

CRS Issue Brief for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

Iraq: Compliance, Sanctions, and U.S. Policy

Updated November 29, 2001

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY

MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

1997-1998 Crises

Operation Desert Fox and Aftermath

Nuclear Program

Chemical Weapons

Biological Weapons

Ballistic Missiles

Human Rights/War Crimes Issues

War Crimes Trial

Resettlement of Iraqi Refugees

Iraqi Support for International Terrorism/September 11

Iraq-Kuwait Issues

Border Delineation and Security/Kuwaiti Sovereignty

Return of Kuwaiti Missing Persons and Property

Reparations Payments

U.S. Policy, Sanctions, and the Oil-for-Food Program

“Smart Sanctions” Initiative

Iraq’s Illicit Trade with Its Neighbors

Jordan

Turkey

Iran/Persian Gulf States

Syria/Lebanon/Egypt

Protecting/Supporting Iraq’s Opposition

Military Action and Long-Term Containment

Kurds/Operation Northern Watch (ONW)

Shiite Muslims/Operation Southern Watch

Costs of Containment

Iraq: Compliance, Sanctions, and U.S. Policy

SUMMARY

In recent years, the United States has been unable to maintain an international consensus for strict enforcement of all applicable U.N. Security Council resolutions on Iraq, but it has largely succeeded in preventing Iraq from reemerging as an immediate strategic threat to the region. There is concern about the long-term threat posed by Iraq, concerns that, in the wake of the September 11 attacks, have reignited a debate over whether the United States should work more vigorously to change Iraq's regime.

During 1991-1998, a U.N. Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM) made considerable progress in dismantling and monitoring Iraq's mass destruction weapons (WMD) programs but was unable to finish verifying Iraq's claim that it has destroyed all its weapons of mass destruction or related equipment. Iraq's refusal of full cooperation with UNSCOM eventually prompted U.S.-British military action in December 1998. All inspectors withdrew and Iraq has been uninspected and unmonitored since, leaving the Security Council uncertain as to whether Iraq has reconstituted its WMD programs.

On November 10, 1994, as required, Iraq accepted the U.N.-designated land border with Kuwait (confirmed by Resolution 833) as well as Kuwaiti sovereignty. Iraq claims that, after the 1991 war, it lost track of the more than 600 Kuwaitis still missing, and it denies possessing any more Kuwaiti property taken during the war. Neither of these claims is considered credible by the international com-

munity. Iraq rejected a 1991 U.N.-sponsored "oil-for-food" program to address humanitarian needs, but it later accepted a revised version of that plan, which has been operational since December 1996.

Iraq's compliance in other areas, especially human rights issues, is still widely deemed unsatisfactory. A U.S.-led no-fly zone has provided some protection to Kurdish northern Iraq since April 1991. Since August 1992, a no-fly zone has been enforced over southern Iraq, where historically repressed Iraqi Shiites are concentrated. The zone was expanded in August 1996, but Iraq nonetheless maintains a substantial presence of ground troops and security forces in the south. Iraq began openly challenging both no-fly zones in late December 1998, and it is stepping up its efforts to try to down a U.S. combat aircraft.

In late 1998, the Clinton Administration publicly added a major new dimension to U.S. Iraq policy — openly promoting a change of regime. Accomplishing this additional U.S. objective is considered risky and difficult, and is not openly supported by many other governments. The Bush Administration appears to be building largely on the Clinton Administration's Iraq policy framework, but the Administration says that rebuilding support for containment requires easing purely civilian sanctions. The opening of a diplomatic dialogue with Baghdad (the United States suspended relations with Iraq in January 1991) has not been under consideration, although Iraq has sought talks with the United States.

MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In early June and again on July 3, 2001, the U.N. Security Council did not reach agreement on a U.S. plan for a “targeted” sanctions regime on Iraq. On November 29, 2001, the Council again agreed to renew the existing sanctions regime but pledged to work to adopt the targeted sanctions plan when current sanctions are next up for renewal in May 2002. Amid a few reports of meetings between Iraqi intelligence officials and terrorists linked to the September 11 hijackings, and in light of the mailing of Anthrax-laden letters some U.S. officials want the U.S. response to the terrorist attacks to include Iraq. Senior U.S. officials indicate that the United States is monitoring Iraq closely and demanding Iraq readmit U.N. weapons inspectors but is not planning immediate military action.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

In forty reviews (at 60-day intervals) of Iraqi compliance from the end of the Gulf war in 1991 until August 20, 1998, the U.N. Security Council maintained comprehensive international sanctions on Iraq's imports and exports. The primary ceasefire resolution is Security Council Resolution 687 (April 3, 1991), requiring Iraq to end its weapons of mass destruction programs, recognize Kuwait, account for missing Kuwaitis, return Kuwaiti property, and end support for international terrorism. Iraq is required by Resolution 688 (April 5, 1991) to end repression of its people. (See also CRS Report RL30472, *Iraq: Oil-for-Food Program*; CRS Report RS20843, *Iraq: U.S. Efforts to Change the Regime*; and CRS Report RL30728, *Persian Gulf: Issues for U.S. Policy, 2000*.)

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

A U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), chaired during July 1, 1997 - June 30, 1999 by Australian disarmament official Richard Butler (succeeding Rolf Ekeus), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) attempted to verify that Iraq had ended all its prohibited WMD programs and to establish a long-term monitoring program to ensure that Iraq remains free of WMD (Resolution 715, October 11, 1991). The monitoring program, accepted by Iraq in November 1993, consisted of visitations and technical surveillance of about 300 sites. Under Resolution 1051 (March 27, 1996), UNSCOM conducted inspections (at point of entry and at end-use destination) of Iraqi imports of any dual use items.

Confrontations over access to suspected WMD sites began almost as soon as UNSCOM began operations in April 1991, prompting adoption of Resolution 707 (August 15, 1991). That resolution required unfettered access to all sites and disclosure by Iraq of all its WMD suppliers. During March 1996 - October 1997, Iraq impeded inspectors from entering Iraqi security service and military facilities, and it interfered with some UNSCOM flights. These actions prompted Resolution 1060 (June 12, 1996) and other Council statements (such as on June 13, 1997) demanding Iraqi cooperation. Resolution 1115 (June 21, 1997) threatened travel restrictions against Iraqi officials committing the infractions. Resolution 1134 (October

23, 1997) again threatened a travel ban and suspended sanctions reviews until April 1998. (France, Russia, China, Egypt, and Kenya abstained.)

1997-1998 Crises. Six days after that vote, Iraq barred American UNSCOM personnel from conducting inspections and, on November 13, 1997, expelled the Americans. Resolution 1137 (adopted unanimously November 12, 1997), imposed travel restrictions on Iraqi officials. (On November 13, 1997, the House adopted H.Res. 322, backing unilateral U.S. military action as a last resort. The Senate did not act on a similar resolution, S.Con.Res. 71, because some Senators wanted it to call for the United States to overthrow Saddam Husayn.) In November 1997 and February 1998, Russia and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, respectively, brokered temporary compromises that enabled UNSCOM to resume operations in Iraq. The February 23, 1998 U.N.-Iraq agreement provided for access to eight “presidential sites” by UNSCOM inspectors and diplomatic observers. Security Council Resolution 1154 (March 2, 1998) accepted that agreement, threatening “the severest consequences” if Iraq reneged. Iraq allowed presidential site inspections (1,058 buildings) during March 26-April 3, 1998, and the United States agreed to lift the travel ban on Iraqi officials and to resume sanctions reviews.

Iraq subsequently refused to implement an UNSCOM plan for completing its work and, on August 5, 1998, barred UNSCOM from inspecting new facilities. The Senate and House passed a resolution, S.J.Res. 54 (P.L. 105-235, signed August 14, 1998), declaring Iraq in “material breach” of the ceasefire. On September 9, 1998, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1194, suspending sanctions reviews. On October 30, 1998, the Security Council offered an easing of sanctions if Iraq fulfilled WMD and other outstanding requirements, but Iraq demanded an immediate end to sanctions and it ceased cooperation with UNSCOM (but not the IAEA). The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1205 (November 5, 1998), deeming the Iraqi action a “flagrant violation” of the February 1998 U.N.-Iraq agreement. On November 14, 1998, with the United States about to launch airstrikes, Iraq pledged to resume cooperation, narrowly averting U.S. air strikes but prompting President Clinton to openly declare a U.S. policy of regime change.

Operation Desert Fox and Aftermath. After a month of testing Iraq’s cooperation, UNSCOM said on December 15, 1998 that Iraq refused to yield known WMD-related documents and that it was obstructing inspections; the IAEA did not issue similar complaints. All inspectors withdrew and a 70-hour U.S. and British bombing campaign followed (Operation Desert Fox, December 16-19, 1998), directed against Iraqi WMD-capable facilities and military and security targets. After almost one year of negotiations among Security Council members on how to restart inspections, the Council adopted Resolution 1284 — adopted December 17, 1999, by a vote of 11- 0 (Russia, France, China, and Malaysia abstained). Resolution 1284 provided for the suspension of most sanctions if Iraq fully cooperates with a new WMD inspection body (UNMOVIC, U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission), although Iraq’s revenues would be subject to undefined financial controls, exports of dual use items to Iraq would still require U.N. approval, and arms exports would remain banned.

In January 2000, the Security Council selected as head of UNMOVIC former IAEA director Hans Blix, who formulated an organizational plan adopted on April 13, 2000. He reported in August 2000 that UNMOVIC was ready to begin preliminary activities in Iraq, but Iraq has refused it entry to date. During February 26-27, 2001, Iraq conducted talks with

the U.N. Secretary General about restarting inspections, but the talks made little progress and have not yet resumed. The Bush Administration, as well as UNMOVIC, has said that resuming inspection remains a key goal, but that technical surveillance measures might be an acceptable substitute, at least in the interim. U.S. reports since 1999 note that Iraq is rebuilding facilities capable of producing WMD, but add that there is no hard evidence that Iraq is reconstituting banned WMD programs at these facilities. A *Jane's Defence Weekly* report of July 25, 2001, says Iraq has been illicitly obtaining spare parts for fighter jets and helicopters from Belarus, Ukraine, and the former Yugoslavia. In August 2001, some U.N. officials said there is concern that some items that could be used in chemical weapons or missile programs are slipping into Iraq from neighboring countries.

The following sums up the status of disarmament efforts in Iraq and outstanding issues.

Nuclear Program

During 1991-1994, despite Iraq's initial declaration that it had no nuclear weapons facilities or unsafeguarded material, UNSCOM/IAEA uncovered and dismantled a previously-undeclared network of about 40 nuclear research facilities, including three clandestine uranium enrichment programs (electromagnetic, centrifuge, and chemical isotope separation) as well as laboratory-scale plutonium separation program. Inspectors found and dismantled (in 1992) Iraq's clandestine nuclear weapons development program, and they found evidence of development of a radiological weapon, which scatters nuclear material without an explosion. No radiological weapon was ever completed, but there is debate over whether Iraq ever tested such a device. UNSCOM removed from Iraq all discovered nuclear reactor fuel, fresh and irradiated. Following the defection of Husayn Kamil (Saddam's son-in-law and former WMD production czar) in August 1995, Iraq revealed it had launched a crash program in August 1990 to produce a nuclear weapon within one year, and that it had planned to divert fuel from its reactors for a nuclear weapon.

The IAEA, before it ceased work in Iraq, said that Iraq's nuclear program had been ended and that it had a relatively complete picture of Iraq's nuclear suppliers. A May 15, 1998 Security Council statement reflected a U.S.-Russian agreement to close the nuclear file if Iraq cleared up outstanding issues (nuclear design drawings, documents, and the fate of some nuclear equipment), but an IAEA report of July 1998, indicated that some questions still remained. The United States did not agree to close the file. In early 2000 and again in early 2001, as part of Iraq's commitments under the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, IAEA inspectors verified that several tons of uranium remained sealed. However, in May 2000, the IAEA destroyed an Iraqi nuclear centrifuge that Iraq had stored in Jordan in 1991. The IAEA said in an October 2000 report that the absence of an inspections program creates uncertainty about Iraqi nuclear activities, even though only a few questions about Iraq's nuclear program remain. The United States believes that Iraq retains the expertise (about 7,000 scientists and engineers) and intention to rebuild its nuclear program.

Chemical Weapons

UNSCOM destroyed all chemical weapons materiel uncovered — 38,500 munitions, 690 tons of agents, 3,000 tons of precursor chemicals, and 426 pieces of production equipment items — and the destruction operation formally ended on June 14, 1994. However, the fate of about 31,600 chemical munitions, 550 mustard gas bombs, and 4,000 tons of chemical

precursors, remains unknown. Iraq refused to yield an Air Force document, found in July 1998 by UNSCOM, that could explain their fate, although Iraq allowed UNSCOM to take notes from it. In February 1998 UNSCOM discovered that shells taken from Iraq in 1996 contained 97% pure mustard gas, raising the possibility that it was freshly produced.

The primary remaining chemical weapons questions center on VX nerve agent, which Iraq did not include in its initial postwar declarations and of which no stockpile was ever located. By 1995 UNSCOM had uncovered enough circumstantial evidence to force Iraq to admit to producing about 4 tons of VX, but UNSCOM believed that Iraq had imported enough precursor — about 600 tons — to produce 200 tons of the agent. In late June 1998, UNSCOM revealed that some unearthed missile warheads, tested in a U.S. Army lab, contained traces of VX, contradicting Iraq's assertions that it had not succeeded in stabilizing the agent. Separate French and Swiss tests did not find conclusive evidence of VX. About 170 chemical sites were under long-term monitoring. Iraq has not signed the Chemical Weapons Convention that took effect April 29, 1997. Recent U.S. government reports to Congress, including a Defense Department report in January 2001, have said Iraq has rebuilt some commercial chemical plants that could be easily converted to chemical weapons production. A *New York Times* report of January 22, 2001 cited a resumption of activity at facilities that previously produced chemical and biological weapons, but added that there is no firm evidence that the plants' products (pesticides, herbicides, and chlorine) are for WMD.

Biological Weapons

Iraq did not declare any biological materials, weapons, research, or facilities in its initial declaration to UNSCOM in April 1991, and no biological stockpile was ever uncovered. UNSCOM focused initially on the major research and development site at Salman Pak (gutted and partially buried by Iraq shortly before the first inspection began) and later on the Al Hakam facility south of Baghdad (dismantled by UNSCOM June 20, 1996). In August 1991, Iraq admitted that it had a biological weapons research program. In July 1995, Iraq modified its admission by acknowledging it had an offensive biological weapons program and that it had produced 19,000 liters of botulinum, 8,400 liters of anthrax, and 2,000 liters of aflatoxin and clostridium. In August 1995, Iraq confessed to having produced 191 biological bombs, of which 25 were missile warheads, loaded with anthrax, botulinum, and aflatoxin for use in the Gulf war, but Iraq claims to have destroyed the bombs after the Gulf conflict. UNSCOM monitored 86 biological sites during 1994 - 1998.

UNSCOM's position was that Iraq's biological declarations were not credible or verifiable. According to UNSCOM, Iraq imported a total of 34 tons of growth media for producing biological agents during the 1980s, of which 4 tons remain unaccounted for. UNSCOM still lacked information on Iraq's development of drop tanks and aerosol generators for biological dissemination, as well as the fate of the biological munitions. In early April 2001, Iraq wrote to Secretary General Annan that it plans to refurbish the Doura laboratory, destroyed by UNSCOM in 1996 on the grounds it could be used for biological weapons. Iraq says it needs the plant to produce vaccines against foot and mouth disease.

The October 2001 anthrax-related terrorism in the United States has generated suspicions of Iraqi involvement because Iraq developed anthrax as part of its biological program. No evidence linking the anthrax to Iraq has been announced.

Ballistic Missiles

U.N. Security Council Resolution 687 requires the destruction of all Iraqi ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometers. UNSCOM accounted for 817 of 819 Soviet-supplied Scud missiles, 130 of which survived the Gulf war, as well as all 14 declared mobile launchers and 60 fixed launch pads. U.S. and British analysts, contrary to UNSCOM's assessments, believe Iraq might be concealing 10 to 12 Russian-supplied Scud-type missiles. UNSCOM's last regular report (October 1998) said it had been able to account for at least 43 of the 45 chemical and biological (CBW) warheads Iraq said it unilaterally destroyed in 1991. (The warheads were unearthed in mid-1998.) An additional 30 chemical warheads were previously destroyed under UNSCOM supervision. UNSCOM also accounted for all but 50 conventional Scud warheads, and said it had made progress toward establishing a material balance for Scud engine components. Unresolved issues include accounting for missile program documentation, 300 tons of special missile propellant, and indigenous missile production (30 indigenously-made warheads and 7 missiles).

In December 1995, after Jordan reported seizing 115 Russian-made missile guidance components allegedly bound for Iraq, UNSCOM said Iraq had procured some missile components since 1991, a clear violation of sanctions. (That month, UNSCOM retrieved prohibited missile guidance gyroscopes, suitable for a 2,000 mile range missile, from Iraq's Tigris River, apparently procured from Russia's defense-industrial establishment.) UNSCOM also had evidence that Iraq, after the Gulf war, conducted secret flight tests and conducted research on missiles of prohibited ranges. Iraq is continuing to develop permitted-range missiles – the Ababil and Samoud programs – and, prior to Desert Fox, UNSCOM had been monitoring about 63 missile sites and 159 items of equipment, as well as 2,000 permitted missiles. U.S. military officials said after Desert Fox that the bombing had set back Iraq's missile program by two years, damaging short-range missile production facilities including Taji, Ibn al-Haythim, Al Kindi, and Al Karama. However, a *New York Times* report of July 1, 2000, stated that Iraq had resumed flight tests of the Samoud missile in May 1999. On July 2, 2001, Iraq fired at a U.S. combat aircraft using ballistic missile technology.

Human Rights/War Crimes Issues

U.S. and U.N. human rights reports since the Gulf war have repeatedly described Iraq as a gross violator of human rights. In 1994, the Administration said it might, at some point, present a case against Iraq to the International Court of Justice under the 1948 Genocide Convention. U.N. Rapporteur for Iraq Max Van der Stoep's February 1994 report said that Convention might be violated by Iraq's abuses against the Shiite "Marsh Arabs" in southern Iraq, including drainage of the marshes where they live. On July 10, 2001, Iraq said it was ready for a dialogue with the U.N. Human Rights Commission about its human rights record. (See CRS Report 94-320, *Iraq: Marsh Arabs and U.S. Policy*)

War Crimes Trial. U.N. Security Council Resolution 674 (October 29, 1990) calls on all states or organizations with substantiated information of Iraqi atrocities to provide such information to the United Nations. The Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY1992, (P.L. 102-138, October 28, 1991, section 301) stated the sense of Congress that the President should propose to the U.N. Security Council a war crimes tribunal for Saddam Husayn. In

later years, similar legislation was passed by one or both chambers, including H.Con.Res. 137, (passed the House November 13, 1997); S.Con.Res. 78, (passed the Senate March 13, 1998); and a provision of the Iraq Liberation Act (P.L. 105-338, signed October 31, 1998).

In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf war, the U.S. Army conducted research into possible war crimes; the report was released on March 19, 1993, after Clinton took office. Since April 1997, the Administration has supported INDICT, a private organization that publicizes alleged Iraqi war crimes and seeks the arrest of 12 alleged Iraqi war criminals. Although apparently lacking international support, in August 2000, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large for War Crimes David Scheffer said that the United States wanted to see an Iraq war crimes tribunal established within six months, focusing on “nine major criminal episodes.” These include the use of chemical weapons against Kurdish civilians at Halabja (March 16, 1988, killing 5,000 Kurds) and the forced relocation of Kurds in the “Anfal” campaign (February 1988, in which an estimated 50,000 to 182,000 Kurds died); the use of chemical weapons use against Iran; post-war crimes against humanity (the Kurds and the Marsh Arabs); war crimes against Kuwait (oil fires, for example) and coalition forces; and other allegations. On December 1, 2000, the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling for an Iraq war crimes tribunal. In late June 2001, a Belgian judge initiated an investigation of Saddam Husayn for crimes against humanity. In FY2001 and again in FY2002, the State Department plans to contribute \$4 million to a U.N. “Iraq War Crimes Commission.” The funds are to be used if and when a U.N. tribunal for Iraq war crimes is formed. (For more information on U.S. funding for Iraqi war crimes issues, see CRS Report RS20843, *Iraq: U.S. Efforts to Change the Regime.*)

Resettlement of Iraqi Refugees

Desert Storm and postwar rebellions against Saddam created a flood of Iraqi refugees, including 39,000 Iraqis in a camp in Saudi Arabia (Rafha). Of that pool, about 14,000 were ex-soldiers (and their family members) that participated in postwar rebellions or had surrendered to coalition forces. The Bush Administration (1989-1993) agreed to participate in a multinational resettlement recommended by UNHCR. The total admitted to the United States under the program were about 29,000 Iraqis, of which about 3,800 were ex-soldiers and their families. About 5,000 Iraqis remain in Saudi Arabia as refugees, and the United States is not resettling any more Iraqis. In July 2001, Iraq urged the remaining Iraqis to return voluntarily to Iraq from that camp. The FY1994 defense authorization (P.L. 103-160) stated the sense of the Senate that there be no admissions of Iraqi ex-soldiers unless they are certified to have assisted coalition forces after defecting and have not committed any war crimes; the Administration says these criteria were met. In the wake of the September 1996 northern Iraq crisis, 5,900 Kurds who worked for U.S. relief operations or U.S.-affiliated NGO's in northern Iraq, as well as 650 opposition activists, were resettled in the United States under the Attorney General's parole authority.

Iraqi Support for International Terrorism/September 11

Resolution 687 required Iraq to end support for international terrorism, and Iraq made a declaration to that effect to the U.N. Security Council. Iraq remains on the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism. According to the State Department's report on international

terrorism for 2000, Iraq continues to sponsor terrorism, primarily against Iraqi dissidents. (See CRS Report RL31119, *Terrorism: Near Eastern Groups and State Sponsors, 2001.*)

Some press reports say that U.S. intelligence has received reports that Iraqi officials have, in the past, met with some of the September 11 hijackers and with bin Laden himself. Partly based on these reports, some U.S. officials have argued that the U.S. response to the September 11 attacks should include military action against Iraq or other action to destabilize Saddam Husayn. However, senior U.S. and British officials have said there is no firm evidence linking Iraq to September 11 or to recent anthrax mailings in the United States, and that the U.S. response, at least for now, will focus on bin Laden's network and Afghanistan's Taliban regime, which hosts him. In early October, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations delivered a message to Iraq's U.N. Mission in New York threatening force against Iraq if it attempted to assist anti-U.S. forces in Afghanistan or capitalize on U.S. action there. President Bush reignited the debate over Iraq on November 26 when he appeared to threaten unspecified action if Iraq did not readmit U.N. weapons inspectors.

Iraq did not send condolences for the September 11 attacks to the U.S. government, although it did send condolences to U.S. activists working against Iraq sanctions. Iraq denies any ties to bin Laden's network and any involvement in the September 11 attacks or the anthrax mailings and notes that it did not have diplomatic relations with the Taliban.

Iraq-Kuwait Issues

Resolution 1284 requires reports on the issues discussed below. However, in contrast to Resolution 687, Resolution 1284 does not make the easing of any sanctions contingent upon Iraqi compliance on these Kuwait-related issues.

Border Delineation and Security/Kuwaiti Sovereignty

Resolution 687 required Iraq to annul its annexation of Kuwait, directed the U.N. Secretary-General to demarcate the Iraq-Kuwait border, and established a demilitarized zone 10 kilometers into Iraq and 5 kilometers into Kuwait. Resolution 773 (August 26, 1992) endorsed border decisions taken by the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission (established May 2, 1991); on November 23, 1992, the Commission finished demarcating the Iraq-Kuwait border as described in an October 1963 agreement between Iraq and Kuwait. The border took effect January 15, 1993. The demarcation deprived Iraq of part of the port of Umm Qasr and a strip of the Rumaylah oil field, which straddles the border. On March 18, 1993, the Commission determined the sea border, allowing both countries access to the Gulf, and its final report was accepted by the U.N. Secretary General on May 20, 1993. Resolution 833 (May 27, 1993) demanded that Iraq and Kuwait accept the final border demarcation. On November 10, 1994, Iraq formally recognized Kuwait in a motion signed by Saddam Husayn, but Iraqi officials routinely make statements that Kuwait interprets as threatening.

The 32-nation U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM), established by Resolutions 687 and 689 (April 9, 1991), continues to monitor border violations. The United States contributes 11 personnel to the 197 observers in UNIKOM, which is commanded (as of December 1, 1997) by an Irish officer and is considered a U.N. peacekeeping operation.

Under Resolution 806 (February 5, 1993), passed after Iraqi incursions into the demilitarized zone in January 1993 (and other incidents), a 908-member Bengali troop contingent supplements the observer group. Kuwait furnishes two-thirds of UNIKOM's \$51 million annual budget. In FY2000, the United States contributed about \$4.5 million to UNIKOM.

Return of Kuwaiti Missing Persons and Property

Security Council Resolutions 686 and 687 require Iraq to account for Kuwaiti and other nationals detained in Iraq during the Persian Gulf crisis. Of an initial 628 Kuwaiti cases, 608 are unresolved (ICRC figure as of May 2000), as are the cases of an additional 17 Saudi nationals. Iraq has admitted to having arrested and detained 126 Kuwaitis, but did not provide enough information to resolve their fate. Only three cases have been resolved since 1995. Since January 1995, Iraq and Kuwait were meeting every month on the Iraq-Kuwait border, along with U.S., British, French, and Saudi representatives, but Iraq has boycotted the meetings since Operation Desert Fox. In February 2000, retired Russian diplomat Yuli Vorontsov was appointed to a new post (created by Resolution 1284) of U.N. coordinator on the issue of missing Kuwaiti persons and unreturned property. Iraq has not yet allowed him to visit Iraq, and in April, June, and August 2000, as well as in March, April, and June 2001, the Security Council has issued statements of concern about the lack of progress. The U.N. Secretary General's August 15, 2001 report on the issue said Iraq continued to be uncooperative. A few days later, Iraq said it would resume meetings on the issue but only if the United States and Britain no longer attended the sessions.

U.N. Security Council Resolutions 686 and 687 require Iraq to return all property seized from Kuwait. In the first few years after the cease-fire, Iraq returned some Kuwaiti civilian and military equipment, including U.S.-made Improved Hawk air defense missiles, and a June 2000 Secretary General report and a June 19, 2000 Security Council statement did note that Iraq had returned "a substantial amount of property." However, since 1994, U.S. officials have accused Iraq of returning to Kuwait some captured Iranian equipment that was never part of Kuwait's arsenal and of using Kuwaiti missiles and armored personnel carriers during Iraq's October 1994 troop move toward the Kuwait border. The United Nations and Kuwait say Iraq has not returned extensive Kuwaiti state archives and museum pieces, as well as military equipment including eight Mirage F-1 aircraft, 245 Russian-made fighting vehicles, 90 M113 armored personnel carriers, one Hawk battery, 3,750 Tow anti-tank missiles, and 675 Russian-made surface-to-air missile batteries. Iraq claims the materiel was left behind or destroyed when Iraq evacuated Kuwait.

Reparations Payments

The U.N. Security Council has set up a mechanism for compensating the victims of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (individuals, governments, and corporations), using 25% (reduced from 30% in December 2000) of the proceeds from Iraqi oil sales. As of September 28, 2001, of a total asserted value of \$320 billion claims submitted, the Compensation Commission (UNCC) has thus far approved claims worth about \$35.4 billion. Following a July 2001 payout of about \$500 million, which included a \$74 million payment to Israel for Iraq's Gulf war Scud attacks, the UNCC has paid out about \$12.7 billion. The Commission has paid some corporate and governmental claims. In September 2000, the UNCC governing

council approved an award to Kuwait of \$15.9 billion for oil revenues lost because of the Iraqi occupation and the aftermath of the war (burning oil wells), although current payment schedules will provide only a small fraction of that award (about \$50 million) until 2003. In June 2001, the UNCC approved \$243 million in payments to all of Iraq's immediate neighbors (except Turkey) for studies of Gulf war environmental damage. Of this amount, \$5 million was approved for Iraq's legal expenses to counter the expected environmental reparations claims. On September 27, 2001, the UNCC approved \$365 million in payments to corporations in Turkey, Kuwait, Britain, Germany, and Israel.

Several legislative proposals to distribute Iraq's frozen assets (about \$2.2 billion) in the United States (separate from the U.N. compensation process) were not enacted, because of differences over categories of claimants that should receive priority. In the 107th Congress, H.R. 1632 proposes to distribute Iraq's frozen assets primarily to U.S. victims of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Some might argue that this group of claimants is covered under the U.N. process discussed above and that the frozen assets in the United States should be used for those with claims resulting from events prior to the Iraqi invasion. (See CRS Report 98-240, *Iraq: Compensation and Assets Issues*.)

U.S. Policy, Sanctions, and the Oil-for-Food Program

As international sympathy for the plight of the Iraqi people has grown, the United States has had difficulty maintaining support for international sanctions. The oil-for-food program, established by Resolution 986 (April 15, 1995) but in operation only since December 1996, has been progressively eased to alleviate human suffering, and the United States has eased its own unilateral sanctions to align them with the oil-for-food program. (For a discussion of the program, see CRS Report RL30472, *Iraq: Oil-For-Food Program*.) Of the Security Council permanent members, the United States has been the most resistant to easing sanctions and has set the highest standards for full Iraqi compliance. The United States rules out dialogue with Iraq on the grounds that Iraq's level of compliance does not justify talks.

“Smart Sanctions” Initiative. During a February 2001 trip to the Middle East, Secretary of State Powell presented a U.S. plan to facilitate exports of civilian equipment to Iraq in exchange for measures to ensure that no militarily useful goods reach Iraq. The Administration portrayed its initiative as an effort to rebuild containment by narrowing differences within the Security Council and limiting sanctions erosion. France, Russia, and China appear to believe that the U.S. objective is to keep sanctions on Iraq in order to promote regime change, and they (and the United Nations in a May 18, 2001 report) have criticized the United States and Britain for placing “holds” on the export to Iraq of about \$3 billion (as of August 2001) in dual use goods to Iraq. These and other countries have been increasingly vocal in promoting an easing of Iraq sanctions.

With phase nine of the oil-for-food program due to expire on June 3, 2001, the Security Council debated integrating the U.S. plan into an authorization for the next phase (phase ten). Failing to reach agreement, the Council adopted Security Council Resolution 1352 on June 1, 2001, extending phase nine by one month with no changes. Russian opposition prevented Security Council adoption of the U.S. plan by the July 3, 2001 deadline, leading to a Council decision to authorize a 5-month phase ten of the program, with no alterations (U.N. Security Council Resolution 1360). With the U.S. plan blocked, Iraq resumed its oil exports, which

had been suspended on June 1, 2001, in protest of the U.S. proposals. Not wanting to jeopardize Russian or moderate Arab cooperation with the war against the Taliban and bin Laden, on November 29, 2001, the United States and Russia, along with the other Security Council members, agreed to authorize another oil-for-food program phase with no changes but to work to agree by the time of the next rollover (June 1, 2002) on a list of goods that would still require review for export to Iraq. The United States and Russia also agreed to work to obtain the return of weapons inspectors to Iraq, perhaps in exchange for a broad easing of sanctions under Resolution 1284 (December 1999).

Another issue that might arise in 2002 discussions on Iraq sanctions include international flights to Iraq. Since August 2000, France and Russia have challenged the U.S. interpretation that U.N. Resolution 670 (September 25, 1990) bans passenger flights to and from Iraq; and there has been a revival of significant air traffic into and from Iraq. (The resolution bans flights carrying "cargo," except humanitarian cargo, subject to Sanctions Committee approval.) In mid-2001, Syria and Jordan began regular chartered passenger flights to Iraq. In early November 2000, Iraq restarted passenger flights within Iraq and its officials have begun flying directly to other countries. The United States has not objected to the internal flights.

France, Russia, and China might also seek in 2002 to permit new investment in Iraq's energy sector. Such investment is provided for by Resolution 1284 only after Iraq fully complies on outstanding WMD issues. Chinese, Russian, and French firms already have agreed to specific energy investment projects in Iraq, under the condition that the investment ban is lifted. As a possible sign of Security Council easing on the investment issue, in February 2001 the Sanctions Committee approved plans by two Russian companies (Zarubezhneft and Tatneft) to drill about 100 wells in existing fields in Iraq.

Previous negotiations on Iraq sanctions sought to prevent Iraq from skirting oil-for-food guidelines in the course of exporting oil. There are continued reports that small oil trading companies are paying Iraq these surcharges, and, in April 2001, the U.S. government warned U.S. firms against buying Iraqi oil from traders that are paying the surcharge. In August 2001, Britain attempted to block the surcharges by altering the oil pricing time frame to 10 days from the current 30, which would keep Iraq's price closer to the world price and cut down the margin for surcharging. The United States at first opposed the British proposal on the grounds that it might disrupt the world oil market, but later proposed a compromise of 15 days, although that proposal still has not been implemented.

Formally, comprehensive U.S. trade sanctions against Iraq have been in place since Iraq's 1990 invasion (Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990, Executive Order 12724 of August 6, 1990, and the Iraq Sanctions Act of 1990, Section 586 of P.L. 101-513). Since then, U.S. trade regulations have been amended to align them with the oil-for-food program. A summary of the regulations governing transactions with Iraq is provided in CRS Report RL30472, *Iraq: Oil-for-Food Program*. U.S. imports of Iraqi oil have soared since 1999 and reached a high of about 970,000 barrels per day in May 2001 — nearly half of Iraq's oil exports. In the 107th Congress, S. 1170, introduced July 12, 2001, would bar U.S. imports of Iraqi oil. A measure introduced in the 106th Congress, but not enacted (H.R. 3825), sought to ease civilian sanctions while preserving military sanctions and would have eased the licensing procedures for U.S. sales of goods to Iraq under oil-for-food. A similar bill (H.R. 742), was introduced in the 107th Congress.

Prior to the oil-for-food program, funds for civilian goods and the implementation of U.N. resolutions on Iraq were drawn from frozen Iraqi assets transferred — or direct contributions — to a U.N. escrow account pursuant to Resolution 778 (October 1992). Total U.S. transfers to the escrow account, which matched contributions from other countries, reached \$200 million, the maximum required under Resolution 778. These transfers were being repaid to the United States from proceeds of the oil-for-food program. Resolutions 1284 and 1302 (June 8, 2000) suspended reimbursements until the end of 2000; about \$173 million is due back to the United States. Repayments resumed in 2001.

Iraq's Illicit Trade with Its Neighbors

As regional fears of Iraq have eased and sympathy for the Iraqi people has grown, the United States has had difficulty persuading regional governments to enforce the sanctions regime, as discussed below. Improving sanctions enforcement by Iraq's neighbors is key to the U.S. targeted sanctions proposals, and press reports indicate that this part of the U.S. plan has run into significant resistance in the region, which is one reason why the United States did not press for its targeted sanctions plan in late November 2001. Several moderate Arab states have strongly opposed any U.S. attack on Iraq in connection with the war on terrorism, unless there is compelling evidence of Iraqi involvement in September 11 plotting. See also CRS Report RL30472, *Iraq: Oil-for-Food Program*.

Jordan. Since 1992, despite Jordan's economic dependence on Iraq and its advocacy of easing sanctions, the United States has considered Jordan's compliance with the U.N. sanctions regime on Iraq satisfactory. In October 2000, Jordan dismissed Lloyd's International from its role as inspector of goods bound for Iraq and arriving in Jordan at the port of Aqaba, a role enshrined in an agreement between Jordan and the United States in 1993. Recognizing Jordan's economic need, the Sanctions Committee "takes note of" Jordan's purchases of discounted Iraqi oil and oil products, which is exchanged for Jordanian goods (approved under the oil-for-food program) and write-downs in Iraqi debt to Jordan. This relationship was renewed in November 2000 at a level of about \$450 million for the year, which translates into about 105,000 barrels per day of Iraqi oil exports to Jordan. On November 1, 2001, Iraq agreed to provide 10% more oil to Jordan in the coming year.

Every year since FY1994, foreign aid appropriations laws (P.L. 103-87, P.L. 103-306, P.L. 104-107, P.L. 104-208, P.L. 105-118, P.L. 105-277, P.L. 106-113, and P.L. 106-429), have denied U.S. aid to any country that does not comply with the sanctions against Iraq, though these laws do not mention Jordan specifically. The Administration has routinely waived sanctions in order to provide aid to Jordan, which is a key U.S. ally in the Middle East peace process; Congress has not objected to that waiver. Secretary of State Powell has pressed Jordan not to proceed with a planned "free trade agreement" with Iraq that, some fear, could increase the flow of dual use goods to Iraq. It should be noted that virtually all trade with Iraq is, in practice, duty free. (See CRS Issue Brief IB93085, *Jordan: U.S. Relations and Bilateral Issues*).

Turkey. Turkey estimates that it has lost \$35 billion as a result of the sanctions. The Turkish government now regulates and taxes the illicit importation of about \$400 million per year in Iraqi energy products by Turkish truck drivers (about 450 trucks per day) returning from Iraq. U.S. sanctions against Turkey for this trade have routinely been waived. In April

2000, Iraq and Turkey neared agreement to increase bilateral trade twelve fold, to about \$2.5 billion per year, roughly pre-war levels. In May 2001, rail service between the two resumed. Turkey appointed an Ambassador to Iraq in January 2001.

Iran/Persian Gulf States. In enforcing the embargo, two U.S. ships lead a Multinational Interdiction Force (MIF) that conducts maritime searches in the Persian Gulf to prevent the smuggling of oil and other high-value exports. The United States has asserted that Iran's Revolutionary Guard has been helping Iraq smuggle out the oil exports in exchange for "protection fees," although Iran did stop some illicit shipments in March, April, and again in late June 2000, earning some U.S. praise. Despite these exceptions, Iran's cooperation helped Iraq's illicit exportation reach a high in mid-2000 of about \$80 million per month, and Iraq reportedly earned a net of about \$600 million for all of 2000, according to British military officials. It should be noted that Iraq receives only half the export value after paying off the Revolutionary Guard and smugglers. The U.S. Ambassador to the UAE said on March 28, 2001, that the smuggling through this route has fallen substantially in recent months, indicating that Iraq is increasing its use of a pipeline to Syria (see below). In October 2001, the United Nations produced evidence of continued illicit oil exports through the Gulf.

Iranian-Iraqi relations have improved since 1995, including talks between Iraq's Vice President and Iranian President Mohammad Khatemi at the margins of the summit in Tehran (December 9-11, 1997) of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). The two exchanged 6,000 prisoners from the Iran-Iraq war in April 1998 and smaller batches of prisoners and remains since. In early October 2000, the two agreed to abide by the 1975 Algiers Accords that delineated their border, and Iran's Foreign Minister visited later in the month, a sign of accelerating rapprochement. Regarding Iraq's relations with the Gulf monarchy states, in April 2000, the UAE and Bahrain reopened embassies in Baghdad, leaving Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as the only two Gulf monarchies without relations with Iraq. Saudi Arabia is slowly increasing direct trade with Iraq but has not re-established political relations. Kuwait has expressed support for Secretary Powell's proposals on Iraq sanctions, although Iraq and Kuwait could not agree on a final statement on their relations or on Iraq sanctions during the Arab League summit meeting in Jordan (March 27-28, 2001).

Syria/Lebanon/Egypt. Syria and Iraq began a warming trend in relations by reopening their border in 1997; this trend has continued since the July 2000 accession of Bashar Assad to the presidency of Syria. In July 1998, the two countries announced a plan to reopen the Iraq-Syria oil pipeline, closed since 1982, and energy industry reports since November 2000 say Iraq has been sending about 100,000 barrels per day of oil through the line, under a bilateral "swap" arrangement in which Syria uses the oil domestically and exports an equivalent extra amount of its own oil. Because of discounts offered to Syria for the oil, Iraq earns about \$1-2 million per day from this illicit exportation, skirting the oil-for-food program. Resolution 1284 (paragraph 16) lays the groundwork for the opening of this route, but Syria and Iraq are resisting controls on this trade. Syria has not implemented its pledge to Secretary of State Powell, made during his February 2001 visit to Damascus, that Syria would place the pipeline under oil-for-food guidelines. As of May 2001, the two countries have reopened diplomatic missions in each others' capitals. Iraq and Syria have announced plans to double their trade from the current level of about \$450 million per year, and they have put into effect a "free trade" agreement.

Lebanon, which is under the heavy influence of Syria, restored diplomatic relations with Iraq October 23, 1998, after a 4-year break. As a sign of warming Iraqi-Egyptian relations, Iraqi-Egyptian trade under the oil for food program has now reached \$800 million annually, and the two agreed in September 2000 to increase that to \$1 billion. On January 18, 2001, the two countries signed a “free trade agreement,” although under the condition that it goes into effect when sanctions are lifted. In November 2000, Iraq and Egypt upgraded their interest sections to embassies.

Protecting/Supporting Iraq’s Opposition

Press reports in March 2001 suggested the United States might work with movements other than the opposition umbrella group Iraqi National Congress (INC) as part of its regime change strategy. In April 2001, signs appeared that the Shiite Islamist group SCIRI, which is based in Iran and is part of the INC coalition, might be willing to work more closely with the United States on anti-Saddam activities. For FY2001, the United States was to provide about \$25 million for opposition activities, although there have been difficulties agreeing on how to use the monies, which were to be used for the INC to distribute humanitarian aid inside Iraq. The State Department has refused to release those funds on the grounds that the opposition is not sufficiently developed to infiltrate into Iraq. The Department instead offered to release \$8 million to help the INC fund its existing operations and to fund clandestine broadcast operations, an offer refused by the INC. The House-passed FY2002 foreign aid bill (H.R. 2506) contains a provision authorizing the expenditure of Economic Support Funds (ESF) in FY2002 to change the regime, although no dollar amount is specified. On August 15, 2001, the INC began satellite television broadcasts into Iraq, which will cost about \$2.7 million per year. For a discussion of the U.S. regime change policy, including the various opposition movements backed by the United States and the Iraq Liberation Act (P.L. 105-338), see CRS Report RS20843, *Iraq: U.S. Efforts to Change the Regime*.

Military Action and Long-Term Containment

The United States and Britain enforce two “no fly zones” to provide a measure of protection for Iraq’s Kurdish minority and other objects of regime repression and to contain Iraq militarily. To enforce the no-fly zones, the two allies invoke U.N. Resolution 678 (November 29, 1990, authorizing use of force to expel Iraq from Kuwait), 687 (the main ceasefire resolution), 688 (human rights), and the Safwan Accords (the March 3, 1991 cease-fire agreements between Iraq and the coalition forces that banned Iraqi interference with allied air operations). Resolutions 678 and 687 were written under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, dealing with peace and security, and are interpreted as allowing military action to enforce these resolutions. Resolution 688 (human rights) was not written under Chapter VII, nor does that or any other resolution establish no fly zones. To justify Operation Desert Fox, the Administration cited additional justification from Resolution 1154 (see above), which warned of “the severest consequences” for non-compliance. Section 1095 of P.L. 102-190, the Defense Authorization Act for FY1992, signed December 5, 1991, expressed Congress’ support for “all necessary means” to achieve the goals of U.N. Security Council Resolution 687. (For information on the U.S. military posture in the Gulf tasked with containing Iraq, see CRS Report RL30728, *Persian Gulf: Issues for U.S. Policy, 2000*.) In instances of strikes on Iraq for no fly zone or other infractions, the Administration also has cited congressional action (primarily P.L. 102-1 of January 12, 1991, authorizing military action to expel Iraq from Kuwait).

Kurds/Operation Northern Watch (ONW). The northern no fly zone was set up in April 1991, to protect the Kurds in northern Iraq. The zone extends north of the 36th parallel. After the September 1996 Iraqi incursion into northern Iraq, humanitarian aspects of ONW were ended and France ended its ONW participation. On June 25, 2001, Turkey renewed for six months basing rights at Incirlik Air Base for the 24 American aircraft and about 1,300 U.S. forces (plus allied forces). However, Turkey fears that ONW protects the anti-Turkish Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which takes refuge in parts of northern Iraq, and Turkey has made repeated attacks against the PKK there since May 1997.

The two leading Iraqi Kurdish parties, the KDP led by Mas'ud Barzani and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Jalal Talabani, agreed in May 1992 to share power after parliamentary and executive elections. In May 1994, tensions between them flared into clashes, and the KDP turned to Baghdad for backing. In August 1996, Iraqi forces helped the KDP capture Irbil, seat of the Kurdish regional government. With U.S. mediation, the Kurdish parties agreed on October 23, 1996, to a cease-fire and the establishment of a 400-man peace monitoring force composed mainly of Turkomans (75% of the force). The United States funded the force with FY1997 funds of \$3 million for peacekeeping (Section 451 of the Foreign Assistance Act), plus about \$4 million in DoD drawdowns for vehicles and communications gear (Section 552 of the FAA). Also set up was a peace supervisory group consisting of the United States, Britain, Turkey, the PUK, the KDP, and Iraqi Turkomans. A tenuous cease-fire has held since November 1997 and the KDP and PUK leaders signed an agreement in Washington in September 1998 to work toward resolving the main outstanding issues (sharing of revenues and control over the Kurdish regional government). None of these issues has been fully resolved, but reconciliation efforts have shown substantial progress thus far in 2001. Both parties are represented in the opposition umbrella Iraqi National Congress, but both also maintain ties to Baghdad. In mid-December 2000, Iraqi troops briefly took up positions just inside the Kurdish enclave, but did not launch an attack.

Shiite Muslims/Operation Southern Watch. Shiites constitute a majority in Iraq but historically have been repressed. The U.S.-led coalition declared a no-fly zone over southern Iraq (south of the 32nd parallel) to protect the Shiites on August 26, 1992 (Operation Southern Watch), although the overflights are primarily part of the U.S. containment strategy. The United States and the United Kingdom (but not France) expanded the zone up to the 33rd parallel on September 4, 1996; France ended its participation entirely after Desert Fox. In response to Iraq's movement of troops toward Kuwait in October 1994, Security Council Resolution 949 (October 15, 1994) demanded Iraq not deploy forces to threaten its neighbors. The United States and Britain interpret this as authorizing military action if Iraq enhances (in numbers or quality of armament) its forces below the 32nd parallel.

The Clinton Administration's position was that major military action against Iraq could be taken if Iraq is known to have rebuilt WMD, threatens its neighbors, or attacks the Kurdish enclave. Indications are that Bush Administration criteria for major military action differ little, if at all. Lesser military containment actions are a matter of debate, as is the fate of the no fly zone enforcement operations. During March 2000-March 2001, Iraqi air defenses fired at or near fixed radar or allied aircraft enforcing the zones on 500 occasions, in many cases provoking U.S. strikes on the activated missile batteries. On February 16, 2001, the United States and Britain struck elements of that network north of the southern no fly zone, in response to Iraq's increasing ability to target U.S. aircraft. U.S. aircraft did not go beyond the zone, but the strike was criticized internationally.

On May 9, 2001, the *Washington Post* reported that U.S. Air Force commanders want to reduce no fly zone enforcement operations, possibly including virtual termination of the northern zone operation. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld appeared to give credence to the reports during a June 2001 visit to Turkey, saying that improved Iraqi air defense would be a factor in his recommendations to the President on the future of the no fly zone enforcement operations. Iraq nearly shot down a U.S. U-2 reconnaissance plane on July 24, 2001. Suggesting less U.S. vigilance in its no-fly zone enforcement, as of late November 2001, coalition aircraft have struck Iraqi air defense targets only about 15 times in 2001, despite being fired on by Iraq over 50 times. In 2000, the United States struck Iraqi air defense targets on 47 occasions. The U.S. strike activity has continued to be relatively low since September 11, despite the post-September 11 debate over stepped-up U.S. action against Iraq.

Costs of Containment. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates contributed a total of \$37 billion to the \$61.1 billion in incremental costs of Desert Storm, all of which has been paid. From the end of the Gulf war until the end of FY2000, the Defense Department has incurred about \$8 billion in costs to contain Iraq and provide humanitarian aid to the Kurds. Of that, about \$1.14 billion was spent in FY2000, and just under \$100 million was spent for Operation Desert Fox. About \$1.1 billion was spent in FY2001, and an FY2001 defense appropriation (H.R. 4576, P.L. 106-259, signed August 9, 2000) provided \$3.938 billion in emergency spending for operations over Iraq and in Bosnia and Kosovo.) The Department of Defense, under the Weapons of Mass Destruction Control Act of 1992 (22 U.S.C. 5859a), assisted UNSCOM by providing U-2 surveillance flights (suspended since the December 15, 1998 UNSCOM pullout), intelligence, personnel, equipment, and logistical support, at a cost of about \$15 million per year. (See CRS Issue Brief IB94040, *Peacekeeping: Issues of U.S. Military Involvement*.)