



31 August 2004

AKE Bespoke Intelligence Reports

AKE's Intelligence Department regularly provides private, focussed reports on a range of political and security issues to suit our clients' needs. If you would like to discuss your requirements or receive a quote please contact intel@akegroup.com or +44 (0)20 7816 5454.

Flashpoints

Baghdad (particularly Sadr City), Najaf, Karbala, Mosul, Basrah, Kirkuk

The following highways and routes should be considered extremely hostile:

- The route to Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) is extremely dangerous. Restrictions are sporadically applied to this route.
- The Baghdad to Amman Highway remains particularly dangerous and should be avoided if at all possible. Indeed, 'The Group of Death' has issued a video warning in which it threatens to cut off Highway 10, the major supply route between Amman and Baghdad.
- In the south of the country, carjacking and banditry are rife on the following routes: Safwan to Basrah, Nasiriyah to Basrah and Hamza to Diwaniyah.
- Roads in the vicinity of Najaf, Karbala and Kufah are likely to become increasingly dangerous because of the ongoing situation in Najaf and Kufah
- The roads from Baghdad to Fallujah have reopened although they remain extremely dangerous. A number of checkpoints have also been erected on the routes and are being manned by both Multinational Forces (MNF) and the Iraqi police.
- The route from Syria to Mosul in the north of Iraq has also proven dangerous in the past few weeks
- The road between Beiji and Tikrit was the scene of an attack in recent days

While these routes have been highlighted, it should be noted that transit throughout Iraq is **dangerous** and no route can be guaranteed as being safe.

Projections

The seizure and threatened execution of two French journalists (detailed below), demonstrates that despite France's opposition to the US action in Iraq, its citizens are still at risk of kidnap and execution as are the nationals of other countries that opposed the conflict. Indeed, given Russian President Putin's move to allow arms sales to the Iraqi government it is likely that Russian citizens operating in Iraq will be at an increased risk of attack and/or kidnap.

The son of Abdullah Azzam, the teacher and friend of Osama Bin Laden, has warned that Muslims from all over the world have travelled to Iraq to carry out their "duty" of Jihad against the US and MNF there. Huthaifa Azzam has also stated that he was welcomed along with a many of his fellow fighters by the former Iraqi leader when it became clear that military action was going to be carried out against Saddam's regime. Comments passed by the infamous militant's son suggest that they were allowed by the regime to operate within it. However, they were monitored and controlled by the former regime. The decision of Azzam to reveal such information at this time may well be an attempt to bolster the Sunni Islamic resistance in Iraq at a time when the Shi'a militants have been grabbing all the headlines. Furthermore, it is not impossible, nor improbable that the adding of the voice of the son of such a prominent figure as Abdullah Azzam will inspire further violence by the Sunni

insurgents in the coming days. Indeed, any forthcoming attacks are likely to be on a large scale.

On 30 August, an aide of the radical cleric, however, signalled al-Sadr's intention to join the political process and perhaps even partake in the first of next year's elections scheduled for January. Followers were also urged to lay down their weapons and to await an announcement on Sadr's political plans. It must be remembered that despite the lull in violence between supporters of the radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, the failure of all but a relative few Mehdi militiamen to hand in their weaponry, and the failure thus far of disbandment, is likely to cause further problems throughout Iraq.

Indeed, the outcome of the three weeks of Shi'a-dominated violence is remarkably similar to the situation that followed the previous Shi'a violence earlier this year when the militiamen were sent back to Sadr City and persisted in violent actions there. The failure of many to hand in their weapons and the fact that many are believed to be being stored in arms caches indicates that the situation is not as 'over' as many are led to believe. What is of further interest is the fact that it does not appear that all of Sadr's so-called 'loyal militia' are under the radical cleric's control. As suggested in AKE's Iraq Security Briefing of 24 August, it is believed that some militiamen from all over southern Iraq may be using the name of the cleric for their own ends and may not be wholly under his control.

In the north of Iraq, tensions between Iraq's Kurdish and Turkoman populations are increasing and this is likely to be further exacerbated by the assassination of a leading Turkoman figure over the weekend period. While sporadic clashes between the two ethnic groupings, particularly in Kirkuk have taken place for many years, Kurdish ambition towards autonomy has invoked anger in the Turkoman population. Increasing numbers of Kurds in the city of Kirkuk has exacerbated this problem considerably. Under the rule of the former regime, while the Turkoman population was not even included in censuses carried out, Kurds were driven out of the city and are now returning. Furthermore, they are constructing homes and buildings, an activity they were not permitted to pursue under Saddam's rule. It is highly possible that this situation will escalate, particularly in the aftermath of the national conference and in the run up to elections early next year.

Summary

Violence has persisted nationwide with attacks involving the usual array of weaponry which includes Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Mortars, Rockets, Small Arms (SAF) and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs). Kidnapping has remained a preferred action, as has the subsequent execution of the victims with the largest execution to date taking place with the slitting of the throats of 12 Nepalese victims. The situation in the Shi'a-dominated areas of Iraq remains tense, with the resumption of violence a strong probability. Sunni-dominated areas, such as Ramadi and Fallujah remain restive. Targeted assassinations and attempted assassinations have also been evident over the weekend period.

Kidnapping remains a significant risk to all personnel operating in Iraq.

Areas of continued concern

- **It is feared that mosques are potential hot spots for demonstrations, and possibly suicide and other explosive attacks in the coming days and weeks**
- **Hotels remain at risk of attack, particularly those providing residence to Western personnel, including those in the 'Green Zone', despite increased security**
- **All facilities relating to the energy industry in Iraq remain at risk of attack, including offices and vehicles**
- **Police stations, local government and Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) facilities continue to be the target of demonstrations and suicide attacks**
- **The homes and offices of those involved in the political development of Iraq, those of personnel involved in the former regime (i.e. low level Ba'athists) and those of tribal leaders are believed to be under an increased risk of attack or assassination**











The following other buildings and facilities are consistently at risk:

- Any building, element of infrastructure or machinery involved with the reconstruction effort (particularly the energy industry)
- Coalition facilities of all nationalities (inhabited by contractors, NGO workers, diplomatic and military personnel)
- Civic buildings, particularly police stations, diplomatic offices and those of NGOs and media organizations
- Any convoy/vehicle carrying personnel from the media/NGOs or indeed contractors and diplomatic staff is at risk of attack at all times

This email is intended for the sole use of the subscriber, who has agreed to abide by the terms and conditions of subscription, as specified [here](#).

This is an abridged version of AKE's Iraq Security Briefing. The full version is sent out on Tuesdays and Thursdays and is available to subscribers. For a free 14-day trial please contact intel@akegroup.com

AKE risk ratings

| | | |
|---|--------|----------------------------------|
|  | 1-9 | Generally stable and secure |
|  | 10-19 | Instability |
|  | 20-29 | Hostile |
|  | 30-39 | Highly unstable |
|  | 40-49 | Widespread militancy |
|  | 50-59 | Low intensity conflict |
|  | 60-69 | Advanced guerrilla war/civil war |
|  | 70-79 | Limited conventional war |
|  | 80-89 | Regional war |
|  | 90-100 | Total war (sub-nuclear) |

For more in-depth analysis of the security situation in Iraq as well as other world hot spots see [Global Intake](#), AKE's online strategic information and intelligence tool.

AKE provides:



**We also provide training and intelligence to assist with ISPS code compliance.
For further details please telephone: +44 (0)20 7816 5454**

If you are experiencing any problems accessing Global Intake or have any comments with the site please email globalintake@globalintake.com. Please note Global Intake is only available to subscribers.

This communication contains information which is confidential and may also be privileged. It is for the exclusive use of the intended recipient(s) and is not intended to be relied upon by any person without subsequent written confirmation of its contents. Furthermore, the content of this e-mail is the personal view of the sender and does not represent the advice, views or opinion of AKE Ltd. Accordingly AKE Ltd disclaim all responsibility and accept no liability (including in negligence) for the consequences of any person acting, or refraining from acting, on such information prior to the receipt by those persons of subsequent written confirmation. In particular (but not by way of limitation) AKE Ltd disclaims all responsibility and accepts no liability for any e-mails which are defamatory, offensive, racist or in any other way are in breach of any third party's rights, including breach of confidence, privacy or other rights. If you have received this e-mail message in error, please notify the security administrator immediately by e-mail to security@akegroup.com. Please also destroy and delete the message from your computer. Any form of reproduction, dissemination, copying, disclosure, modification, distribution and/or publication of this e-mail message is strictly prohibited. AKE Ltd (Company Number 2558662) trading address is Mortimer House, Holmer Road, Hereford, HR4 9TA, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1432 267111

Copyright © AKE Ltd 2004