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CONFIDENTIAL

August 6, 2003

To: Members of the Executive Board  
From: The Secretary  
Subject: **Iraq Security Assessment and Protection of Fund Missions**

Attached for the **information** of Executive Directors is a paper on an Iraq security assessment and the protection of Fund missions.

It is not intended that this paper will be published on the Fund's external website.

Questions may be referred to Mr. L. Perez, MED (ext. 35944) and Mr. Schroeder, TGS (ext. 34849).

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INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

**Iraq Security Assessment and Protection of Fund Missions**

Prepared by the Middle Eastern and Technology and General Services Departments

Approved by George T. Abed and Brian C. Stuart

August 5, 2003

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. In response to the discussion at the Executive Directors' informal briefing on Iraq on July 28, this paper reports on current security conditions in Iraq and the measures taken to protect Fund mission teams. The assessment reflects the views of the Middle Eastern and Technology and General Services Departments.
2. In assessing the appropriateness of fielding Fund missions to Iraq, management and staff seek to balance the need for the Fund to play its role in helping the people of Iraq with the paramount importance of ensuring the safety of Fund staff. Fund security services are monitoring the situation on a daily basis, in close cooperation with the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD). To date, the Fund has judged it appropriate to field small missions, subject to the precautions discussed below. However, the situation is very fluid and could change at any time.
3. Given the dangerous and changeable security environment, and with unclear prospects for improvement, Fund operations in Iraq face significant challenges. UNSECOORD has declared Iraq to be in Security Phase Four, which restricts entry into the country to staff directly concerned with emergency or humanitarian relief operations, or security. Accordingly, Fund missions have so far been kept small to improve safety and are limited to essential travel only.

**II. SUMMARY OF SECURITY CONDITIONS**

4. The general security environment in Baghdad and the Central Region is poor and volatile, and conditions are judged unlikely to improve substantially over the next several months. Nevertheless, the risk to staff in Iraq can be minimized so long as future mission teams continue to carefully follow established security protocols.

5. There has been an increase in the number of attacks against CPA forces protecting airports, government offices, museums, hospitals, and all major highways into and out of Baghdad. The alleged sources of the attacks include Ba'ath Party loyalists, other irregular fighters, and armed bandits. Attacks have included the use of landmines and concealed explosive devices along roadsides, "hit and run" assaults against CPA forces, sniper shootings, and vehicle-to-vehicle drive-by assaults.
6. The widespread availability of weapons and military-grade ordinance has amplified the scope and level of violence both against the CPA forces and among Iraqis. The local population is victimized by car-jackings, street robberies and shootings.
7. Indigenous law enforcement does not yet play a major role in the CPA's efforts to restore public order and basic stability. Security continues to be the exclusive responsibility of the CPA forces. A dusk-to-dawn curfew remains in effect for all UN agencies and their personnel.

### **III. SECURITY SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND FUND MISSIONS**

8. While the CPA has overall responsibility for approving all movement of international organizations' staff into and out of Iraq and for the overall security arrangements in Iraq, the Special Representative for the Secretary General of the United Nations (SRSG) is specifically responsible for security arrangements for the United Nations and other international organizations currently on the ground in Iraq.
9. The CPA has established detailed registration requirements for all those entering and leaving Iraq, and both the CPA and the SRSG are informed in advance of all Fund mission movements into and out of Baghdad. Executive Directors representing the CPA are also formally contacted to seek their concurrence with a proposal to send a mission. Security clearances are obtained and flight arrangements made via the United Nation's Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), which operates flights between Amman and Baghdad.
10. Upon arrival in Baghdad, Fund staff are provided security briefings by the UN Chief Field Security Officer, and security updates are provided daily. Communications briefings are provided by the UN Senior Radio Technician, who issues hand-held VHF radios to Fund mission team members. These radios enable staff to communicate with UN staff 24 hours a day for administrative and emergency purposes. In addition, the Fund has acquired from the CPA several MCI cellular phones capable of point-to-point communication inside Iraq. Missions are also issued Fund-standard portable satellite phones, which provide a reliable communications back-up when trying to communicate with places outside of Iraq (although their effectiveness in receiving calls is limited). Arrangements have been put in place to permit Fund staff to use the UN's telephone system during the day to place calls outside Iraq.
11. A member of the Fund's Security Services Division with considerable prior Middle East experience accompanied the first MED mission into Baghdad in June to conduct a preliminary security assessment and to establish suitable contacts within the CPA, the SRSG,

and other UN organizations in Baghdad. A highly experienced UN-affiliated security professional was retained to provide on-the-ground security and logistical support to Fund missions. When this individual resumed a full-time role with the United Nations in Baghdad in mid-July, an equally qualified successor was quickly identified to provide such support on a contractual basis. Because of the growing demands placed on the CPA and the UN organizations for assistance with transportation, communications, security requirements and logistics, a full-time security professional will be retained in Baghdad to support Fund missions for the foreseeable future.

12. The UN Field Security Office in Iraq has included support for Fund staff in developing their evacuation contingency plans, and has ample aircraft to evacuate Fund staff in Iraq to a safe haven within 36 hours.

#### **IV. SECURITY CONDITIONS SPECIFICALLY AFFECTING INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

##### **A. General Conditions and Arrangements**

13. From the earliest stages of the involvement of international organizations in post-conflict Iraq, the SRSG established a policy of advising missions from the United Nations and other international organizations to keep their distance from the CPA security forces for safety reasons. While this has limited the number of hostile encounters involving the staff of the United Nations or other international organizations, attacks have occurred since the first week of July. Mortar attacks and assaults on military elements guarding UN office compounds have occurred, as have drive-by shootings of vehicles in international convoys outside of Baghdad, despite the vehicles being plainly identified.

14. While no attacks have taken place against the Fund or its personnel, the World Food Program, the International Office of Migration, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the International Committee of the Red Cross have been targeted on roads and highways outside of Baghdad, and casualties have resulted. On July 20, an Iraqi driver was killed and a staff employee of the International Organization for Migration was wounded when their UN convoy was attacked by gunmen with automatic weapons. The attack, one of three separate incidents involving shootings on UN vehicles outside of Baghdad on the same day, occurred 50 kilometers south of Baghdad. Those responsible have not been identified, and the CPA and UN authorities at this point have not attributed responsibility to a particular group or groups. The most significant threat to Fund personnel at present is the prospect of being caught in a “wrong place, wrong time” scenario, where an insurgent attack takes place against a nearby CPA target. To mitigate this risk, mission team members must remain mindful of operational security requirements and carefully observe the guidance provided by the Baghdad-based security resources.

##### **B. Transportation Security**

15. At times, traffic can be chaotic and queues form at accident sites, bridges, and CPA checkpoints. Beyond the inconvenience, the traffic issue represents a danger to staff owing to

the possibility of being immobilized in the vicinity of a planned or opportunistic insurgent attack against a coalition convoy or fixed target.

16. Travel between the office space provided to Fund missions and the palace compound where the head and other members of the CPA are in residence can take twenty to thirty minutes or more each way, depending on traffic conditions. To date, arrangements have been made with the UN Security Office in Baghdad to have Fund mission team members travel in well-marked UN vehicles. The UN cars are equipped with two-way radios and there must be at least one Arabic speaker in each car. However, these vehicles are otherwise conventionally equipped and are not armored.

17. Given the poor security environment in and around Baghdad, and because of the United Nations' growing needs for transport for its own staff, the United Nations can no longer be relied on to provide vehicles for Fund missions. Management has approved the purchase of an armored SUV for mission use, which seats seven plus a driver, and the vehicle is expected to be delivered in Baghdad at the beginning of September. An additional conventional vehicle with two-way radio capability and painted with the UN design will be purchased for use on trips where security conditions allow.

### **C. Hotel Security**

18. Only the Palestine, Petra, Al Rashid, and Rimal hotels have been cleared and authorized by UN Security for use by the UN and UN-affiliated staff and international organizations. Fund mission members and experts have used the Sheraton Hotel (at a time when it had security clearance) and more recently the Rimal Hotel. An on-site inspection by the Fund's Security Services Division staff determined that only the Rimal was fully adequate for mission stays from the standpoint of security and basic services.

### **D. Office Security**

19. To date, the UN has permitted Fund staff to use an office inside the UN space at the Canal Hotel. Protected by CPA forces on the outer perimeter and UN security personnel on the interior, this provides a relatively secure environment. However, given the strong likelihood that the SRSG's office needs will grow and the Fund could be displaced, the Fund is exploring alternative, secure office work space.

20. The present UNDP compound has office space and small living quarters that could be renovated in short order to meet the Fund's business needs. The compound has back-up generator power, is wired for computers and other information technology equipment, has its own guard force, and is surrounded by a walled perimeter. Additional security measures would need to be put into place, however, before it would be suitable for occupancy.

## V. CONCLUSION

21. Fund missions to Iraq at this time are based on the need to balance the Fund's role in helping the people of Iraq with the paramount importance of ensuring the safety of Fund staff. The current situation thus requires a sustained, well-coordinated, and appropriately resourced support effort. The risk to staff in Iraq can be minimized so long as future mission teams continue to follow established security protocols. This includes participation in pre-mission security briefings, training in the use of field radio equipment, an understanding of the UN's emergency communications and contingency plans, strict adherence to transportation security arrangements, and frequent liaison and coordination with locally-based UN field security staff.

22. A full-time security professional with a high degree of experience in post-conflict environments will be retained in Baghdad for the foreseeable future to assist Fund missions and provide coordination with the CPA and UN security operations. This is viewed as a key to the success of current and future protection efforts. However, the situation remains fluid and subject to change. Accordingly, Fund security services, both at headquarters and on the ground, will continue to monitor the situation on a daily basis in close cooperation with the CPA and UNSECOORD.

23. Based on the arrangements discussed above, management has so far approved three missions to Baghdad—an initial fact-finding mission by MED and technical assistance missions by FAD and MFD. In addition, two senior staff members visited Baghdad last week to attend an organizational meeting of the International Advisory and Monitoring Board and one staff member is on an extended mission to Baghdad. The appropriateness of future missions will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the evolving security situation.