. As these represent and house the loci of power in Iraq—Saddam and the ruling Ba'th Party—it is likely that such premises also house information that will be relevant to war crimes and WMD. Ba'th Party members and other senior government and military figures loyal to Saddam will thus presumably attempt to destroy such evidence before losing control.
- *Dismantling internal security and intelligence apparatus.* Finally, the coalition forces should prepare now to dismantle Iraq's internal security and intelligence apparatus after a conflict. Internal security forces and the intelligence structure infiltrate every part of Iraqi society and permeate every Iraqi government institution. Dismantling them will be necessary to eradicate the climate of fear and oppression that currently marks Iraqi society.



**GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION***4. Establish an international transitional administration and name a transitional administrator.*

The United States has indicated its preference to see the UN run an international civilian administration in Iraq. The UN must begin setting up such an administration now so that it is prepared to place a functioning, core mission on the ground in Iraq by the time the conflict ends. In a January 2003 press conference, Annan noted that the UN is “doing some thinking, without assuming anything” about putting together postconflict structures for Iraq. He stated, however, that it would be “premature” to start discussing the appointment of a special representative to the secretary general (SRSG) for Iraq.<sup>8</sup> (In Kosovo and East Timor, the SRSGs doubled as the transitional administrators.) Although preparing a postconflict mission in a member state would place the UN in a politically delicate situation, failure to do so only invites repeating past problems associated with hastily planned postconflict civilian missions that were painfully slow to arrive in the field. Failure to prepare to deploy a civilian administration as soon as practicable after the conflict ends could lead to a destabilizing vacuum of political authority and would also mean a longer initial period of U.S. military occupation of Iraq.

**Iraqi oil wealth will not be able to cover all its own postconflict needs.**

The UN Security Council must appoint a transitional administrator as early as possible to allow him to begin planning his administration immediately, working with core staff members and liaising with military officials and humanitarian organizations. If political concerns preclude appointing an administrator before the conflict begins, the UN should appoint a coordinator to oversee the immediate process of setting up the transitional administration. Core staff members should be recruited now. The UN should solicit funds to spend on planning the civilian administration; to pay its salaries and other necessary expenses; and to support reconstruction projects that could begin right away, such as reopening schools, providing access to clean water, and rebuilding ports.

Security Council members must additionally begin discussions of the transitional administration’s mandate. The mandate must be robust, flexible, and unambiguous; it must provide the mission with full executive, legislative, judicial, and financial authority. At the same time, the administration should be streamlined, relying on existing Iraqi infrastructure and technocratic talent rather than importing an international cadre. To ensure that

Iraqis play the key role in their country's reconstruction, the mandate should emphasize maximum use of the existing Iraqi civil service at the local and national levels and call for Iraqis to head government ministries and the use of Iraqi advisory councils wherever useful.

The mandate also should call for maximum decentralization of government services and should stress paying salaries at the municipal level, which could have an immediate beneficial effect. A high degree of decentralization will increase the influence of suppressed regional voices and the identification and cultivation of Iraqis who will become the future leaders of Iraq.

5. *Develop a national dialogue process and recruit a national dialogue coordinator.*

The viability of any new Iraqi government depends on giving all Iraqis a tangible stake in its formulation. One effective means is a national dialogue process similar to the *loya jirga* in Afghanistan, which would maximize Iraqi input into the nature of their future state; open up a political process in Iraq; and ensure that the framework, timetable, and overall structure of Iraq's future government and political systems are Iraqi driven and directed. The UN should appoint a special coordinator for the national dialogue process—ideally an Iraqi—who could begin developing the outlines of a model now. The coordinator could begin planning for a series of municipal- and provincial-level meetings that would lead to a graduated selection of national dialogue delegates. These delegates would then deliberate on issues key to Iraq's future, such as addressing whether Iraq should be a federal democracy, developing a national process for reconciliation, and dealing with past wrongs.

In collaboration first with Iraqis in the diaspora and then with Iraqis throughout the country, the coordinator could begin to define the form and agenda of a national dialogue process. The agenda might include defining a new political and government system for Iraq, revising or drafting a new Iraqi constitution and legal codes, and devising a process for dealing with past wrongs, such as a truth and reconciliation commission or a general amnesty.

## **JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION**

6. *Recruit a rapidly deployable justice team of international legal experts, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, corrections officers, and public information experts.*

The UN should recruit standby teams of international legal experts, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and corrections officers who could rapidly deploy to Iraq to work with and train existing Iraqi personnel as well as to supplement their capabilities as needed. There is a significant amount of hu-

man and physical judicial infrastructure, including judges and lawyers inside Iraq and in the diaspora, a functioning court system, courthouses, laws, and a constitution, that can be built on when reconstituting the Iraqi justice system. Unfortunately, critical actors in the judicial arena will likely be seen as tainted after having enforced Saddam's laws for so long. It may be necessary for international officials to fill their positions temporarily. Regional and Iraqi talent and expertise should be drawn on to ensure greater grounding in local language and customs. The UN also should create a team of Iraqi expatriate and international lawyers to vet Iraq's existing laws and constitution for consistency with international human rights laws and to decide on the interim body of law to be applied in Iraq after the conflict.

**F**urther reconstruction needs will require at least a partial lifting of UN sanctions.

The past 20 years have eroded the Iraqi peoples' trust in their judiciary and law enforcement organizations. In order for Iraqis to begin to trust the transformation of these institutions from mechanisms of repression to defenders of human rights and the rule of law, the international community must undertake a massive public outreach and education initiative. Teams of public information officers, consisting of international experts and Iraqi legal experts conducting community outreach and education programs, could be effective in creating transparency and generating trust among the general public. These specialists could educate Iraqis about reforms to the legal code and promote dialogue among international personnel, community leaders, and the public on rule of law and human rights issues.

### *7. Identify and recruit CIVPOL.*

CIVPOL will most likely play the role of advisers, supplementing rather than replacing a sizable Iraqi civilian police force. The UN should immediately begin recruiting a limited force of CIVPOL to be utilized as police supervisors, mentors, and trainers in the immediate postconflict environment. The record of recent large-scale CIVPOL deployments in Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor has been mixed. Deploying limited numbers of CIVPOL while relying primarily on existing Iraqi personnel and infrastructure could alleviate some of these problems.

Iraq has 35,000–58,000 civilian police. A mechanism must be developed to vet the existing police force to cleanse it of the political remnants of Saddam's regime. The remaining officers could be employed under the su-

pervision of international authorities—most likely the transitional security force—until CIVPOL is deployed in force.

The UN also should begin developing plans for the reconfiguration and standardized retraining of the Iraqi police, the reconstitution of Iraqi police academies, and the decentralization of the police. A retraining program will be needed to instill the new chain of command, reinforce civilian control of the police, and educate and train Iraqi police on human rights standards.

### **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**

8. *Call for a debt-restructuring meeting and push the UN Security Council to begin a review of past war-related claims against Iraq.*

Iraq's financial burden is an estimated \$383 billion, including foreign debt, compensation claims, and pending contracts. Iraq must be freed from this overwhelming burden so that its oil revenues can be used to help pay for reconstruction—estimated to cost tens of billions in the first year alone and as much as \$25–100 billion overall.

Saddam has amassed \$62–130 billion in foreign debt, most of it in short-term loans from commercial banks but including some long-term debt to foreign governments. The U.S. government should lead the call to convene a meeting of sovereign claimants and creditors to discuss a speedy and effective debt renegotiation. This could be done as a formal Paris Club restructuring, through the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or through a specifically created debt forgiveness/reduction mechanism. Major creditors and claimants should agree to a five-year moratorium on Iraq's external debt, similar to the Paris Club creditors' agreement for Yugoslavia in 2001.

Iraq's overall financial burden includes \$172 billion in unsettled claims related to the Persian Gulf War, which have been submitted to the UN Compensation Commission (UNCC). In addition, there are \$43 billion in claims already resolved by the UNCC, which so far have been paid at a rate of about \$4 billion per year from Iraqi oil revenues as part of the oil-for-food mechanism. There are also reportedly \$100 billion in reparations claims related to the Iran-Iraq War, although the Security Council has never decided on a formal mechanism for resolving these claims. The United States should begin discussions in the Security Council about calling on the UNCC to cease consideration of all unsettled Gulf War compensation claims. The Security Council also should call on the UNCC to halt or discount further payment of already resolved claims, for which \$27 billion is still owed.

Finally, Saddam's regime has entered into contractual arrangements that could limit funds available for reconstruction. Iraq has pending contracts

with Russian, Dutch, Egyptian, United Arab Emirates, Chinese, and French entities estimated at \$57.2 billion, primarily in the energy and telecommunications sectors. The UN should establish a mechanism for reviewing the legality and legitimacy of these contracts to help ensure that the Iraqi people are protected against unfair or odious contracts signed by Saddam.

9. *Begin an immediate review of sanctions against Iraq and prepare necessary documentation to suspend or partially lift those sanctions.*

For the United States to mobilize an effective postconflict humanitarian and reconstruction response in Iraq, certain U.S. sanctions provisions will need to be waived. Currently, the Iraq Sanctions Act of 1990 and certain other U.S. statutory provisions prohibit, inter alia, all U.S. imports from and exports to Iraq, except for certain humanitarian goods as part of the oil-for-food program; all foreign military and commercial arms sales to Iraq; and most U.S. foreign assistance, other than emergency medical and humanitarian assistance.

Although it would probably be desirable to retain certain sanctions even after a regime change, such as restrictions on sales and exports of military items and on Nuclear Regulatory Commission licenses, some provisions will have to be waived in order for U.S. government officials, humanitarian organizations, and private citizens to participate in the postconflict reconstruction effort without undue delay.

In addition to these U.S. bilateral sanctions, the UN has imposed a regime of multilateral sanctions against Iraq pursuant to a series of Security Council resolutions. Resolution 661, passed in August 1990, is the foundation of the international sanctions regime. It prohibits imports of Iraqi goods and most exports to Iraq and freezes Iraq's funds and assets. Subsequent resolutions have tied lifting the sanctions to satisfaction of demands regarding payment of debt and compensation, WMD, and repudiation of terrorism. Resolution 986, passed in 1995, allowed for the limited sale of oil in exchange for humanitarian goods—the oil-for-food program—and this remains the only permitted avenue of goods out of and into Iraq. Though it may be possible to continue to provide humanitarian goods through the oil-for-food program, further reconstruction needs will require at least a partial lifting of UN sanctions. It may be particularly urgent, for example, to lift those sanctions prohibiting all exports to Iraq, as reconstruction projects

**Decentralization will increase the influence of Iraqis who will become future leaders.**

such as rebuilding bridges and power grids and reopening schools will in some cases require bringing certain goods and services into Iraq.

A Security Council working group should be convened immediately to begin holding discussions and drafting language to lift those sanctions

**It took more than a year for critical reconstruction projects to get started in Afghanistan.**

necessary to allow a robust humanitarian and reconstruction response. Even if the UN sanctions were lifted, the comprehensive U.S. sanctions still would limit the ability of U.S. government agencies and citizens to participate in the reconstruction efforts. Thus, all relevant U.S. government agencies—the State, Defense, Treasury, and Commerce Departments in particular—should simultaneously convene an interagency working group to discuss

which U.S. sanctions should be lifted after a conflict and to start preparing necessary documents.

10. *Convene a donors conference for Iraq.*

Funds will be needed right away for at least three critical objectives: to meet emergency humanitarian needs; to start up the international civilian mission; and to launch “quick start” reconstruction projects. The United States should work with major donor countries (European states, Japan, the Gulf Arab states), the World Bank, the IMF, and the UN to convene a donors conference to these ends.

Having humanitarian resources available will allow the NGO community to begin its preparations at the earliest date and also could free up some of the oil-for-food funds for other purposes, such as restoring local government services (police, lights, sanitation, schools) in addition to other tangible community needs.

Funds should be raised ahead of time to pay for the international civilian administration to ensure that at least the core administration can be inserted into Iraq immediately after a conflict. Previous UN postconflict missions, such as those in Kosovo and East Timor, have been painfully slow to arrive in the field, due in part to a lack of sufficient, immediately available funding.

Even assuming that Iraqi-generated funds could be used for reconstruction projects soon, the potential to use such resources will not be realized in the immediate term. Funds should therefore be raised for reconstruction projects that the international civilian administration could undertake right away. It took more than a year for critical reconstruction projects such as road rebuilding to get started in Afghanistan, leading to major

frustration with UN agencies and major donor countries on the part of the Afghan government.

## **Planning Postconflict Reconstruction Can't Wait**

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Getting postconflict reconstruction in Iraq wrong could devastate the interests of the United States, Iraqis, and the international community more broadly. One clear lesson from previous postconflict reconstruction efforts is the importance of preconflict planning, preparation, communication, and coordination. Anticipating and preparing for the myriad tasks that must be performed in countries emerging from war is an arduous task, but one that must be undertaken before the fighting starts if postconflict reconstruction efforts are to be effective.

The United States and the UN must immediately work together to take the concrete actions outlined here if they hope to be successful in what will be a long and costly process of reconstructing Iraq. Any postconflict reconstruction effort would benefit from the broadest possible involvement of countries and organizations other than the United States. If political considerations, however, prevent the UN or its member states from taking the early actions detailed here, the United States should nonetheless move forward on any of the actions recommended above that would not require UN action. Ad hoc, underfunded, and delayed efforts driven by unrealistic time lines and political considerations will not work.

The United States and the international community must commit the resources, military might, manpower, and time that will be required in Iraq—and we must start doing so now to militate against ethnic and retributive violence; infringements on Iraq's territorial sovereignty by neighboring countries; power-grabbing by competing factions within Iraq or Iraqi opposition members; and the inability to jump-start Iraq's economic recovery because of its overwhelming debt burden. A serious, early commitment to postconflict reconstruction could also lessen the deep distrust among Iraqis and the broader Muslim community about U.S. motivations for going to war with Iraq and the U.S. commitment to a peaceful and economically secure future for all countries in the Middle East.

## **Notes**

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