

# UNAMI FOCUS

## *Voice of the Mission*



News Bulletin on UNAMI Activities

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### SRSR Activities

On 19 February, SRSR Ashraf Qazi started a two-day visit to Iran where he held talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Manouschehr Mottaki. Mr. Qazi met with Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul in Ankara on 15 Feb 2007. In late January and early February, Mr. Qazi visited Syria and Saudi Arabia where he held talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallim and Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Saud Al-Faisal. These visits came as part of a regional tour aimed at hearing the views of Iraq's neighbors and encouraging them to contribute to the Government's efforts to reduce violence, bring greater stability and promote national reconciliation.

The SRSR also met with the Head of the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) Sheikh Humam Hammoudi to discuss the CRC, which resumed its work on 10 January 2007. Mr. Qazi was briefed by Sheikh Hammoudi that the CRC had established four subcommittees on political issues, the completion of the constitution, drafting text, and public outreach. According to Mr. Hammoudie, representatives of these subcommittees will shortly visit the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

On 25 Dec 06, the SRSR met with Sadrist members of the Council of Representatives (CoR), Nasser Al Ruba'i and Quasi Abdul Wahab. He also met Vice President Tareq Al Hashemi on 26 Dec 06 to discuss the deteriorating security situation in Iraq. A week earlier, Mr. Qazi met separately Deputy Prime Ministers Salam Al- Zouba'ee and Barham Saleh to discuss the latest developments in Iraq. Al-Zouba'ee stated that the UN should be given more responsibilities in Iraq as it is respected and trusted by all Iraqis. It should maintain its focus on Human Rights violations in Iraq. It should also prevent the interventions of neighbors, he said. Dr Barham Saleh, on the hand, urged the UN to play a more active role in Iraq. For him, the International Compact was the only viable vehicle for reform and reconciliation in Iraq as, in his view, the National Reconciliation Conference had failed to achieve any tangible results.

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SRSR Ashraf Qazi and Iraqi Minister of Water Resources Abdullatif Rasheed - Launching the Human Development report - Baghdad 26 Dec 2007  
26 Dec 2006

### UNAMI: Over 34,000 civilians killed in Iraq in 2006

According to the ninth UNAMI human rights report, nearly 6,400 Iraqi civilians were killed in the November-December 2006 period, slightly less than in the preceding two months, as rampant and indiscriminate killings, sectarian violence, extra-judicial executions - and impunity for the perpetrators - continued virtually unchecked. The report, which was released on 16 January 2007, puts the total civilian casualty figure for the year 2006 at 34,452 dead and 36,685 injured.

"An unprecedented number of execution-style killings have taken place in Baghdad and other parts of the country, whereby bodies were routinely found dumped in the streets, in rivers and in mass graves - most bearing signs of torture with their hands and feet bound, and some were beheaded," the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) human rights report for the period says of "the modus operandi" of both Sunni and Shiite groups.

Without significant progress on the rule of law sectarian violence will continue indefinitely "and eventually spiral out of control," thwarting efforts by the Government in the political, security or economic spheres, according to the report, which stresses the urgent need to fight impunity and seek accountability for crimes.

In virtually every sphere, and building on earlier reports, the latest study amounts to a

litany of abuses ranging from attacks on women, minorities and professional groups to forced displacements, to the activities of the police and security forces and the United States-led Multi-National Force (MNF-I).

According to information made available to UNAMI, 6,376 civilians were killed in the two-month period - 3,462 for November and 2,914 for December - compared with 7,054 for the previous two months, when October's toll reached a new high of 3,709. Despite the "slight reduction... it is evident however that violence has not been contained," the report warns.

It notes that law enforcement agencies do not provide effective protection. Increasingly militias and criminal gangs act in collusion with, or have infiltrated the security forces, while operations by security and military forces, including MNF-I, continue to result in growing numbers of individuals detained and without access to judicial oversight.

"Armed operations by MNF-I continued to restrict the enjoyment of human rights and to cause severe suffering to the local population," the report says, citing use of facilities protected by the Geneva Conventions, such as hospitals and schools, as military bases, allegations that

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MNF-I snipers killed 13 civilians in one week in Ramadi, and lack of access to basic services, such as health and education, affecting a larger percentage of the population.

The report reiterates previous calls to security and military forces to respect fully international law and to refrain from any excessive use of force.

It notes that since the bombing of the Shiite mosque in Samarra in February, some 471,000 people have been forcibly displaced. It calls the situation in Baghdad “notably grave,” with insurgents including foreign terrorist groups remaining particularly active.

“No religious and ethnic groups, including women and children, have been spared from the widespread cycle of violence which creates panic and disrupts the daily life of many Iraqi families, prompting parents to stop sending their children to school and severely limiting normal movement around the capital and outside,” the report says, also citing a “dramatic increase” in abductions in recent months.

It notes a rapid erosion of women’s rights in the central and southern regions. “Women are reportedly living with heightened levels of threats to their lives and physical integrity, and forced to conform to strict, arbitrarily imposed morality codes,” it says, with cases of young women abducted by armed militia and found days later sexually abused, tortured and murdered.

“Female corpses are usually abandoned at the morgue and remain unclaimed for fear of damaging the family honour,” it adds. “More than 140 bodies were unclaimed and buried in Najaf by the morgue during the reporting period.” In a suspected honour crime case, a secondary school student was publicly hanged in east Baghdad by armed militia and her brother shot dead when he tried to rescue her.

In the north it cites “honour killings” with 239 reportedly women burning themselves in accidents or suicide attempts the first eight months of 2006. “Most victims of suspected honour crimes suffer horrific injuries which are unlikely to have been accidentally caused whilst cooking or refuelling oil heaters,” it says.

Attacks have also continued or escalated against minorities such as Christians, homosexuals, and the thousands of Palestinian refugees who are seen as having supported the ousted regime of Saddam Hussein.

“Killings, threats, intimidations, and kidnappings are becoming the norm for Palestinians in Iraq. Many of these actions are reportedly carried out by the militias

wearing police or special forces uniform. Most of the victims are found dead or simply disappear,” the report says.

“The ability of new security plans to effect real change in Iraq will depend on a comprehensive reform program that can strengthen the rule of law and deliver justice for all Iraqis,” it stresses.

“It is essential that the State and the Government of Iraq are seen as united in their efforts to contain and eventually eradicate sectarian violence, to ensure the rule of law and, through that, remove the popular basis of support for the perpetrators of this violence.”

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## Political Update

On the eve of the first anniversary of the bombing of the Holy Samarra shrine one year ago, three explosions in quick succession on 12 February hit the Shorja market in down town Baghdad and killed dozens. The explosions which occurred during the 15 minute pause (12.00 local time) urged by Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki to commemorate the Sammara attack, coincided also with the deployment of thousands of extra security forces onto the streets as part of the long-awaited Baghdad Security Plan.

Although Implementation of the Baghdad Security Plan started on 14 Feb came simultaneously, a week earlier, US and Iraqi forces stormed the Ministry of Health and detained Undersecretary Hakim Al-Zamili, who is also a senior member of the Sadrist Movement. The MNF-I issued a statement in which it accused al-Zamili of funding the Mahdy Army through the large-scale employment of militia members. Gen. David Petraeus who officially took over the command of the MNF-I in Iraq from Gen. George Casey on 10 February is now in charge of the operation.

In tandem with these heated debates, Kirkuk was tabled again with the decision for Kirkuk Arabs to return to their original regions. The High Commission on the Implementation of Article 140 has issued Resolution No. 3 (dated 4 February) which stipulates that those Arabs who were brought to the governorate due to the Arabization policy be returned to their original regions in exchange for plots of residential land as well as financial compensation of ID 20 million for each. The decision drew negative reactions from non-Kurdish political entities.

In early February, Mr. Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, the leader of SCIRI continued his diplomatic tour to the Gulf countries, following his visit to Iran. He visited UAE and Bahrain. Although the original plan had included Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as well, Al-Hakim did not visit these two countries.

After so many delays, the Council of Representatives approved on 8 February the long-overdue 2007 budget. The 2007 budget of 41 billion USD is the largest in Iraq’s history with the level of deficit set at about 8 billion USD.

On 21 December, Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki and President Jalal Talabani met with U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates who was in Iraq for a three-day visit. The Prime Minister announced that the new Baghdad security plan to be completed soon would be implemented in the near future. Following his meeting with the Prime Minister, the Secretary of Defense attended the meeting of the U.S.-Iraqi Joint Security Committee

Iraqi Minister of Finance Baqer Al-Zubaydi on 22 December announced that the 2007 federal budget will amount to 41 billion dollars. He also indicated the new budget will cover a 50 to 70 percent increase in salaries of government employees, and interest rates will be raised to rein the current inflation of 56 percent and strengthen the Iraqi Dinar. Deputy Speaker of COR confirmed on 23 December that pending the Cabinet’s approval the Parliament will take up the budget for which purpose the autumn session will be extended for the whole month of January. Having no quorum due to the Sadrist boycott and poor attendance of other faction, the Council’s backlog has amassed dozens of bills, of which as many as 35 are awaiting either second reading or voting.

Prime Minister Recep Erdogan of Turkey, while visiting the U.S. and the UN on 19 December, called for a timetable of MNF-I withdrawal. Erdogan also suggested bilateral or trilateral meetings between Iran, Turkey, Syria and the U.S.

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## Constitutional Support Newsflash

Following the decision by the Council of Representatives (CoR) to recess until mid-March 2007, members of the CRC and international experts have departed for a series of study tours to Spain, Germany and Malaysia. These tours are led by the Office of Constitutional Support (OCS), in partnership with the UN Office of Project Services (UNOPS), and were held from 10 to 18 Feb. Iraqi Participants engaged with senior public officials and leaders in other jurisdictions on the central challenges of federal-constitutional government. At the same time, OCS is developing initial drafts recommendations on possible constitutional amendments in the areas of the judiciary; federalism; wealth and resource sharing; and human rights, to be presented to the CRC in final form over the coming weeks.

The CRC has established four subcommittees. on political issues, the completion of the constitution, drafting text, and public outreach.. The Political subcommittee is chaired by Mr. Iyad Samarai of Al-Tawafuk. It will decide upon such issues as federal and regional jurisdiction, sharing of natural resources. The Technical subcommittee is chaired by Mr. Fouad Massoum of the Kurdistan Alliance It will consider better textual reformulation of the constitution, including eliminating duplicating terms and articles. The Complementary Subcommittee is headed by CRC chairperson Sheikh Hamoudi. It will deal with such issues as judicial architecture, Federation Council, and independent institutions that were not thoroughly articulated in the current constitution. The Public Outreach subcommittee is formed to in order to handle public outreach through the coordination with civil society organizations.

The OCS has started organizing the second generation of its series of multiparty dialogues (MPD). In this regard, 15 Iraqi parliamentarians and officials participated in an MPD on the judicial architecture in the Iraqi constitution. It took place in Cairo, Egypt, from 21 to 23 January 2006.

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### **Electoral Update**

The status of the Iraqi Electoral Commission remains the same with the new Commission law remains stagnated by the inability of the Council of Representatives (CoR). Thus, the Commissioners are continuing to work without a clear mandate from the CoR and UNAMI is following up reports that the CoR may have reduced the Commission's operating budget for 2007. The Commissioners believe the entire budget has been restored and we are awaiting clarification now from the Ministry of Finance.

The Board of Commissioners (BoC) of the Iraqi Electoral Commission (IECI) attended a Graphic Information Systems (GIS) seminar in Amman, Jordan. This was conducted by a professional company dealing in GIS and gave the BoC an insight in not only the graphical use of the computer program system, but, also in its use for database management. This information will be valuable in formulating the Voter Registration List.

The BoC has sent a letter to Deputy Speaker of Council of Representatives (CoR) in relation to the extension of their mandate. BoC mandate expired on 10 November. This will clarify the position of the BoC in a legal sense, whilst the CoR decide on the IHEC Law.

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On 7 January, Chief of Human Rights Office (CHRO) met with the Minister of Human Rights to review activities in 2007 and ways to enhance the cooperation with the Ministry in connection with urgent individual cases of protection. On 4 January, CHRO met with the Chief Justice to discuss the special meeting on the rule of law of the sectoral working group, which took place on 13 January 2007. A paper outlining a framework on the rule of law for Iraq was also agreed upon with the chief justice who introduced it at that meeting. On 4 January, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, received KRG UN Representative Dr Dindar Zebari. Dr Zebari welcomed the strengthened presence of the UNAMI HRO in Erbil and its fruitful cooperation with relevant KRG Ministries.

On 1 January, Ministry of Interior ordered the closure of Al Sharqiya satellite channel for, allegedly, encouraging sectarian violence and reporting false information. On 3 January, its offices in Baghdad were raided by MOI forces and searched.

The HRO documents more cases of violence against women and suspected honour crimes in the North and Mosul. On 31 Dec, the police reported finding the bodies of two women in Islah Zraai, Mosul, bearing gunshot wounds to the head and body. On 3 January 2007, unidentified gunmen killed a woman inside her house in Al Ghadeer area. Bodies of victims, who were extra-judicially executed, continued to show up in Baghdad and other cities, some with signs of torture.

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### **Relief, Reconstruction & Development Activities**

The draft resolution and the Joint Monitoring Matrix annex of the International Compact with Iraq have been finalised based on the last preparatory group meeting in Baghdad. The UN Agencies' Clusters are currently in the process of determining specific areas where the UN could provide direct assistance in support of the outlined indicators. Discussions also took place with the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) Chair from Canada regarding the need to convene the next meeting of IRFFI donors to decide, inter alia, how best this funding mechanism can support the Compact. The precise date and venue for the IRFFI meeting have yet to be determined as these would correlate with the main Compact event which also remains undecided. In the meantime, recruitment for the Deputy Reconstruction and Humanitarian Coordinator appeared to be in the final.

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The PIO issued a press release on SRSG Ashraf Qazi's meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul. The meeting took place in Ankara on 15 Feb. On 10 Feb 2007, the PIO arranged for a televised interview with SRSG. Al-Iraqiyya Satellite Channel conducted it. Among the issues discussed: role of the United Nations in assisting Iraqis in the political, constitutional and electoral processes, UNAMI humanitarian activities in the country, Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries and elsewhere and internally displaced persons, impact of the current security situation in Iraq on Iraqis and the work of the mission.

On 8 February 2007, the PIO organized a luncheon at the SRSG's residence in Baghdad. It was attended by the New York Times Bureau Chief in Baghdad and another correspondent along with Chief of Public Information. The meeting, which was on deep background basis focused on the latest developments in Iraq.

On 4 February, the PIO issued a press release on SRSG's call on Iraqis to exhibit fresh thinking in facing violence. From 28 to 31 January, the PIO issued two press releases on Mr. Qazi's visits to Syria and Saudi Arabia. As part of its counter-journalism activities, PIO issued on 28 January a press release rejecting the erroneous report published by Al-Hayyat Arabic newspaper in which one of its correspondents claimed that SRSG Ashraf Qazi criticized Al-Maliki's Government and described it as sectarian and not representing all Iraqis. On 29 January, the daily published a report on SRSG Ashraf Qazi's visit to Syria including the rejection by PIO of the above-mentioned news. The PIO issued two press releases on SRSG's condemnation of bombings in Bab-Al-Sharji and Al-Mustansiriya University, which took place on 17, and 23 January respectively.

The office also issued a press release dated 30 December on SRSG's comments on imposition of death sentence against Saddam Hussein. SRSG Qazi said, "The UN stands firmly against impunity, and understands the desire for justice felt by the many Iraqis. Based on the principle of respect for the right to life, however, the UN remains opposed to capital punishment, even in the case of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide."

In early January, the PIO issued the end-of-year UNAMI Focus Magazine in Arabic and English.

The PIO assisted UNDP Iraq in arranging the launching of the Human Development Report 2006 in Baghdad, including a media advisory and invitation to the news conference following the presentation.

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## **Guest of the Month: Chief Administrative Officer UNAMI Mr. John Griffith**

UNAMI Focus Newsletter interviewed the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of UNAMI Mr. John Griffith few days before concluding his assignment, which started in April 2005.

### **How do you assess your experience in Baghdad?**

UNAMI is probably one of the most difficult missions I have ever worked in. When it comes to working in Iraq, the main concern is the security situation. It is extremely difficult here, probably the worst any mission has endured. The staff are working under very difficult circumstances. In addition to that and because of the security concerns, the mission is split in three countries, Kuwait, Jordan and Iraq. There are currently five offices in Baghdad, Basra, Erbil, Amman and Kuwait. All of this leads to an extremely difficult situation that involve stresses and burdens on the administration and also on other offices because you have the substantive primarily in Amman, Jordan, the administration in Kuwait and office of the administrative support for the substantive staff in Amman. So, having these offices in three countries is a challenge for everybody. The best solution will be to have the Amman and Kuwait offices amalgamated in whichever country sometime in the future to one office if we cannot come back to Iraq. There are ways of doing this but it has to be carefully managed from a staff perspective because there will be some changes there. The other challenge, of course, is the security concerns. 50% of the operational budget of UNAMI is related to provision of security equipment or services. Every construction we do or refurbishment of premises has to have a security concern related to it, which means an increase in cost of refurbishing and constructing any building. So, there is a long learning curve that has been going on here especially on the administration and security sides. It has not gone to such an extreme prior to 2003 and it is not the same extreme in other missions. Movement of staff is another concern. It is difficult because it involves getting staff in and out of the International Zone and in and out of Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) to Amman and Kuwait and other destinations. This has been a challenge for everybody. We now have our own Danish aircraft but it is not the aircraft of first choice, administration would prefer commercial chartered aircraft as opposed to military aircrafts. But that was something that United Nations headquarters and Secretary-General at that time did not want. That may change in 2007. Military planes have a history of breakdowns or engine failure. The failure rate is about 51% on military C-130 aircrafts. So, this is an area which needs to be looked at.



CAO of UNAMI Mr. John Griffith –Baghdad –Feb 07

### **What are the high and low points that underline the uniqueness of this mission?**

Because the mission is so challenging that is a high point in itself. There is a very stressful working environment due to the daily changing security situation in Iraq. The low point is probably our office in Basra from an administrative perspective. My predecessor invested in one facility down there and that was on the agreement with the Iraqi Government and Multi-national Forces that they could protect us. As soon as the investment was concluded, they said they could not protect it any more. So, we had to move and moving to Basra Palace Island which has been agreed on by everybody: Iraqi Government and MNF-I, and we moved there but the security situation deteriorated. We are now in the process of moving out from there. It needs careful planning. In an area such as Iraq with Security concerns and deterioration, more careful thought has to be given in the future when investing large sums of money on something that has a precarious future.

### **What would you advise UNAMI staff?**

Because we are spread in three countries, there is an inevitable detachment among these three offices. Staff have to be patient, tolerant and try even harder to work as a team. That is a challenge in itself because they are not in one building. They also have to ensure that once in Iraq they have to take particular care of security and safety. That in itself is difficult. One more thing, staff should abide by the curfews and reporting times. It is important to ensure that Security and Safety Unit knows where they are at any given time.

### **If you were to do it again, what would you do differently?**

A: When I first came here, there was a criticism leveled that the administrative support was mainly in Kuwait, and there were maximum of nine staff members and often two to three people in Baghdad from the administration side. I made a conscious effort to change that. That worked well from the beginning but now we are in a stage where once again staff levels are going down for security concerns. Although

I concentrated my time here in Baghdad, I probably would on retrospect after the first six to nine months spend more time in Amman and Kuwait. In other words, I would do more rotation than staying mostly in Baghdad. This is my advice to my successor, especially now when the staff levels are going down. It is probably the right time to devote more time to the other two offices. If I were staying, this is what I would probably be doing to increase the team spirit so that staff won't feel that they are left out or on the side. And the same applies to other substantive offices because since we have sized down many substantive staff went to Amman and they need more guidance on what to do in some areas. So the chiefs presence in the other two offices will give the staff motivation and more direction and focus.

### **In your opinion, what areas should UNAMI PIO pay more attention to?**

A: I think it is long overdue that UN has its own 24/7 TV station like. It should concentrate on all activities of the UN and not only on those of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. There are plenty of programs that are put out by UN and viewed on major TV stations such as World Report on CNN. There is a need for a UN Satellite Channel in order to provide a universal access. That would get the message on what the UN is doing to the average person in different parts of the world. This is important because the UN spends millions of dollars of various tax payers' money and they have the right to be informed about how their money is spent. Regarding Iraq the security situation does not allow setting up a UN TV station but a Radio station is feasible. I think that UNAMI PIO has done a fine job in representing the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq (SRSRG) and responding to issues. Perhaps, the UNAMI monthly Focus magazine should include information and updates from Administration and Security sections in order to make it of more internal interest, and I see that you have started doing so by conducting this interview.

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## Fiji Guard Activities

FGU has involved itself in a lot of activities for the last 2 months. The month of December was the highlight whereby Fiji Guard Unit (FGU) celebrated its festive season at a high note.

FGU personnel made all attempts to assure their families and friends at home of their duty in Baghdad as most of their family were worried about the increase in incidents in Iraq at this festive season. One can only be in such places as Iraq to know and understand how much he or she misses their family because this is something that people used to take for granted.

On Sunday 03 December 2006, FGU conducted its second Commanding Officers Parade whereby the Commanding Officer (CO) Lieutenant Colonel Moses Tikoitoga gets to review the parade, he ensured that the discipline of soldiers is up to a standard. During this Parade, the CO addressed the Battalion as a whole assuring of their duty here in Iraq. The third of such parade was conducted on Sunday 07 January 2007 and Lieutenant Colonel Tikoitoga reiterated to members of FGU that it is a new year with a new beginning and FGU personnel should think about developing their task and responsibilities and most of all ensure that it is better than the previous year.

The Rotation of troops from Erbil on Wednesday 24 Jan 2007 brought about significant changes in the lives of soldiers. Troops get to experience a new working environment which was productive and most of all enjoyable by everyone. FGU personnel from Erbil were astonished upon their arrival to hear Gunshots and Car Bomb exploding as it is an unusual thing to hear from their Area of Operation (AO).

In addition to all these activities the Battalion Operation Readiness Check (ORC) was conducted at month's ends. The December ORC was conducted from 26 – 28 December 06 and the third ORC was conducted on 23 – 25 January 2007. This activity involves the conduct of exercise to ensure that troops are prepared if security alerts arises.

Further to the activities of FGU, the troops from Erbil conducted a Quarter Guard for the Japanese Director of National Security Policy Division Mr Jun Shimml that visited the Area of Operation (AO) on Thursday 01 February 2007.

## Photos from UNAMI Activities

### Welcome Aboard



On 21 January a C-130 belonging to the Danish Airforce and dedicated to the exclusive use of UNAMI landed in Kuwait. The aircraft made its maiden flight to Baghdad on January 29. UNAMI plans to maintain a scheduled service of three flights per week connecting Kuwait, BIAP and Amman. The aircraft will also carry out non-scheduled flights as required by the Mission and will be available for use by staff of other UN agencies on its scheduled flights.



On 26 December 2006, UNAMI PIO organized a press conference to launch the Human Development report for 2006. The conference was attended by SRSR Ashraf Qazi, Iraqi Minister of Water Resources Abdullatif Rasheed, Head of UNDP Iraq Paolo limbo. The report focuses on human development, water, and poverty.



On 16 January 2007, the Human Rights Office at UNAMI issued its ninth bimonthly report on Human Rights situation in Iraq. On this occasion, UNAMI PIO organized a press conference, during which the Chief of Human Rights Office Gianni Magazzeni presented the report. Some 15 journalists and correspondents representing various media organizations attended the event which was held at the Convention Centre of the Iraqi Parliament.



From FGU Parade- Dec 2006

### UNAMI Focus

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