

- Accordingly, the bulk of the population is now totally dependent on the Government of Iraq for a majority, if not all, of their basic needs and, unlike the situation in 1991, they have no way of coping if they cannot access them: the sanctions regime, if anything, has served to increase dependence on the Government as almost the sole provider." [para 2].

- "There is also the temptation to draw comparisons between the situation in Afghanistan following the military intervention of 2001/2002 and the situation, which is likely to be facing Iraq in a post conflict scenario. Aside from having similar population figures, such comparisons are simply invalid." [para 3]. Afghanistan is a decentralised, rural community. Iraq however, has "a relatively urbanized population, with the state providing the basic needs of the population".

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

- The CASI website, [www.casi.org.uk](http://www.casi.org.uk), provides comprehensive information on Iraq and the sanctions regime, including extensive links to UN, governmental and NGO reports.

- CASI can also be contacted by email at [info@casi.org.uk](mailto:info@casi.org.uk) or by telephone on 0845 330 4520.

- CASI has brought together the main sources of information on the likely consequences of war at [www.casi.org.uk/info/consequences.html](http://www.casi.org.uk/info/consequences.html).

## **ABOUT CASI**

This briefing was produced by The Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq (CASI), a Cambridge-based group which provides information about the humanitarian situation in Iraq and its context. It also aims to raise awareness of the effects of sanctions on Iraq, and campaigns on humanitarian grounds for the lifting of non-military sanctions. CASI's exclusive concern is humanitarian: it campaigns only for the lifting of the non-military sanctions. CASI does not support or have ties to the government of Iraq.

# **CASI**

## **campaign against sanctions on Iraq**

# **War with Iraq: Likely Humanitarian Scenarios**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This briefing summarises an internal UN document, entitled "Likely Humanitarian Scenarios" and dated 10th December 2002, which evaluates the likely humanitarian consequences of a war on Iraq. It was written to assist with UN contingency planning for safeguarding the wellbeing of the population, and is based upon estimates by UN humanitarian agencies. While it is only a draft document, and estimates may since have been revised, it is probably the most authoritative information currently available regarding UN assessments of the humanitarian consequences of a war.

The text of the document is available on the CASI website at [www.casi.org.uk/info/undocs/war021210.html](http://www.casi.org.uk/info/undocs/war021210.html).

## **SOURCE OF THE DOCUMENT**

The document was obtained by Nathaniel Hurd from a source at the UN, who authorised its publication. Several paragraphs and tables have been deleted at the request of the individual who released the document, including the entirety of page 3.

Additional notes by Nathaniel Hurd are at [www.casi.org.uk/info/undocs/war021210notes.html](http://www.casi.org.uk/info/undocs/war021210notes.html).

## **DOCUMENT CONTENTS**

The document anticipates "a large scale and protracted ground offensive, supported by aerial and conventional bombardment", where "the resultant devastation would undoubtedly be great" [para 1].

The humanitarian consequences it predicts for the Iraqi population include:

### **DISEASE AND WIDESPREAD CASUALTIES**

- "The outbreak of disease in epidemic if not pandemic proportions is very likely" [para 25].

- "as many as 500,000 people could require treatment to a greater or lesser degree as a result of direct or indirect injuries", based upon World Health Organisation estimates of 100,000 direct and 400,000 indirect casualties [para 23].

- The document indicates existing shortages of some medical items, "rendering the existing stocks inadequate" for war-increased demand [para 22], and exacerbated by the "likely absence of a functioning primary health care system in a post-conflict situation" [para 24].

- damage to the electricity network will reduce "water and sanitation as well as health [sectors]" [para 5]. In the short term "39% of the population will need to be provided with potable water" [para 28].

### **FOOD SHORTAGES**

- "It is estimated that the nutritional status of some 3.03m people countrywide will be dire and that they will require therapeutic feeding [according to UNICEF estimates]. This consists of 2.03m severely and moderately malnourished children under 5 and one million pregnant women" [para 27].

- Aid agencies will need to provide "food and necessities for some 5.4 million people"[para 39].

## **REFUGEES**

- "It is estimated that there will eventually be some 900,000 Iraqi refugees requiring assistance, of which 100,000 will be in need of immediate assistance, [according to UNHCR]" [para 35]. An estimated 2 million people will require some assistance with shelter [para 33]. For 130,000 existing refugees in Iraq "it is probable that UNHCR will initially be unable to provide the support required" [para 36].

### **PHYSICAL DAMAGE - CONSEQUENCES FOR AID WORK**

- "the electricity network will be seriously degraded". This will cause "collateral reductions in all sectors, particularly water and sanitation as well as health" [para 5a].

- "there will be a significant degradation of the already poor transportation system" [para 5d].

- "as Iraq is trisected by two major river systems which flow north-south and as most, if not all, major bridges will be destroyed or damaged, east-west movement of goods and people will be on a restricted basis" [para 5e]. Thus for aid logistics, "Initially, access to those in need would either be denied by one or the other of the protagonists or severely hampered by security and safety concerns. Additionally, logistics, particularly the ability to move with any degree of freedom, will be a major constraint" [para 1].

### **EFFECT OF SANCTIONS**

- "There is a temptation in some quarters to equate the situation following any future military intervention in Iraq, with the population's ability to cope at the time of the 1991 conflict. Such comparisons are not valid". Before 1991 most Iraqis "were in full employment and had cash and material assets available to them to cope with the crisis". Now most "have completely exhausted their cash assets and material assets.