



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Institute for the Study of International Migration

## ***IRAQ: The Human Cost of War***

Panel Discussion on the Humanitarian Situation in Iraq

March 21, 2007

Sponsored by the Institute for the Study of International Migration and the  
Iraq Remembrance Week Organizing Committee

Panel discussion on **IRAQ: The Human Cost of War**. Experts from the Brookings Institute, UNHCR, and the State Department shed light on the current humanitarian situation in Iraq. The panel explored various topics, including the refugee and displacement crisis, the impact of the war on Iraqi society and development, protection challenges, and plausible solutions for these issues. An hour long Q & A session followed the panel discussion.

### ***Event:***

Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007

10 AM- 12 PM

ICC Auditorium- Inter Cultural Center, Georgetown University

Panelist Topics, Biographies, and Statements are below.

**The panelists included:**

***Roberta Cohen,***

Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights.

Topic: *Impact of sectarian violence on displacement within Iraq and solutions proposed for addressing the problem.*

***Wendy Young,***

Coordinator for External and Governmental Relations United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Topic: *The on-the-ground humanitarian crisis in Iraq, causes for refugee flight, and UNHCR's role. She gave a statistical overview of numbers and locations, and analyzed protection challenges and the UNHCR's plans to address such issues.*

***Adam Shapiro,***

Co-founder of the International Solidarity Movement and former Country Director in Afghanistan for the international human rights organization Global Rights.

Topic: *The current situation of Palestinian Refugees from Iraq.*

***Lawrence E. Barlett,***

Representative from State Department, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration.

Topic: *The burgeoning US Role in Protection and Assistance of Iraqi Refugees.*

***Moderator: Susan Martin,***

Director, Institute for the Study of International Migration

Donald G. Herzberg Chair in International Migration, Georgetown University

**The Panelists Bios are below.**

***Roberta Cohen***

Roberta Cohen is a specialist in human rights and humanitarian issues. She is a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and serves as Senior Adviser to the Brookings Institution-University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement, which she co-founded and co-directed for more than a decade. From 1994 until 2007, she served as Principal Adviser to the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons and subsequently to the Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons.

Together with Representative Francis Deng, she co-authored the first major study on the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) -- those uprooted by conflict, ethnic strife and natural and human made disasters who remain within the borders of their own countries. Entitled *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement* (Brookings, 1998), the study proposed the creation of an international system for addressing the needs of IDPs. In 2005, Deng and she were co-winners of the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order.

Cohen has published about 100 articles on human rights and humanitarian issues in journals such as the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Forced Migration Review*, *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, *Global Governance*, *Harvard International Review*, *International Studies Perspectives*, and the *United Nations Chronicle*, and a series of op-eds in leading newspapers on human rights and humanitarian issues. She won the DACOR (Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired -- State Department) Fiftieth Anniversary Award in 2002 for Exemplary Writing on Foreign Affairs and Diplomacy, in particular on humanitarian issues, and the 2005 Washington Academy of Sciences Award for Distinction in the Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Prior to her focus on internally displaced persons, Cohen served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights in the Carter Administration and as Senior Adviser to the United States Delegation to the UN Commission on Human Rights and General Assembly. She was a public member of the US Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2003 and a public member of the US Delegation to the Commission on Human Rights in 1998. She served as Executive Director of the International League for Human Rights, as Honorary Secretary of the Parliamentary Human Rights Group (United Kingdom), and as a consultant to UNHCR, the World Bank, the National Academy of Sciences and various non-governmental organizations. For 5 years, she worked in Africa and won the Superior Honor Award of the United States Information Agency for reopening and expanding US-Ethiopian educational and cultural ties in difficult political times.

She received an Honorary Doctorate of Law from the University of Bern in 2006 and has an MA with distinction from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a B.A. from Barnard College, which awarded her its distinguished alumna award in 2005.

### **Wendy Young**

Ms. Wendy Young is the Coordinator for External Relations at the UNHCR Regional Office for the Caribbean and the USA. Her main responsibilities are liaising with the Executive and Legislative Branches of the United States Government and the nongovernmental community to enhance political and financial support for the Office's humanitarian programs. She promotes the Office's work on refugee protection, asylum, and resettlement efforts with the country offices of other United Nations agencies and key international and US non-governmental organizations.

Prior to joining UNHCR, Wendy Young has been active in refugee and asylum issues for almost 20 years. She served for more than ten years with the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. An acknowledged expert on refugee protection challenges, she has worked closely with the US Congress, the US Department of State, the media, and other organizations. She authored numerous reports on asylum issues to lead legislative reform efforts.

In recognition of her leadership on behalf of refugee women and children, she has received the American Immigration Lawyers Association *Human Rights Award*, the American Bar Association *Child Advocacy National Certificate of Recognition*, and the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center's *Annual Award*. She holds a Juris Doctorate and a Master of Arts in International Affairs from American University and a Bachelor of Arts from Williams College.

### **Adam Shapiro**

Adam Shapiro is a human rights activist and documentary filmmaker. He is currently working independently to help Palestinian refugees from Iraq find safe haven and security. He previously served as Country Director in Afghanistan for the international human rights organization Global Rights. He is a Ph.D. candidate in International Relations at American University, and holds an MA in Politics from New York University and an MA in Arab Studies from Georgetown University. Adam is co-producer and co-director of two documentary films, "About Baghdad" (2004) and "Darfur diaries: message from home" (2005). He is working on a third documentary filmed in Afghanistan. Adam is also a co-founder of the International Solidarity Movement in Palestine and lived and worked in the Occupied Palestinian Territories for three years. He has lived and worked throughout the Arab world and speaks Arabic.

### **Susan Forbes Martin**

Susan Martin holds the Donald G. Herzberg Chair in International Migration and serves as the Director of the Institute for the Study of International Migration in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. Dr. Martin is also Co-Director of the Certificate Program on Refugees and Humanitarian Emergencies. Previously Dr. Martin served as the Executive Director of the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, established by legislation to advise Congress and the President on U.S. immigration and refugee policy, and Director of Research and Programs at the Refugee Policy Group.

Her publications include *Refugee Women, The Uprooted: Improving Humanitarian Responses to Forced Migration*, *Beyond the Gateway: Immigrants in a Changing America* (ed.), *Managing Migration: The Promise of Cooperation*, the *World Migration Report: 2000* (ed.), and numerous monographs and articles on immigration and refugee policy. She is also the principal author of the *2004 World Survey on Women and Development: Women and Migration*, commissioned by the United Nations Division on the Advancement of Women.

Dr. Martin earned her MA and Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Pennsylvania and her BA in History from Douglass College, Rutgers University. She is the President of the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration and serves on the U.S. Comptroller General's Advisory Board, the Academic Advisory Board of the International Organization for Migration, and the Board of the Advocacy Project.

## **Full Text of Panelists Statements on ‘Iraq: The Human Cost of War’.**

### **STATEMENT BY ROBERTA COHEN, BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, AT THE PANEL ON ‘IRAQ: THE HUMAN COST OF WAR,’ GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, MARCH 21, 2007**

My remarks will focus on the relationship between sectarian violence in Iraq and the forced displacement of 4 million Iraqis, both inside the country and abroad. I will also examine some of the different proposals being put forward for dealing with sectarian violence and displacement.

Last fall, a report published by the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement documented how extremist groups of Sunnis and Shias were driving the expulsions of Iraqis from their homes.<sup>1</sup> The information was compiled by an Iraqi team composed of both Sunni and Shia men and women who visited different provinces of Iraq where sectarian violence was rife.

Their main finding, which has become quite evident today, is that the sectarian violence has begun to change the social and demographic makeup of many Iraqi cities, helping to fragment Iraq along religious and ethnic lines. The Sunnis and Shias pushed out of their homes mostly go to areas where their group is in the majority while Christians flee to parts of Ninewah province and Kurds flee to the northern Kurdish areas. A de facto ethnic segregation has begun in Baghdad and other cities.

The violence is organized by extremist groups; it is not spontaneous or popular. The groups use threats, intimidation and direct violence to expel people. Moqtada al Sadr’s Mahdi army for example has driven most Sunni families out of eastern Baghdad. It has also pushed hundreds of Sunni families out of the mainly Shiite district of Hurriyeh by means of murders, kidnappings, graffiti on walls, mortars or rockets, visits by masked men, threats by neighbors, torching of mosques and businesses. Similarly, many Shia have been forced out of western and southern Baghdad and from Anbar province.

The goals of the extremist groups are to consolidate their territory and impose their authority on particular areas. They seek to usurp the government by forcing people to rely on them. Indeed, in many areas the extremist groups replace the government because they protect neighborhoods and provide relief supplies so that people turn to them rather than the government. At the same time, the extremist groups are connected to Shia and Sunni political parties and movements, which rely on the insurgent groups to maximize their own power in the government. The ultimate prize is the political control of Iraq and the control of its resources, in particular oil.

The violence used by the extremist groups is intended to make sure that people do not return to their home areas. Indeed, bestiality is often relied on – the beheading of children, the sewing of dog heads on beheaded corpses, the use of electric drills on people. As a result, many of the displaced people interviewed by the Brookings team indicated that they would not want to return to their homes, or believe they will be unable to since the displacement reflects more than temporary insecurity but deep-seated political divisions in the country.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ashraf al-Khalidi and Victor Tanner, *Sectarian Violence: Radical Groups Drive Internal Displacement in Iraq*, Brookings Institution-University of Bern Project on Internal Displacement, October 2006.

Even prior to the February bombing of the holy Shia shrine in Samarra, sectarian strife was on the rise. But after February 2006 Shia restraint against the Sunnis came to an end and extremist groups aided by government forces and the police began to go on rampages against Sunni civilians. Basically, this is a civil war by armed groups against the other side's civilians. Al Sadr's Mahdi army is in the forefront when it comes to persecution and killings of Sunnis. His group controls more than 30 seats in the parliament and Prime Minister al Maliki relies on Al Sadr's support. For the time being, the Mahdi Army is lying low, letting the US and government forces go after Sunni extremists. But the Mahdi army can always resume its violence once the Americans withdraw. The Badr brigade of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, mainly in the south, also drives sectarian displacement. To complicate matters, there has been inter-sectarian violence between the Mahdi army and the Badr brigade, both Shiite groups, for control over territory. On the Sunni side are the Association of Muslim Scholars, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Islamic Party. There are also al Qaeda operatives.

The numbers of persons displaced by sectarian violence since the Samarra bombing is estimated at more than 700,000 people. Since not all IDPs register, the numbers are imprecise. The overall total of IDPs in Iraq is estimated to be 1.9 million. These also include hundreds of thousands uprooted by coalition military operations as well as hundreds of thousands uprooted by the policies of the Saddam Hussein regime and who have not yet returned to their homes. However, the newest and fastest growing number of displaced people is from sectarian violence; it is also the kind of displacement that can seriously damage the political process.

Administrative displacement – or the deliberate transfer of mainly Sunnis to different job locations, presumably on ethnic grounds – is another aspect of sectarian displacement. In addition, hundreds of thousands of people are teetering on the brink of displacement. They may stay at home, but they sleep in different houses at night, and fear to go to work or school during the day – a form of pre-displacement.

Those uprooted by sectarian violence are not only Sunnis and Shias but sizeable numbers of minority groups – Kurds, Christians, Sabians, Turkmen, Roma as well as foreign nationals – Palestinians and Sudanese, who are also expelled from Sunni and Shia areas. There are also expulsions and flight from the Kurdish areas in the north although the situation here is different from the sectarian violence in the center and south. Under Saddam Hussein, large numbers of Kurds were expelled from Kirkuk and its surrounding areas in order to Arabize these areas. When Kurds began to return after the 2003 war, some 100,000 Arabs fled or were pushed out by the Kurdish authorities or Pesh Merga and became displaced in other parts of Iraq. Yet Kurds also remain displaced because of Saddam Hussein's Arabization policy.

Most of Iraq's internally displaced persons face extreme hardship, many with urgent needs for shelter, food, medicines, clean water, employment and basic security. While the vast majority stays with families and friends, host families are running out of resources. Unknown numbers of IDPs are in public buildings, schools, improvised shelters, parks, cemeteries, soccer fields, and about 7,000 in government run camps administered by the Iraqi Red Crescent.

The national government does not have the skills, resources or will to take care of their displaced populations. Government agencies provide food rations and place children in schools, but the government has a reputation for incompetence and corruption, as well as ethnic partiality. To this I can testify having met some of the staff members of the Iraqi Displacement and Migration Ministry. Local authorities, local neighborhoods and mosques are reportedly more effective, as is

the Iraqi Red Crescent, but local authorities do not usually provide housing and jobs and some have begun to limit the number of IDPs coming into their areas. As a result, it is often the radical sectarian Shia and Sunni groups that lend support to the displaced, intentionally filling the void left by the government and local authorities.

The international community has been slow to recognize the humanitarian crisis inside Iraq. For several years, billions of international funds focused on recovery and development programs that couldn't be implemented because of the violence. Both the Iraqi and US governments assumed that the domestic situation would stabilize and that IDPs and refugees would return home. This proved to be terribly wrong. Fortunately a reassessment of UN programs and donor priorities is now taking place, with needed attention planned for IDPs and refugees. However, UNHCR's January appeal for \$60 million for 4 million Iraqi refugees and IDPs is too small. It is essential that the international community increase its humanitarian funds for Iraqi refugees and IDPs. The US has offered one third of the \$60 million but should offer up to one half, should seek to give substantial aid to Syria and Jordan, and should take in more than 7,000 Iraqis in its resettlement program this year, in particular Iraqis who risked their lives to help Americans. Hopefully, the conference being called by UNHCR in April will produce better results.

It has also been proposed that UN agencies and international NGOs should establish greater presence inside Iraq. A January report of the Feinstein International Center points out that UN agencies and NGOs cannot be effective in Iraq if they operate by remote control and if they rely on coalition forces for security. It recommends greater staff involvement with local leaders and local communities who can provide protection. However, one is left wondering what the cost will be for humanitarian organizations that work closely with the social welfare offices of armed militias, especially in times of sectarian cleansing.

Another debatable proposal is one put forward by the Iraqi government this month. As part of its Baghdad security plan, it called upon the displaced to return to their homes and reconcile with their neighbors. But this could be life threatening given the lack of security in their home areas. The government also ordered all Iraqis occupying other people's homes in Baghdad to leave or be evicted. Fortunately, US military officers have refused to comply since displaced people may have no choice but to occupy empty homes.

Military options are regularly put forward. Indeed, one of the purposes of the US surge of troops is to create calm in the capital and presumably some space for political solutions to the sectarian violence. However, there are several caveats to the surge strategy. For one, while violence has diminished in Baghdad, it has risen in surrounding provinces. Second, in order to maintain the reported calm achieved, American troops may have to stay indefinitely, which is not realistic. Third, the idea that local troops and police can be built up to address sectarian violence is too often undermined by incidents of local troops and police supporting sectarian violence.

The most effective solution would be a political one but at present there does not seem to be willingness on the part of the Shia or Sunni to genuinely share power in a democratic framework. Some analysts as a result have proposed partition of the country into Kurdish, Shiite and Sunni areas with shared oil revenues. Accompanying partition would presumably be population transfers. In fact it has been argued that the international community should help relocate people to areas of their own ethnic origin on a voluntary basis. Not surprisingly, this solution has proved repugnant to many since it puts the international community in the position of facilitating ethnic cleansing. It is also complicated because there are many mixed families and many people used to

living with and working together with people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Yet advocates of the idea argue that it may be the only way to protect people from sectarian violence. If they ask to be relocated for protection, they should be helped.

Another contested idea is whether IDP camps or safe havens should be created on a large scale since not everyone can leave the country. However, in the current environment of sectarian violence, safe areas could easily become targets of attack or be taken over by one ethnic group or another. Moreover, it would be difficult to protect people in camps unless these become near detention centers surrounded by troops, which raises concerns in particular about freedom of movement. Rather than camps, many humanitarians insist that IDPs should be helped where they are, but this of course presumes presence and access in different locations, which may not always be possible.

The best solution, some argue, is open borders so that people can readily flee Iraq and become refugees. However, Jordan and Syria, after taking in near two million refugees, have become stretched to capacity and have begun to close their borders. Fear of terrorism has also been a factor. Terrorists, some point out, can infiltrate refugee populations; in addition, foreign governments as well as armed groups can manipulate and arm the refugees, especially if camps are set up. It is better therefore to contain the problem. Others, however, counter that the Iraqi refugee profile does not fit the usually cited case of the Afghan mujahadeen, who after losing a civil war took up the fight abroad to regain their homeland. In the case of Iraq, greater international burden sharing, the provision of temporary protection, and expanded resettlement programs could prove more effective.

To conclude, it is clear that solutions for Iraq's refugees and IDPs will be difficult to achieve. A political solution is nowhere near conclusion, which means that the civil war will continue to run its course, with the possibility that one side or the other may win and that a democratic state will not emerge. During this interim period, it is essential to strengthen the humanitarian response. The United States has a special obligation here since its actions in Iraq have spawned the current crisis.

**Statement by Lawrence E. Bartlett  
Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration  
U.S. Department of State  
Presentation at Georgetown University Session on  
Iraq: The Human Cost of War  
March 21, 2007**

Since 2003, the U.S. Government has provided substantial support to UNHCR, WFP, ICRC, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and a range of NGOs that provide direct assistance to Iraqi refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq, and third country national refugees inside Iraq to help meet basic humanitarian needs and support reintegration programs. These programs reinforce the USG's reconstruction and security efforts in Iraq. Our support has increased the capacity of Iraqi government ministries working with refugees and internally displaced persons, provided training to non-governmental organizations serving

refugees, and assisted numerous victims of conflict. These programs helped many of the 300,000 Iraqi refugees who returned home between 2003 and 2006 to reintegrate into their own communities and helped many of the estimated two million IDPs inside Iraq to meet basic needs.

Due to the upsurge in sectarian violence beginning in 2006, this trend has reversed, and currently many more Iraqis are fleeing their homes to other areas of Iraq and to neighboring countries. UNHCR estimates that 712,000 Iraqis have become displaced within Iraq since February 2006, and that between 1.5 to 2 million Iraqis are outside Iraq, though a large percentage of them had left Iraq prior to 2003. We believe the current population of Iraqis in Jordan and Syria is a mixture of the Iraqis who departed before 2003 and newer arrivals. Many organizations, including UNHCR, have raised concerns about new arrivals and growing numbers of Iraqis in these countries, though neither UNHCR nor the governments of Jordan or Syria have definitive figures on the size of the population.

Although we lack firm figures on how many Iraqis are seeking refuge in neighboring countries we do know that many left with minimal resources and are living on the margins. Other than al-Ruwaished, which shelters a stable population of third country nationals from Iraq, Jordan and UNHCR have not established refugee camps. In Syria, Palestinians from Iraq are sheltering in the El Hol camp, but all others from Iraq are living on the local economy. Anecdotal reporting indicates that many Iraqi children in these countries do not have access to schools or adequate health care. We need better information on the needs of Iraqis in these countries, particularly their protection concerns. The Government of Jordan has agreed to allow a survey of the needs of Iraqis in Jordan that would guide the international community in focusing assistance and protection activities. The Government of Syria is also considering a new survey of Iraqis in Syria. We hope these surveys will be undertaken in the very near future.

We are not waiting for precise numbers before responding to the needs of vulnerable Iraqis in neighboring countries. We are continuing our support to UNHCR and NGO programs benefiting Iraqis in these countries. In 2006, the U.S. provided nearly \$8 million to UNHCR for their programs for Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. We have pledged \$18 million in 2007 towards UNHCR's \$60 million appeal. In 2006, we also provided \$3.3 million in funding to an NGO to assist the most vulnerable Iraqis in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. In 2007, we are expanding support for these and similar programs serving needy Iraqis in neighboring countries, beginning with \$20 million to support UNHCR, ICRC, and some NGO programs. An additional \$15 million is included in the President's FY07 supplemental request and we are identifying additional funding to meet growing needs.

Our support for UNHCR's refugee protection mandate and our diplomatic efforts with host governments will continue to be an essential part of our strategy to help preserve the principle of first asylum and ensure that assistance reaches vulnerable refugees. In a visit last week to the region, Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey appealed to Syrian and Jordanian officials that they keep their borders open and allow the international community to implement programs on behalf of needy and vulnerable Iraqis. Both Governments said they would continue to offer asylum and assistance to Iraqis. Both Jordan and Syria are also hosts to sizeable Palestinian refugee populations, and we recognize the additional burden Iraqi refugees place on these countries. We are working with UNHCR and host governments to see how we can help bolster their capacity to provide protection and assistance so Iraqis do not over-stretch social service networks and these governments' ability to continue to receive Iraqis seeking asylum.

Another aspect of our response to Iraqi refugee needs in the region is a planned expansion of our U.S. resettlement program. The U.S. has been resettling Iraqi refugees since the mid-1970s. To date the U.S. has resettled more than 37,000 Iraqis, the vast majority of whom were victims of Saddam Hussein's regime. Since April 2003 we have resettled 692 Iraqis in the United States. In light of the increased influx of Iraqis into Jordan and Syria in 2006 and early 2007, we have acted aggressively to expand our ability to offer more Iraqis refuge in the United States during 2007. One element of this expansion is to boost UNHCR's resettlement operations in the region. In 2006, we provided an additional \$400,000 of funding targeted to support UNHCR resettlement operations in the region. These expanded operations will increase registration efforts, help identify vulnerable cases, and boost the number of referrals to our program and those of other resettlement countries. We have provided another \$500,000 for this purpose in 2007.

Given the large numbers of Iraqis in Syria and Jordan, the U.S. and other third country resettlement programs will play a small but important role in the international community's overall effort to meet Iraqi refugee needs. We are working closely with UNHCR to prioritize U.S. resettlement for the most vulnerable Iraqi refugees in Jordan, Syria and other countries.

There are also some special populations of Iraqis that have received notice from humanitarian organizations – minority populations in Iraq and Iraqis who have worked closely with the United States in Iraq. Some have called for special protection and programs for these people, including religious minorities such as Christians, who have fled Iraq or those who have worked for the American government or U.S. organizations or companies. Many of these Iraqis are in refuge in Jordan, Syria, or Turkey and may be unable to return to Iraq because they fear for their lives. We intend to ensure that these special populations receive full consideration and access to the U.S. resettlement program.

I want to take a moment to talk about important programs the U.S. Government supports inside Iraq. While recent reports have highlighted the conditions of Iraqis in neighboring countries, there are populations of concern still inside Iraq. UNHCR and the Iraqi government estimate there are as many as 2 million internally displaced persons and another 44,000 third country national refugees in Iraq. The U.S. Government continues to support UNHCR, ICRC, and key NGO programs inside the country that assist communities with new internally displaced persons, recently returned refugees, and victims of violence. For example, we support important programs that upgrade hospitals throughout the country and provide medical services to those who are innocent victims of the armed insurgency. We also fund and provide diplomatic support to programs that seek to protect, assist, and provide durable solutions for Palestinian, Turkish, and Iranian refugees inside Iraq. In 2005 and 2006, we funded the movement of over 3,000 Iranian Kurdish refugees from the Al Tash refugee camp near the strife-torn town of al Ramadi to a safe area in Northern Iraq – providing permanent housing, employment programs, and local integration support. We are also working closely with UNHCR and the governments of Iraq and Turkey to enable the voluntary return of more than 10,000 Turkish Kurdish refugees from the Mahkmour refugee camp to their home villages in Turkey.

In addition, the U.S. Agency for International Development continues its strong support for the protection and assistance requirements of nearly 700,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq. NGOs work closely with new IDPs to provide life-saving and sustainable assistance throughout the country. The steady increase in displacements will require additional funding in 2007; there is \$45 million in the President's FY07 supplemental request for USAID's support on behalf of IDPs in Iraq.