



17 June 2004

Flashpoints

Baghdad, Fallujah, Ramadi, Basrah, Kirkuk

The following highways and routes should be considered extremely hostile:

- 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 Coalition Forces (CF) and the Iraqi police.
- The Baghdad to Amman Highway remains particularly dangerous and should be avoided if at all possible.
- The route to Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) is extremely dangerous. Restrictions have been applied to this route.
- Routes in the vicinity of Najaf, Kufah and Karbala should be avoided, as should those around al-Kut.
- 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

Intelligence reaffirms the analysis that the Kurdish population of northern Iraq, particularly Kirkuk, is growing increasingly frustrated at the UN Security Council's failure to accommodate the political aspirations of Iraq's Kurdish population. It is feared this has fuelled anti-Coalition (particularly anti-US) sentiment among that ethnos. The information received indicates that many in the Kurdish area believe that the violence in Fallujah in recent months resulted in the insurgents in that part of the country being granted increased autonomy. It is feasible that elements within the Kurdish community have drawn lessons from the troubles in Fallujah and may now seek to push their own agenda in a similar manner.

Further attacks on Iraq's vital energy infrastructure are anticipated. Remarkably an oil tanker belonging to the Northern Oil Company was stolen from Baiji (details below). It is feared that the vehicle might be used in a future attack, potentially making a devastating explosive device.

Further suicide attacks are likely, targeting Iraqis perceived as collaborating with the Coalition, Iraqi Interim Government and those involved in the reconstruction effort (however indirectly). Despite its continued use in Iraq, suicide, let alone suicide bombing, is not permitted by the Koran. It is specifically stated in the Koran, [4:29] that 'O you who believed, do not consume each others' properties illicitly – only mutually acceptable transactions are permitted. *You shall not kill yourselves. God is merciful towards you.*' And in [4:30] 'Anyone who commits these transgressions, maliciously and deliberately, *we will condemn him to Hell. This is easy for GOD to do.*' Of course, suicide bombings are known to have been carried out by both Shi'a and Sunni Islamists over the years and it is believed that in the eyes of the perpetrators of these attacks (and the clerics that back them) that the consequences of the action are not so much about the next life than the presence and the eradication of the apostate and unacceptable powers that rule.

Summary

Attacks have continued throughout Iraq. Targeted assassinations have been particularly evident, as has the use of vehicle-borne explosive devices (IEDs). Targeted assassinations have largely focussed on high-level Iraqi community, political and industry figures and have taken the form of drive-by shootings. This trend will continue in the run up to and the aftermath of the transfer of power. Vehicle-borne suicide attacks have been employed against a wide range of targets from contractors to those Iraqis viewed as assisting the reconstruction, Coalition and, of course, military targets. In addition, hijackings, kidnappings, ambushes, rocket and mortar attacks are still an immediate risk to all personnel working in Iraq. Attacks involving the use of IEDs, Small Arms Fire (SAF) and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs) have also persisted.

Responsibility for the vehicle-borne suicide attack on 14 June that resulted in the death of 13 individuals including five foreign nationals has been claimed by the Jama'at al-Tawhid and Jihad group which claims to have links with Iraq's al-Qaeda figurehead, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. While the statement has not yet been confirmed as authentic, the group has claimed previous attacks including the 17 May assassination of Ezzedine Salim who held the position as the president of the Interim Governing Council (a rotating position) at the time of his death. The statement will no doubt be viewed as encouragement for members of the group and other suspected affiliates of the al-Qaeda terror network and will result in further attacks of this type.

It is highly likely that these claims are true as it is known that al-Qaeda and therefore its affiliates utilise the concept of Jahiliyyah. Jahiliyyah was originally a term used to describe the period before the advent of Islam, the time of pagan worship. However, with the evolution of modern militant Islam and the writings of figures such as Sayyid Qutb and Maududi, the term has been applied to those believers who are thought to have strayed from true Islam and are classified as unbelievers. Furthermore, different fundamentalist groups have applied the term Jahiliyyah to different areas of society, for example, they may include only Muslims that they believe have strayed from the path of Allah or they may include everyone, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In this regard, it appears that the perpetrators of the most recent attack and previous attacks in Iraq and also in Madrid, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Morocco, have been inspired by the aforementioned writings and use the concept of Jahiliyyah for both the purpose of and as the justification for their attacks. The concept explains why growing numbers of Muslims have been killed and injured in attacks. Indeed, Ansar-al-Islam and al-Qaeda, and no doubt many other groups operating in Iraq and elsewhere, believe elements of society are 'Jahili'. These groups believe that a '*vanguard*' must be formed and withdraw from society as the Prophet Muhammad did on his original *Hijrah* (migration or journey by Muhammad and his companions from Mecca to Medina in 622ce, that marked commencement of the Muslim era) and thereafter utilise jihad (struggle *not just* holy war) against jahili society as Muhammad did in Mecca, to create a pure Islamic community or *Ummah*. Featuring highly among these members of society are Muslims that work closely alongside the West, which is viewed as corrupt, and the Gulf monarchies, particularly the higher echelons and business classes of such which are believed by many Islamist groups to have strayed from the true path, making them a much desired target

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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

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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)

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