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SADDAM HUSSEIN: crimes and human rights abuses

A report on the human cost of Saddam's
policies by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office

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SADDAM HUSSEIN: crimes and human rights abuses

“Our quarrel is with Saddam, not the Iraqi people. They deserve better. Iraq is a country with a very talented population, a country that is potentially rich and successful. We want to welcome it back into the international community. We want the people to be free to live fulfilling lives without the oppression and terror of Saddam.”

Prime Minister **Tony Blair**,
TUC Conference, 10 September 2002

Introduction

Iraq is a terrifying place to live. People are in constant fear of being denounced as opponents of the regime. They are encouraged to report on the activities of family and neighbours. The security services can strike at any time. Arbitrary arrests and killings are commonplace. Between three and four million Iraqis, about 15% of the population, have fled their homeland rather than live under Saddam Hussein's regime.

For 10 years Saddam denied access to the UN Special Rapporteurs on the human rights situation in Iraq. However, in February 2002, Andreas Mavrommatis, the current UN Special Rapporteur, was able to make a brief visit. Iraqi officials accompanied him everywhere during a strictly limited programme. It remains to be seen whether he will be able to return to Iraq to continue his mission and if he will be given unrestricted access to enable him to carry out a full, independent assessment of Iraq's human rights situation. In his report, dated 20 August 2002, Mr. Mavrommatis regretted that, since his visit, the Iraqi government were not showing a sufficient level of cooperation. Iraq still refuses to allow UN human rights monitors to operate in Iraq, in defiance of the UN's demands.

Kurds and the Shia, the harassment of opposition figures outside Iraq and the occupation of Kuwait.

The United Nations Security Council and the UN Commission on Human Rights have repeatedly, over many years, condemned Iraq's human rights record. But Iraq continues to flout UN resolutions and to ignore its international human rights commitments. On 19 April 2002, the UN Commission on Human Rights passed a resolution drawing attention to "the systematic, widespread and extremely grave violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law by the Government of Iraq, resulting in an all-pervasive repression and oppression sustained by broad-based discrimination and widespread terror."

These grave violations of human rights are not the work of a number of overzealous individuals but the deliberate policy of the regime. Fear is Saddam's chosen method for staying in power.

This report, based on the testimony of Iraqi exiles, evidence gathered by UN rapporteurs and human rights organisations, and intelligence material, describes the human cost of Saddam Hussein's control of Iraq. It examines in turn Iraq's record on torture, the treatment of women, prison conditions, arbitrary and summary killings, the persecution of the

Torture

Torture is systematic in Iraq. The most senior figures in the regime are personally involved.

Saddam Hussein runs Iraq with close members of his own family and a few associates, most of whom come from his hometown of Tikrit. These are the only people he feels he can trust. He directly controls the security services and, through them and a huge party network, his influence reaches deep into Iraqi society. All real authority rests with Saddam and his immediate circle. Saddam is head of state, head of government, leader of Iraq's only political party and head of the armed forces.

Saddam presides over the all-powerful Revolutionary Command Council, which enacts laws and decrees and overrides all other state institutions. Several RCC decrees give the security agencies full powers to suppress dissent with impunity. An RCC decree of 21 December 1992 guarantees immunity for Ba'ath party members who cause damage to property, bodily harm and even death when pursuing enemies of the regime.

Saddam has, through the RCC, issued a series of decrees establishing severe penalties (amputation, branding, cutting off of ears, or other forms of mutilation) for criminal offences. In mid-2000, the RCC approved amputation of the tongue as a



new penalty for slander or abusive remarks about the President or his family. These punishments are practised mainly on political dissenters. Iraqi TV has broadcast pictures of these punishments as a warning to others.

According to an Amnesty International report published in August 2001, 'torture is used systematically against political detainees. The scale and severity of torture in Iraq can only result from the acceptance of its use at the highest level.' Over the years, Amnesty and other human rights organisations have received thousands of reports of torture and interviewed numerous torture victims.

Although Iraqi law forbids the practice of torture, the British Government is not aware of a single case of an Iraqi official suspected of carrying out torture being brought to justice.

A Tortured Family : a case brought to the attention of the FCO

A family, arrested in late 2000, were taken to two separate interrogation centres within Republican Guard facilities located along the road to Abu Ghraib. The husband was held in one centre whilst the wife and children were held at a women's facility. The husband and wife were interrogated under torture about the husband's sale of a vehicle which, the interrogators said, had been captured by Iraqi security forces during a raid on Iraqi oppositionists.

The interrogators said separately to both husband and wife that they would cease the torture if they signed confessions admitting to be collaborating with the oppositionists. They refused. The wife was stripped naked and cigarettes stubbed out on all parts of her body whenever she refused to implicate her husband. She was beaten and thrown around the interrogation room. Her children were forced to watch the torture. She was eventually released, having been told that her husband would continue being tortured until she returned to confess. She was arrested again two weeks later and the same pattern of torture was repeated, leaving her a psychological wreck.

During his interrogation, the husband's arms were tied behind his back and he was then suspended in the air using a hook hung from the ceiling. This caused intense pain as his shoulder muscles and ligaments were torn. After a period, the interrogators entered the room and the husband was unhooked and placed in a chair in the middle of the room. From close range, he was then shot at with a pistol whenever he refused to agree to sign his confession. Sometimes shots were fired which missed his body, at other times the pistol muzzle was placed against his fingers, toes or arms and fired so as to mutilate these areas.

Over the following two weeks further interrogations occurred at intervals, following periods of food and water deprivation. Eventually the husband's and wife's wider family paid a bribe to an Iraqi Intelligence officer and both the husband and wife were released. They subsequently escaped from Iraq.



Uday Saddam Hussein

Saddam's elder son. He has been frequently accused of serial rape and murder of young women.

He maintained a private torture chamber, known as "al-Ghurfa al-Hamra" (the Red Room), disguised as an electricity installation, in a building on the banks of the Tigris

He personally executed dissidents in Basra during the uprising that followed the Gulf War in March 1991.

In one infamous incident of mass torture, Uday Hussein ordered the national football team to be caned on the soles of their feet after losing a World Cup qualifying match.

As a member of the National Security Council, he bears command responsibility for all crimes committed with the authority or acquiescence of that body.

(From INDICT and other sources)

There is first-hand evidence that the Iraqi regime tortures children. In June, a BBC correspondent, John Sweeney, visiting the Kurdish safe haven of northern Iraq, reported the story of Ali, an Iraqi who used to work for Saddam's son Uday. Some time after the bungled assassination of Uday, Ali fell under suspicion. He fled north, leaving his wife and two-year-old daughter behind. The secret police came for his wife. They tortured her to find out where Ali was. When she did not tell them, they tortured the daughter, half-crushing her feet. When John

Sweeney met Ali and his daughter two years later, she was still hobbling. Ali feared that his daughter had been crippled for life.

Mr Sweeney also met six other witnesses in northern Iraq with direct experience of child torture, including another of Saddam's enforcers – now in a Kurdish prison – who told him that an interrogator could do anything. 'We could make a kebab out of a child if we wanted to' he told Mr Sweeney and chuckled.



Qusayy Saddam Hussein

Saddam's younger son. As head of the Iraqi internal security agencies, he has permitted and encouraged the endemic use of torture, including rape and the threat of rape, in Iraq.

(Source: INDICT)

The treatment of women



A Professional Rapist

Government personnel card of Aziz Salih Ahmed, identified as a “fighter in the popular army” whose “activity” is “violation of women’s honour” (i.e. a professional rapist).

(Source: *the Iraq Research and Documentation Project, Harvard University*)

Najat Mohammed Haydar, an obstetrician in Baghdad, was beheaded in October 2000 apparently on suspicion of prostitution, according to Amnesty International. Even by Iraqi standards her execution was an outrage. There was no evidence to support the charge of prostitution and she was reportedly arrested before the introduction of the policy to behead prostitutes. The real reason for her death was her criticism of corruption in the Iraqi health service.

Under Saddam Hussein’s regime women lack even the basic right to life. A 1990 decree allows male relatives to kill a female relative in the name of honour without any punishment.

Women have been tortured, ill-treated and in some cases summarily executed too, according to Amnesty International. Su’ad Jihad Shams al-din, a 61 year-old medical doctor, was arrested in Baghdad on 29 June 1999 on suspicion that she had contacts with Shia Islamist groups. The soles of her feet were beaten during frequent torture sessions before she was released without charge or trial on 25 July 1999.

Human rights organisations and opposition groups continue to receive reports of women who have suffered psychological trauma after being raped by Iraqi personnel while in custody. Raping female political prisoners is part of the regime’s policy, as the box illustrates.

According to Amnesty International, in October 2000, dozens of women accused of prostitution were beheaded without any judicial process, together with men accused of pimping. Some of the victims were reportedly accused for political reasons and had not been involved in prostitution. Representatives of the Ba’ath party and the Iraqi Women’s General Union witnessed the killings, carried out by members of the Saddam Fidayeen (the militia created in 1994 by Saddam’s elder son, Uday Hussein) using swords to behead victims in front of their homes.

Nidal Shaikh Shallal was fired from her government job and her husband was jailed for four months and tortured by Iraqi military intelligence. They later had their possessions confiscated and were expelled from their home by the Iraqi regime. On 18 October 2002, she told a meeting of the National Press Club in Washington about the situation of women in Iraq.

“The Iraqi woman has lost her loved ones – husbands, brothers and fathers,” Shallal said.

“The Iraqi woman has endured torture, murder, confinement, execution, and banishment, just like others in Iraqi society at the hands of Saddam Hussein’s criminal gang.”

“The heads of many women have been publicly cut off in the streets under the pretext of being

liars, while in fact they mostly belonged to families opposing the Iraqi regime. Members of Saddam Hussein’s gang have raped women, especially dissident women. The wives of dissidents have been either killed or tortured in front of their husbands in order to obtain confessions from their husbands. Women have been kidnapped as they walk in the streets by members of the gangs of Uday and Qusayy [Saddam’s sons] and then raped.”

On a personal level, Shallal said her brother had been arrested in 1980. Her family still does not know what happened to him. Several of her cousins have been executed. 882 male members of her tribe, the Jibour, have been arrested. Their fates are unknown.

Saddam Hussein’s Treatment of Women

Amnesty International (2001) – A 25 year old woman known as Um Haydar was beheaded in the street without charge or trial at the end of December 2000 after her husband, suspected by the authorities of involvement in Islamist armed activities, fled the country. Men belonging to Saddam Fidayeen took Um Haydar from her house in al-Karrada district, in front of her children and mother-in-law. Two men held her arms and a third pulled her head from behind and beheaded her in front of the residents. The beheading was also witnessed by the ruling Ba’ath Party in the area. The security men removed the body and the head in a plastic bag and took away the children and mother-in-law.

Human Rights Alliance, France (2002) – A young woman was arrested because her husband had refused to join the war against Iran. Pregnant at the time, she gave birth in prison on 3 December 1989. “I breast fed my son, but they took him away when he was seventeen days old – so that he would not become like me. I am still looking for him, I never had any further news of him”. This woman, who was also horribly tortured in prison, says she still suffers endless torture: the torture of not knowing where her son is.

Prison conditions

Conditions for political prisoners in Iraq are inhumane and degrading. The following description of prison conditions is based on British Government sources.

The “Mahjar” prison located on the Police Training College site in central Baghdad formerly housed the Police Dog Training Centre. The normal occupancy of the “Mahjar” is 600-700 people. Thirty of the cells are underground and thirty other cells used to be dog kennels.

Prisoners are beaten twice a day and the women regularly raped by their guards. They receive no medical treatment, but some prisoners have survived up to a year in the “Mahjar”. Two large oil storage tanks each with a capacity of 36,000 litres have been built close to the “Mahjar”. The tanks are full of petrol and are connected by pipes to the prison buildings in the “Mahjar”. The prison authorities have instructions to set light to the petrol and destroy the “Mahjar in an emergency.

General 'Abd Hamud, the head of Saddam's private office, has played a direct role in supervising prisons and their security. Both he and Saddam have signed death warrants for prisoners. The archive files holding these death warrants were kept hidden within the cafeteria area on the eighth floor of the main Ministry of Interior building in Baghdad.

The “Sijn Al-Tarbut” (the casket prison) is located on the third underground level of the new Directorate of General Security (DGS) building in Baghdad. The prisoners here are kept in rows of rectangular steel boxes, as found in mortuaries, until they either confess to their crimes or die. There are around 100-150 boxes which are opened for half an hour a day to allow the prisoners some light and air. The prisoners receive only liquids.

The “Qurtiyya” (the can) prison is located in a DGS compound in the Talbiyyah area of the Saddam City district of Baghdad. This consists of 50-60 metal boxes the size of old tea chests in which detainees are locked under the same conditions as the “Sijn Al-Tarbut”. Each box has a tap for water and a floor made of mesh to allow the detainees to defecate.

In early 1998, the Iraqi regime obstructed a UN weapons inspection team which was trying to investigate claims that Iraq had conducted biological weapons experiments on prisoners during the mid-1990s.

Freed Kurdish political prisoner tells story of Baghdad jail

Ra'id Qadir Agha is a member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. He served eight years in prison. The following is part of a report, in Ra'id's own words, of his imprisonment – published by the Iraqi Patriotic Union of Kurdistan newspaper *Kurdistani Nuwe* on 23 October 2002.

“At first they put me in a compressed room less than one metre high and with the same width. You couldn't sleep, nor could you stand in it. You could only sit. The room had been made with a thick plate with only one hole in the ceiling, through which they would give us water. However, when the investigations start, you lose your appetite for food, except water, because you are under great pressure and tension. I remained there for seventeen days.

In sector four (of the prison) they have ten rooms, all painted pitch black. Once there, you could see nothing and would not know whether it was night or day. For there were no lights in those rooms. You could hear nothing. The rooms were infested with large numbers of lice and rats. I spent about eight months in those rooms

We had only one loaf and a half of bread daily with half a glass of soup, actually which was not soup but only hot water. And in the evening they gave us a gravy of chard. On Thursdays they would provide us with food that had to last till Saturday. In the evenings they would open the doors not to let us go out, but to count the prisoners, to see who was dead and who was alive. It goes without saying, hair cutting or shaving the beard were out of the question and hunger was an extremely inhumane phenomenon. This condition lasted days, months, and years. Many prisoners starved to death. For at the beginning you would lose weight and grow lean and skinny. This state would cause a great deal of pain. Then you would begin to lose hair. Your skin would be affected in the same way. You would start losing your sight and hearing.”

Arbitrary and summary killings

Dealing with Demonstrations

(from the Iraq Research and Documentation Project, Harvard University)

This document shows a set of instructions for dealing with opposition demonstrations. The memorandum, dated March 6, 1991, is from Baghdad Security Headquarters to the Director General of the Dohuk Governorate Security Directorate and his subordinates.

Chief of Security
Dohuk Governorate
2/3/1991
Instructions

1. All officers, deputies and NCOs to report to their bases with all their weapons immediately upon hearing of a demonstration, in order to receive instructions.
2. All of those responsible for the self defence of the directorate to remain at post without leaving their place of duty under the supervision of officer in charge.
3. In the event of a hostile demonstration, these groups will be contained by closing all access routes and by taking control of all high points overlooking them.
4. After taking the above measures and containing the hostile elements, armed force will be used in accordance with central instructions to kill 95% of them, and to leave 5% for interrogation.
5. If the force comes under hostile fire from other directions and it is possible that there are saboteur elements in the vicinity to protect the demonstration, the force will return fire intensively.
6. An emergency force will be prepared to reinforce the primary force and to defend sensitive sites.
7. The technical unit will, when authorised, use technical means as instructed under the supervision of the officer of the unit and the security representative Tahir Mahmud Ahmad.

(Editorial note: technical unit and technical means are euphemisms for chemical weapons.)

Executions are carried out without due process of law. Relatives are often prevented from burying the victims in accordance with Islamic practice, and have even been charged for the bullets used.

Human rights organisations, such as Human Rights Watch, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iraq have reported the phenomenon of killing inmates in order to ‘cleanse’ the prisons. In 1984, 4,000 political prisoners were executed at a single prison, the Abu Ghraib. An estimated 2,500 prisoners were executed between 1997 and 1999 in a further “prison cleansing” campaign. In February 2000, 64 male prisoners were executed at Abu Ghraib, followed in March by a further 58, all of whom had previously been held in solitary confinement. In October 2001, 23 political prisoners, mainly Shia Muslims, were executed at Abu Ghraib.

Between 1993 and 1998 around 3,000 prisoners from the “Mahjar” prison were executed in an execution area called the “Hadiqa” (garden) near to the prison. The “Hadiqa” consisted of an open area and sand bank that was covered by a steel awning. Prisoners from the “Mahjar” were executed in the “Hadiqa” by machine gun.

A Special Oversight Committee at the prison decided on the executions.

Non-Judicial Beheading and Torture

(From the Iraq Research and Documentation Project, Harvard University)

Although local commanders have wide latitude to execute prisoners, this commander is rebuked for not interrogating them before killing them.

The document below was issued following the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council’s appointment in March 1987 of Ali Hasan al-Majid as head of all security, military and civil affairs in northern Iraq. Immediately after his appointment the Anfal campaign against the Kurds was launched. The regime pursued its campaign using a range of indiscriminate and lethal methods, including chemical attacks against Kurdish civilians, the destruction of Kurdish villages and executions by beheading.



*One Arab Nation With an Eternal Message
The Ba’ath Arab Socialist Party
The Region of Iraq
Northern Organisation Bureau Command
Number: 5083 (Secretariat Office)
Date 22 Aug 1987*

-Confidential and Personal-

*To: First Corps Command
Subject: Execution of Criminals*

Comradely Salute,

*[Re:] your personal and confidential letter
[No.] 352 on 8 Aug 1987.*

The valiant comrade, Ali Hasan al-Majid, Commander of the Northern Organisation Bureau, has commented as follows on your aforementioned letter:

“There is no objection to cutting off the heads of traitors. But it would have been preferable had you also sent them to Security for the purpose of interrogating them. [Security personnel] could have got from them other significant information that could have been useful, prior to their execution.”

Kindly review...Respectfully

[Signature]

Tahir Tawfiq

Secretary of Northern Affairs Committee

Ra’id Qadir Agha, the member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, whose experience of prison is given on page 11, recalls vividly the execution of prisoners.

“Also, on the day after Uday (Saddam’s son) was shot at, the death chamber section had more than 800 prisoners in it. You could see things for yourself from the rooms which overlooked the solitary section. It happened that the inmates of those two rooms, during that night, would draw a line on the wall for every dead body they saw taken out. Thus that very night more than 2000 prisoners were put to death. For they had brought a guillotine that beheaded 12 by 12, that is, twenty-four prisoners per minute.”

Persecution of the Kurds

Under Saddam's rule, Iraq's Kurdish communities have experienced terrible suffering.

Documents captured by the Kurds during the Gulf War and handed over to the non-governmental organisation Human Rights Watch provided much information about Saddam's persecution of the Kurds. They detail the arrest and execution in 1983 of 8,000 Kurdish males aged 13 and upwards.

Amnesty International in 1985 drew attention to reports of hundreds more dead and missing, including the disappearance of 300 Kurdish children arrested in Sulaimaniya, of whom some were tortured and three died in custody.

In 1988, Iraqi government forces systematically razed Kurdish villages and killed civilians.

Amnesty International estimates that over 100,000 Kurds were killed or disappeared during 1987-1988, in an operation known as the Anfal campaigns, to quell Kurdish insurgency and activities.

The campaign included the use of chemical weapons. According to Human Rights Watch, a single attack on the Kurdish town of Halabja killed up to 5,000 civilians and injured some 10,000 more.

Persecution of Iraq's Kurds continues today, although the protection provided by the northern No Fly Zone has curbed the worst excesses. Saddam's regime is pursuing a policy of Arabisation in the north of Iraq to dilute Kurdish claims to the oil-rich area around the city of Kirkuk. Kurds and other non-Arabs are forcibly relocated from there to other parts of Iraq.



The UN Special Rapporteur reports claims by Kurdish opposition sources that 94,000 individuals have been expelled from their

homes since 1991. Agricultural land owned by Kurds is said to have been confiscated and redistributed to Iraqi Arabs. Arabs from southern Iraq have been offered incentives to move into the Kirkuk area and, in disputes with their Kurdish neighbours, are always favoured by the authorities.

In addition, ethnic Kurds and Turcomans have been prevented from buying property and those who own property and wish to sell have to find an Arab buyer. Kurds have also been coerced into changing the ethnicity on their identity cards to Arab as part of this process. Turcomans are not even allowed to register as such. They must call themselves either Kurdish or Arab.



Ali Hasan al-Majid "Chemical Ali"

As commander for the northern region, he bears direct command responsibility for the chemical weapons attack on the town of Halabja in northern Iraq which resulted in the death of up to 5,000 people.

He also took a leading role in the brutal repression of the uprising that followed the Gulf War in 1991, which included mass executions, torture and widespread destruction.

(Source: INDICT)

The Plight of a Veteran

(Source: The Iraq Research and Documentation Project, Harvard University)

The document below (the English translation is on the right) is Asi Mustafa Ahmad's letter to Saddam Hussein asking for the whereabouts of his wife, daughter, and two sons, and answer from Sa'doun Alwan Muslih. The document, at the bottom of the page, is from the Chief of the Presidential Office, stating that "your wife and your children were lost during Anfal Operations that were carried out in the northern region in 1988." Dated October 29, 1990.



In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
 Mr. President, the Leader, Saddam Hussein (May God preserve him) The Honourable President of the Republic and President of the Revolutionary Command Council,
 I salute you a salute of comrades in struggle, and I present myself to you as one of the loyalists. I appeal to you in the name of the fairness of the Ba'athists to settle my case, which has occupied night and day, and I lost all hope, until I found nobody else to resort to other than you, I present you with this problem of mine for your attention.

My sir,
 I the undersigned (Asi Mustafa Ahmed), a returned prisoner on 24/8/1990, a reserve soldier born in 1955, took part in the glorious battle of Saddam Hussein's Qadisiyya in the Shosh sector. I fell prisoner on 27/3/1982, and I stayed imprisoned until the day the proclamation of the prisoner exchange was issued. So I returned to the homeland and I kissed the earth of the beloved homeland and I prostrated myself before a picture of Mr. President, the Leader, Saddam Hussein. In my heart was the longing to reach my family, they'll be happy to see me and I'll be happy to see them, in a joy that cannot be described. Except that, oh, my disappointment, although I found the house, I could not find my wife, nor could I find my children. And oh the catastrophe, and oh when they informed me that the entire family fell into the hands of the Anfal forces of the Anfal operation that was conducted in the northern region under the leadership of Comrade Ali Hasan al-Majid, and I do not know anything about their fate.

They are:
 1 - Azima Ali Ahmed born 1955, my wife
 2 - Jeroo Asi Mustafa born 1979, my daughter
 3 - Fraydoon born 1981, my son
 4 - Rokhosh born 1982, my son
 I've come to you with this petition of mine, pleading to be granted sympathy for and knowledge of their fate. May God prosper you and protect you, and thanks to you and respect.
 The returned prisoner Asi Mustafa Mohammed
 Without residence in Sulaimaniya / Chamchamal district Beeks Place / Haji Ibrahim Mosque
 4/10/1990



In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
 The Republic of Iraq
 Office of the Presidency
 Mr. Asi Mustafa Ahmed
 Number / Sh. A / B / 4 / 16565
 Sulaimaniya Province/Chamchamal District Date/10/Rabee' al-Thani/1411H
 Place / Beeks / Haji Ibrahim Mosque
 29 / 10 / 1990 M
 Per your request of 4 / 10 / 1990 M
 Your wife and your children were lost during the Anfal operations that were conducted in the northern region in the year 1988.
 Appreciatively,
 Sa'doun Alwan Muslih f/ Director of the Office of the Presidency

Persecution of the Shia community

The Shia community, who make up 60% of Iraq's population, is Iraq's biggest religious group. Saddam has ensured that none of the Shia religious or tribal leaders is able to threaten his position. He kills any that become too prominent.

In April 1980, a leading Iraqi Shia cleric, Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, was executed. Many members of another leading clerical family, the al-Hakim, were arrested in May 1983 and executed. Another member of this family, Sayyid Mahdi al-Hakim, was murdered in Khartoum in January 1988.

More than 100 Shia clerics have disappeared since the 1991 uprising. Sayyid Muhammad Taqi al-Khoie was killed in a staged car accident in July 1994. Following the assassination in 1998 of two leading Shia clerics, Grand Ayatollah Shaykh Mirza Ali al-Gharawi and Ayatollah Shaykh Murtada al-Burujerdi, the UN Special Rapporteur reported his fears that this formed part of a systematic attack on the independent leadership of Shia Muslims in Iraq.

In early 1999, during a peaceful demonstration in response to the Iraqi regime's murder of the most senior Shia cleric in Iraq, Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, security forces fired into the crowd of protestors, killing hundreds of civilians, including women and children. Security forces were also involved in efforts to break-up Shia Friday prayers in Baghdad and other cities. Large numbers of Shia were rounded up, imprisoned without trial and tortured. In May 2001, two more Shia clerics were executed in Baghdad for publicly accusing the regime of the Grand Ayatollah's murder.



Barzan al-Tikriti

Saddam's half brother. Personally responsible for the detention and/or murder of several thousand male members of the Barzani tribe in 1983. While head of Iraqi Intelligence (the Mukhabarat) 1979-1983, he was responsible for the repression of religious and ethnic minorities, including forced deportation, disappearances and murder.

Linked to the arrest of 90 members of the al-Hakim family and the murder of at least six of them.

In response to attacks on government buildings and officials in southern Iraq during 1999, the Iraqi army and militia forces destroyed entire Shia villages in the south.

During the 1990s, Saddam pursued a policy of draining the marshes area of southern Iraq so forcing the population to relocate to urban areas where it was less able to offer assistance to anti-regime elements and could be controlled more effectively by the regime's security forces. As an UN Environment Programme report put it – 'The collapse of Marsh Arab society, a distinct indigenous people that has inhabited the marshlands for millennia, adds a human dimension to this environmental disaster. Around 40,000 of the estimated half-million Marsh Arabs are now living in refugee camps in Iran, while the rest are internally displaced within Iraq. A 5,000-year-old culture, heir to the ancient Sumerians and Babylonians, is in serious jeopardy of coming to an abrupt end.'

Harassment of the Opposition outside Iraq

The UN Special Rapporteur has received numerous reports of harassment, intimidation and threats against the families of opposition members living abroad.

In mid-February 1999, the brother of a senior London-based member of the Iraqi National Accord (INA) was arrested by Iraqi Intelligence (the Mukhabarat) in Basra and forced to phone his brother in the UK and explain his predicament. A Mukhabarat officer subsequently spoke to the INA member in London and demanded that he co-operate with the Mukhabarat. The implication for his brother's well-being was clear.

In January 1999, the Mukhabarat phoned another INA official, who was told that his children and brother were under arrest in Iraq and would face punishment if he did not co-operate with the Mukhabarat. The Mukhabarat demanded details of the home, car and routines of INA head Dr Ayad Allawi. Iraqi intelligence has made at least one attempt to assassinate Dr Allawi.

From an interim report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iraq

General Najib al-Salihi, a senior officer in the Iraqi Army, left the country in 1995 to live in Jordan where he became an active member of the Iraqi opposition. After his departure, his male and female relatives in Iraq were subjected to arrests, questioning and other forms of harassment. His brother was forced to travel twice to Jordan to try and persuade him to return to Iraq.

General al-Salihi reported that on 7 June 2000 he received a telephone call from Baghdad and was told to go and collect a "gift" from a store in Amman. This consisted of a video tape showing the rape of a female family member. Ten days later he reportedly received a call from the Iraqi Intelligence Service. He was asked if he had received the gift and was told that one of his female family members was in the hands of Iraqi Intelligence. He was then again urged to stop his activities. General al-Salihi, during an interview with the Special Rapporteur, stated that he was willing to surrender the video tape only at the trial of a top Iraqi government official.

Occupation of Kuwait

Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990. Iraqi forces committed robbery, raped Kuwaitis and expatriates, and carried out summary executions. Amnesty International documented many other abuses during the occupation of Kuwait.

Iraq denied access to the Red Cross, which has a mandate to provide protection and assistance to civilians affected by international armed conflict.

As Iraq tried to impose its own identity on the occupied territory, Kuwaiti civilians were arrested for “crimes” such as wearing beards. People were dragged from their homes and held in improvised detention centres. In findings based on a large number of interviews, Amnesty International listed 38 methods of torture used by the Iraqi occupiers, including beatings, breaking of limbs, extracting finger and toenails, inserting bottle necks into the rectum, and subjecting detainees to mock executions.

More than 600 Kuwaiti and third country nationals remain unaccounted for. The British Government believe some were still alive in 1998. Iraq refuses to comply with its UN obligation to account for the missing. It has failed to provide sufficient information to close more than three of the 600 or so files.

In an attempt to deter military action to expel it from Kuwait, the Iraqi regime took hostage several hundred foreign nationals (including children) in Iraq and Kuwait, and prevented thousands more from leaving. Worse still, hostages were held as human shields at a number of strategic military and civilian sites, many in inhumane conditions. These acts were in violation of international law – the Fourth Geneva Convention, to which Iraq is a party – as was confirmed in United Nations Security Council resolutions 670 and 674.

At the end of the Gulf War, the Iraqi army fleeing Kuwait set fire to some 1,160 Kuwaiti oil wells, with serious environmental consequences.



Aziz Salih al-Nu'man

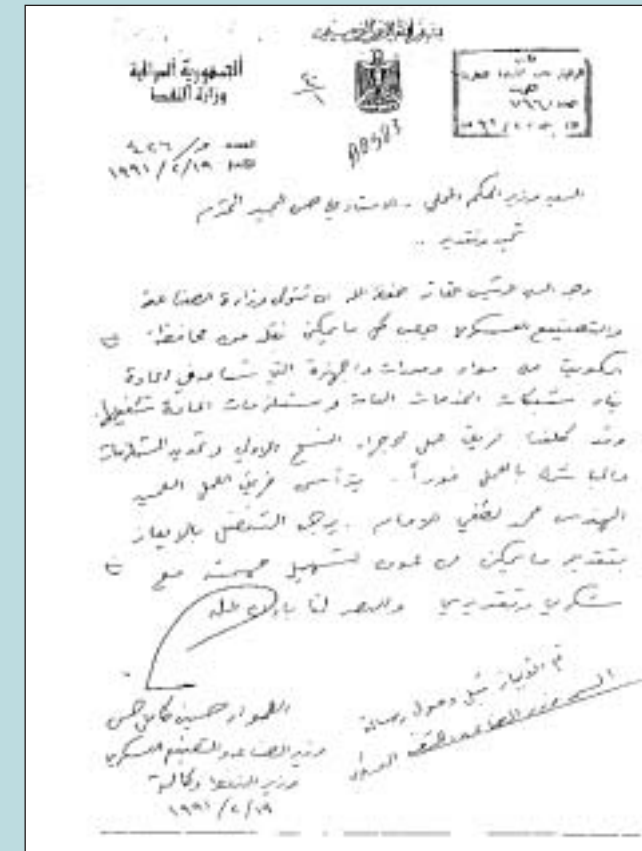
As Governor of Kuwait during the latter part of the occupation, November 1990 – February 1991, he bears responsibility for grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention (Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War) committed by Iraqi forces during that period, including murder, torture, rape and deportation.

(source: INDICT)

The Looting of Kuwait

(Source: Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait)

This document shows the organised way Iraq looted Kuwait



19/2/1991

Mr. Ali Hasan al-Majid

Minister of Localities

The President and Leader has instructed the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialisation to transport from the governorate of Kuwait all possible materials, plant and equipment that can be carried which could contribute to the reconstruction of the networks of public services and whatever is required to get them running again. We have charged a working party to carry out the initial survey to determine what is required and to set about work immediately. The working party will be headed by Brigadier Engineer Mohammed Lutfi al-Imam. Please note this and offer all possible assistance to facilitate his task. With thanks and regards, Victory will be ours, with God's will.

General Hussein Kamil Hasan

Minister of Industry and Military Industrialisation and acting Minister of Oil

This dossier does not include every Iraqi's personal story of suffering, caused by Saddam's regime, known to the British Government. There are sadly far too many to mention them all. But the evidence in the dossier is a faithful representation of what ordinary Iraqis face in their daily lives. It is no wonder that, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in 2001, Iraqis have become the second largest group of refugees in the world. Iraqis also top the table of foreign nationals seeking asylum in the UK.

Saddam Hussein has been ruthless in his treatment of any opposition to him since his rise to power in 1979. A cruel and callous disregard for human life and suffering remains the hallmark of his regime.

Saddam Hussein's Regime's Methods of Torture

The following methods of torture have all been reported to international human rights groups, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, by the victims of torture or their families.

Eye gouging

Amnesty International reported the case of a Kurdish businessman in Baghdad who was executed in 1997. When his family retrieved his body, the eyes had been gouged out and the empty eye sockets stuffed with paper.

Piercing of hands with electric drill

A common method of torture for political detainees. Amnesty International reported one victim who then had acid poured into his open wounds.

Suspension from the ceiling

Victims are blindfolded, stripped and suspended for hours by their wrists, often with their hands tied behind their backs. This causes dislocation of shoulders and tearing of muscles and ligaments.

Electric shock

A common torture method. Shocks are applied to various parts of the body, including the genitals, ears, tongue and fingers.

Sexual abuse

Victims, particularly women, have been raped and sexually abused, including reports of broken bottles being forced into the victim's anus.

"Falaqa"

Victims are forced to lie face down and are then beaten on the soles of their feet with a cable, often losing consciousness.

Other physical torture

Extinguishing cigarettes on various parts of the body, extraction of fingernails and toenails and beatings with canes, whips, hose pipes and metal rods are common.

Mock executions

Victims are told that they are to be executed by firing squad and a mock execution is staged. Victims are hooded and brought before a firing squad, who then fire blank rounds.

Acid baths

David Scheffer, US Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes, reported that photographic evidence showed that Iraq had used acid baths during the invasion of Kuwait. Victims were hung by their wrists and gradually lowered into the acid.

Saddam Hussein: Costs to Fellow Muslims

The Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) resulted in an estimated **1 million** Muslim casualties, dead and wounded. Iranian casualties were estimated at between **450,000 and 730,000**. Iraqi casualties were estimated at between **150,000 and 340,000**.

During the 1988 Anfal campaign in Iraqi Kurdistan, Iraqi troops were responsible for the death or disappearance of up to **100,000** Muslim Kurds.

On March 16 1988, Iraqi troops killed up to 5,000 and injured some **10,000** Muslim Kurds in a single day in a chemical weapon attack on the town of Halabja in northern Iraq.

The 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait led to the death of some 1,000 Kuwaiti Muslim nationals.

605 prisoners of war remain unaccounted for since 1991, including nationals of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, India, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Egypt, Bahrain, and Oman.

Between **3 and 4 million** Muslim Iraqis have abandoned their homes and sought refuge outside Iraq.

Many **hundreds of thousands of Iraq's Muslims** have been displaced internally. Estimates of 900,000 may be conservative. In the north, towns and villages were systematically destroyed by the regime during the war with Iran. Further south, non-Arabs in the region of Kirkuk have been relocated to other parts of Iraq and Arabs induced to occupy their homes and lands. And in the south, between 300,000 and 500,000 Muslim citizens have been forced from their traditional homes in Iraq's marshlands.

Thousands of Muslims have been arbitrarily arrested, ill-treated, tortured and executed in Iraq in recent years because of their suspected opposition political activities, or because they are relatives of people sought by the authorities.

Sources: US Committee for Refugees Report 2002

Human Rights Watch Country Report

International Alliance for Justice News Service 12/9/2002

Amnesty International Report – Victims of Systematic Repression

British Government's own sources

List of Chemical Attacks in Iraq from 1987-88 (based on Human Rights Watch – GENOCIDE IN IRAQ report)

Human Rights Watch carried out extensive research into chemical weapons attacks in northern Iraq. Based on field interviews, they reckon at least sixty villages, as well as the town of Halabja, were attacked with mustard gas, nerve gas, or a combination of the two in the Anfal campaign against the Kurds between 1987-88.

Human Rights Watch say that the Iraqi regime have used chemical weapons for at least four complementary purposes:

- (a) to attack base camps and main-force concentrations of Kurdish guerrillas.
- (b) to harass and kill retreating guerrillas
- (c) to inflict exemplary collective punishment on civilians for their support for the guerrillas. The most dramatic case is the chemical bombing of Halabja after the seizure of the town by guerrillas and Iranian revolutionary guards.
- (d) to spread terror amongst the civilian population as a whole, flushing villagers out of their homes to facilitate their capture, relocation and killing.

While a distinction between these different kinds of targets is helpful in understanding the tactical thinking behind the Iraqi campaign, it is without meaning in legal terms. Chemical weapons are by their nature indiscriminate, and their use is outlawed under any circumstances.