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U.S. Department of Justice

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Interview Session Number: 4
Interview Conducted by: SSA George L. Piro
Arabic/English Translation: SSA [REDACTED]

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~~(S)~~ Saddam Hussein (High Value Detainee #1) was interviewed on February 13, 2004 at a military detention facility at Baghdad International Airport (BIAP), Baghdad, Iraq. Hussein provided the following information:

~~(S)~~ The lead interviewer began the discussion by explaining that today's session would be a general dialogue regarding the United Nations (UN) and various resolutions concerning Iraq as passed by the UN.

~~(S)~~ Hussein said, "Let me ask a direct question. I want to ask where, from the beginning of this interview process until now, has the information been going? For our relationship to remain clear, I want to know." The interviewer told Hussein that he is a representative of the US Government, and that reports from these interviews are no doubt being reviewed by many US government officials. Although the interviewer denied any personal knowledge, these individuals may include the President of the United States. Hussein stated that he would have no reservations if others were "brought into" the process and that he "does not mind" if the information is published.

~~(S)~~ When questioned whether Hussein had ever used "doubles" or those resembling him as has been often discussed in books and other publications, he laughed and stated, "This is movie magic, not reality." Hussein added that it is very difficult for someone to impersonate another individual.

~~(S)~~ When questioned whether others in the Iraqi government, including his son Uday, had used "doubles" as has been described in a book by an Iraqi man, Hussein denied any information regarding these reports. He stated, "I think my sons would not do this." Hussein added they might have considered such a tactic during war, but not in peace. He never saw

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"doubles" for either of his sons, during times of war or peace. Hussein asked rhetorically, "Do not think I am getting upset when you mention my sons. I still think about them and the fact that they were martyred. They will be examples to everyone throughout the world." Both of his sons fought in the war against Iran in the 1980s, before "arriving at the normal age." They, and one other individual, are the only ones known to Hussein as having fought while "underage."

~~(S)~~ During the Iran-Iraq War in the battle for the liberation of the Al-Faw Peninsula in 1987, Hussein and all of his immediate male relatives fought. This was an important and decisive battle, a fact which was communicated by Hussein to all Iraqis. Hussein stated, "When I believe in principles, I believe in them fully, not partially, not gradually, but completely." Hussein added that God creates us, and only he decides when he is going to take us. Hussein ended this portion of the interview saying, "If you decide to publish a book, be sure to write it in English as well as Arabic."

~~(S)~~ Upon revisiting the issue whether Hussein ever used "doubles," he replied, "No, of course not."

~~(S)~~ The interview then turned to a discussion of Hussein's view/opinions vis-a-vis the UN in the 1990s, beginning with UN Resolution 687. As relayed by the interviewer, UNR 687 called for Iraq to, among other things, declare the existence, if any, or to destroy, chemical and biological weapons, and agree to make no further attempts to manufacture or acquire such weapons. The resolution also called for Iraq to reaffirm its compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. UNR 687 also detailed steps which Iraq had to undertake in order to have UN sanctions against the country lifted. Specifically, the interviewer asked about Hussein's decisions and the rationale for these decisions with respect to UNR 687.

~~(S)~~ Hussein stated UNR 661, not UNR 687, is the first resolution in the 1990s concerning Iraq which would eventually contribute to tensions and lead to the most recent war with the United States. The interviewer confirmed his familiarity with this resolution, but stated UNR 687 would be the starting point for this discussion.

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~~(S)~~ Hussein acknowledged Iraq accepted UNR 687. Hussein further acknowledged Iraq made a mistake by destroying some weapons without UN supervision. When questioned as to whether Iraq also made a mistake regarding failure to provide complete disclosure, initially and throughout the process, Hussein responded, "That's a very good question." UNR 687 was not written according to the "UN way." It followed UNR 661, issued before the first Gulf War, and similar to UNR 661, was supported by the United States. Hussein stated, "The United States started the cause and others followed. 661 was agreed upon by all parties while 687 was not."

~~(S)~~ After the first Gulf War began, the US President eventually requested a meeting in the Gulf on a ship, similar to the meeting held at the end of World War II between the United States and Japan, in order to discuss a cease-fire agreement. Iraq refused such a meeting. Ultimately, Iraq met with leaders of other countries in a location "at the borders." Iraq agreed to a cease-fire and withdrew its armies. Thereafter, UNR 687 was passed. Hussein reiterated that UNR 687 was approved at the insistence of the United States. According to Hussein, "no such decision" existed before in the history of the UN.

~~(S)~~ When the first Gulf War began, Iraqi military forces were "away from the borders." There were those who wanted to "rape" Iraq in war, since they could not do that in peace.

~~(S)~~ The Iraqi government wrote letters to the UN affirming compliance with UNR 687. Iraq did not agree with the resolution but agreed to implement it so that "people would not get hurt."

~~(S)~~ In Hussein's view, UN inspectors wanted all expenses, including their accommodations, travel, and other costs paid for by Iraq. Instead of waiting for the inspectors and bearing these expenses, Iraq commenced destruction of the weapons. Iraq did not hide these weapons. UN inspectors later requested documentation of the destruction of the weapons and visited various places taking samples for review. Hussein stated, "If it is presumed that we were mistaken in the percentage of weapons that we say we destroyed, then how many mistakes were made by the United States according to UNR 687." These "mistakes" include occupying Iraq, implementation of the "No Fly Zones" over northern and southern Iraq, and the bombing

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of Iraq which took place from the first Gulf War to the most recent one. Hussein questioned why the UN implemented UNR 687 in such a harsh manner against Iraq, while other UN resolutions, including those against Israel, were not enforced. Hussein ended this portion of the discussion saying, "If we were to bring a professor from a college in the United States to Iraq, he would agree with my observations regarding UNR 687, with the exception of the issue of the sovereignty of another country (Kuwait)."

~~(S)~~ During a lengthy dialogue with the interviewer regarding UNR 687, Hussein made several statements. He acknowledged UNR 687 passed and Iraq agreed "to deal with it." Regarding destruction of weapons, Hussein stated, "We destroyed them. We told you, with documents. That's it." When questioned about Iraqi restrictions placed on locations visited by UN inspectors, Hussein replied, "What places?" The interviewer told Hussein numerous locations including the Ministry of Agriculture, to which Hussein replied, "By God, if I had such weapons, I would have used them in the fight against the United States." The interviewer pointed out that most accused persons who are innocent agree to a full and complete examination of the details of the accusation. Once cleared, the accused party would then provide evidence of any mistreatment during the investigation. Hussein stated, "This is not a question, it is a dialogue. Good."

~~(S)~~ Hussein opined that the United States used prohibited weapons in Vietnam. He asked whether America would accept Iraqis inspecting the White House for such weapons. Hussein stated any such search would likely find nothing. He added, "A country that accepts being violated will bring dishonor to its people." Negotiation is the normal method of resolution of any disagreement, particularly among nations. Negotiation is the "way of the UN."

~~(S)~~ When emphasized to Hussein that the international community agreed that Iraq had not complied with UNR 687, he responded that Iraq believed there was something wrong with "the international way." The United States convinced the world of its position regarding Iraq. Regarding further discussion, Hussein commented, "I must prepare an answer in my mind, so that it does not come in pieces. Let's leave the past where it is, not that we agree, but to maximize our time."

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~~(S)~~ Hussein commented that in the most recent war with Iraq, the United States only ally was Britain. All other major countries, including France, China, Russia, and Germany, were against the war. The United States was "looking for a reason to do something." Now, the United States is here and did not find any weapons of mass destruction. Hussein pointed out to the interviewer that decisions were made by the Iraqi leadership and not just by Hussein. Iraqi leaders made decisions which gave the United States an "opening" and the reasons for the most recent war.

~~(S)~~ Hussein remarked that, at times, people told Jesus Christ, the Prophet Muhammad, Moses, David, and all other prophets to give up their beliefs, teachings, and principles to save their own lives. Hussein stated, "If a man gives up his principles, his life has no value. In the case of the prophets, they would have been ignoring the orders of God." Hussein added, "If Iraq had given up its principles, we would have been worthless." Hussein stated that he was elected by the people, and not "brought in by some other country or companies." Thus, he was required to comply with the principles of the people.

~~(S)~~ The interviewer stressed to Hussein that Iraq's actions led to the implementation of UN sanctions. The Iraqi leadership's actions, and in some cases failure to act, compelled the UN to continue the sanctions. Hussein responded, "This is your opinion. I answered." He continued saying that it is difficult to give up "your nationality, your country, and your traditions." Hussein pointed out that perhaps the interviewer and another American might think differently on the subject of Iraq.

~~(S)~~ Hussein said, "If I wanted to be a politician, I could. But, I do not like politicians or politics." When noted to Hussein that some people would state he played politics with the UN, Hussein stated, "We abided totally by all UN decisions." The United States should be blamed, not the UN. Hussein stated, "We are among the few remaining cavaliers."

~~(S)~~ Upon any examination of blame, the interviewer pointed out one must first look at the origins of the discord between Iraq and the world, the invasion of Kuwait. Hussein responded, "America had a plan with Kuwait to attack Iraq. We had a copy of the plan in our hands. If I had the (prohibited)

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weapons, would I have let United States forces stay in Kuwait without attacking? I wish the United States did not have the intention to attack Iraq."

~~(S)~~ When questioned whether the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which led to war with the United States, also precipitated the sanctions against Iraq, Hussein asked, "I ask you as an American, when did the United States stop shipments of grain to Iraq? In 1989. When did the United States contact European countries to boycott sales of technological equipment to Iraq? In 1989. The United States was planning to destroy Iraq, an intention pushed by Zionism and the effect of Zionism on elections in the United States." This US "plan" was also influenced by countries located near Iraq, particularly Israel, which viewed Iraq as a dangerous military threat upon conclusion of the Iran-Iraq War. Hussein stated, "I believe this very much."

~~(S)~~ Regarding Kuwait and the war, Hussein stated, "It is difficult to avoid someone who is armed and standing outside your house unless you come out and shoot." As Iraq is a small country, it was difficult to stop the United States no matter what steps were taken.

~~(S)~~ Leading up to the most recent war, the United States provided much "history" to the world regarding Iraq. Hussein stated, "It was difficult for me, or any honorable person, not to attempt to stop the United States from entering Iraq."

~~(S)~~ Regarding providing his personal observations versus his opinions as President of Iraq, Hussein stated, "There is nothing I consider personal. I cannot forget my capacity as President. This is what I know and am convinced of. Thus, it is difficult to answer from a personal viewpoint. I cannot forget my role and principles for one second, and forget what I was."

~~(S)~~ At the end of the interview, Hussein was again asked about his movements after the beginning of the war in March, 2003. Hussein stated he was not in the Dora neighborhood of Baghdad on March 19, 2003 when it was bombed by coalition forces. Hussein added that he was not in this neighborhood in the ten days before this attack or at any time throughout the

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war. Hussein believes that coalition forces targeted this location because they mistakenly believed he was present.

(S) Regarding his method of movement before the fall of Baghdad in April, 2003, Hussein stated that success in movement of persons or equipment during war time required knowledge of enemy capabilities as well as "our own capabilities." The persons closest to Hussein (Murafiqeen) would direct him to "move this way or that way." When asked whether Hussein normally traveled in a Black Mercedes before the war, he stated, "Perhaps. We had all colors of Mercedes." Regarding whether he normally traveled in a long motorcade, Hussein stated, "I'll leave this for history."

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