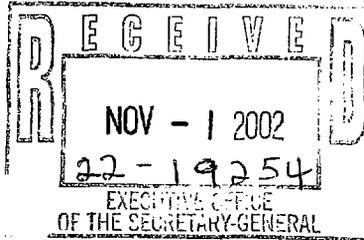


NATIONS UNIES
LE HAUT COMMISSAIRE
POUR LES RÉFUGIÉS



UNITED NATIONS
THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR REFUGEES



Caso Postale 2500
1211 Genève 2 Dépôt
Suisse

1 November 2002

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

Dear Kofi

In the context of UN's ongoing efforts to plan and prepare for an eventual crisis in Iraq, UNHCR has been working on its preparedness and contingency planning. As you may know, I also visited Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Yemen and Jordan recently, and exchanged views with the authorities.

Enclosed please find the document "A Summary of UNHCR's Contingency Planning for a Potential Refugee Crisis in and around Iraq". I would also like to draw your attention to the annexed Terms of Reference for the UNHCR's Special Co-ordinator, who will provide the overall supervision of our planned activities.

I am at your disposal for further information and consultation.

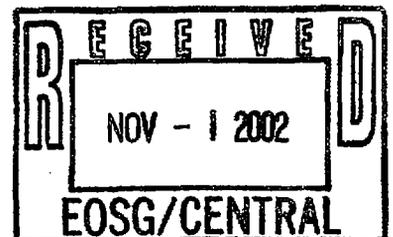
Yours sincerely,

~~_____
Ruud Lubbers~~
b. int Ruud

cc has been sent to Salman Ahmed and Rick Hooper

Mr. Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the
United Nations
New York

cc: Ms. Louise Fréchette, Deputy Secretary-General, UN Headquarters
Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs



**A SUMMARY OF UNHCR'S CONTINGENCY PLANNING
FOR A POTENTIAL REFUGEE CRISIS
IN AND AROUND IRAQ**

Restricted Distribution



1 November 2002

1. The Role of UNHCR in the Event of a Refugee Crisis in and around Iraq

In the event of a crisis in Iraq and a subsequent outflow of people in the neighbouring countries, acting on the basis of its mandate UNHCR's priority concern would be to ensure that the immediate protection and material needs of those fleeing are being met. To do so, UNHCR will advocate for an open border policy and a temporary protection regime in neighbouring countries. Should this option prove not to be achievable, UNHCR is ready to envisage cross border operations, provided that both minimum security conditions are met and that by doing so the protection of the concerned people is not further jeopardised. In all cases, UNHCR's response will be carried out in close co-operation with the authorities of each of the respective host countries, or other relevant authorities, and in full co-ordination with the other concerned UN agencies.

2. Planning figures for Populations of concern to UNHCR

Conflict in Iraq could lead to major population displacements of which the following groups would be of concern to the High Commissioner (planning figures are given in brackets):

- (a) Iraqis crossing the border into neighbouring countries to seek asylum (300,000);
- (b) Asylum seekers stranded at the border inside Iraq (200,000);
- (c) Refugees currently in Iraq (100,000);
- (d) Third country nationals currently in Iraq, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion who are unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail of the protection of his/her country.

3. Existing refugee population inside Iraq

UNHCR is concerned about the existing refugee population inside Iraq, which amounts to approximately 100,000 people, comprising 62,000 Palestinians, 14,000 Turks and 24,000 Iranians. In the event of a collapse of government structures and resulting widespread insecurity, these refugee groups inside Iraq may be forced to flee and seek asylum in neighbouring countries or in safer areas inside Iraq. These populations are of direct concern to UNHCR. However, each one of these groups may require a specific approach and response, which is currently still being internally discussed¹.

¹ Issues at stake (among others): (1) Need to reach an understanding with UNRWA on its role vis-à-vis the Palestinian refugees currently in Iraq in case of an emergency. (2) Should Humanitarian Evacuation be envisaged for the refugees currently in Iraq in the event of a major conflict inside Iraq? Under which conditions? Where to? etc.

4. Overall Co-ordination on Refugee Issues

In order to ensure both coherence and efficiency in the delivery of the emergency refugee programme and to facilitate co-ordination with concerned governments and other UN agencies, the High Commissioner will appoint a Special Regional Co-ordinator.

5. Protection, Assistance and Operational Co-ordination

In the event of a mass influx of population into countries neighbouring Iraq, responding to the protection and assistance needs of the refugees could prove to be a daunting task. In order to ensure a rapid, coherent and efficient response during the initial phase of the emergency, UNHCR will take the lead in the planning, delivery and co-ordination of protection and the provision of material assistance for refugees. In co-operation with other UN and humanitarian agencies, UNHCR has already developed a six-month integrated emergency protection and assistance programme, which includes four priority components, namely:

- (a) the protection of the refugees (border monitoring, reception at the border, registration and profiling of the refugee population, camp monitoring and follow up on individual cases);
- (b) the provision of a winter package (tent, blankets, mattresses, heating/cooking stove, kerosene lamp, fuel and plastic sheeting);
- (c) the provision of basic water and sanitation services in accordance with recognised international standards;
- (d) sectoral level co-ordination of the refugee programme - co-ordination functions will involve harmonising and streamlining policies, needs assessment, resources and implementation as well as facilitating the flow and sharing of information.

6. Co-operation with neighbouring countries

In relation with points one (1) and five (5) above, UNHCR will practice full partnership with the neighbouring countries capitalising on their prime responsibility, generosity and capabilities. UNHCR will co-operate fully with their NGOs and implementing partners.

7. UNHCR's Current and Planned Level of Preparedness

UNHCR is developing a two-phase approach in relation to a possible crisis in and around Iraq. First, efforts are currently focussed on pre-positioning of NFIs in two locations in the sub-region² for an initial outflow of 100,000 people into the countries bordering Iraq. In addition, UNHCR's global stand-by capacity includes 72 international staff members ready for deployment within 72 hours and a Central Emergency Stockpile in Copenhagen with NFIs for 250,000 persons. In the second phase, subject to the availability of funds, UNHCR's contingency plan envisages the reception, protection and assistance to some 600,000 refugees for an initial period of 6 months. In the context of the IASC Reference Group on preparedness, close co-ordination and ongoing information sharing is maintained with OCHA and other concerned UN agencies.

8. Constraints on Level of Preparedness

The financial constraints have placed serious difficulties on preparedness efforts. To date, pre-positioning of NFIs in the region is underway for just 71,000 of the projected 100,000 persons in phase one. This modest figure has been achieved thanks to \$1.5m US identified from existing CASWANAME resources and NFIs released by BE from SEO stocks, both of which will require eventual reimbursement. The estimated requirements to cover the pre-positioning of NFIs for 100,000 persons is \$11.5m US³, while the equivalent figure for pre-positioning for 600,000 persons foreseen under the contingency plan, is \$53.1m US. The total requirement for a six-month operation, including staff costs, is \$154m US, of which \$113m US (73%) would be needed for pre-positioning and the first three months' response.

9. Fund Raising Strategy and Current Financial Constraints

It is clear that the current financial constraints facing UNHCR, in particular the lack of operational reserves, prevents the Organisation from preparing for the full projected outflow (600,000). Should a crisis in Iraq become inevitable, the rapid mobilisation of resources (i.e. rapid response by donor governments) will be essential to be able to respond to the immediate needs of the people and avoid undue suffering. A funding strategy is under discussion internally, and will eventually be co-ordinated at the inter-agency level.

² Iskenderun in Turkey and Aqaba in Jordan

³ This includes support costs and a lump sum for vital sectors (water, sanitation, etc.)

10. Issues Requiring a Global UN Approach and Response

Issues arising from a military intervention in Iraq may have a direct impact on the humanitarian operations inside and possibly outside Iraq. The very nature of these issues, including the sensitive political dimension of some of them, will require a global UN approach and response. Among these issues, the following can be highlighted:

- Cross border involvement of neighbouring State(s) for humanitarian and/or political purposes;
- Separation of combatants from refugee population;
- Safety zones inside Iraq;
- Relations with the military and potential involvement of military in humanitarian action;
- Human rights issues;
- The use or threat of use of NBC weapons;
- Co-ordination among agencies;
- Advocacy and Public Information;
- The use of CERF;
- The use of OIP funds.

1 November 02

**Terms of Reference
for
UNHCR's Special Co-ordinator for the Iraq Crisis**

The High Commissioner's Special Co-ordinator for the Iraq crisis, in close co-ordination with the Regional Bureau Directors and the other concerned competent units at Headquarters, will:

Advise the High Commissioner on developments in the Iraq situation;

Oversee development of UNHCR policy and strategy in anticipation of, and in response to an Iraq crisis, and supervise its implementation;

In the framework of the United Nations response, co-ordinate the international community in addressing the needs of refugees and other persons of concern to the High Commissioner;

Liase with senior UN and government officials, envoys and other representatives of the international community involved in contingency planning and initial response in order to ensure that UNHCR's mandate and its co-ordinating role in relation to persons who fall under it are recognised and respected;

Develop and maintain senior level contacts with Governments of all countries concerned, in order to promote UNHCR's policies and objectives in the region;

Provide related briefing to diplomatic and donor communities as well as the media on humanitarian developments in the region and on UNHCR's objectives and response, in order to create an understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Office and obtain necessary political and material support;

Co-ordinate and supervise aspects of the work of UNHCR Representatives in the region that relate to the crisis in Iraq in order to ensure coherent and consistent implementation of UNHCR policies and operations throughout the region;

Accompany the High Commissioner to meetings on the Iraq crisis and oversee preparation of policy statements to be made at such meetings;

Represent the High Commissioner in conferences and meetings dealing with the Iraq crisis to put forward UNHCR's position and gather support for the policies and objectives of the Office.

UNHCR (1 Nov 02)

UNHCR

Office of the Secretary General



Correspondence Log # 22-19254

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PRIORITY

M/K

*Should I see this?
Hy/ky added?
or summary?*

SR 12/11

Perkins 11/11

