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U.S. Department of Justice

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Interview Session Number: 13
Interview Conducted by: SSA George L. Piro
Arabic/English Translation: SSA [REDACTED]
LS [REDACTED]

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~~(S)~~ Saddam Hussein (High Value Detainee #1) was interviewed March 11, 2004 at a military detention facility at Baghdad International Airport (BIAP), Baghdad, Iraq. Hussein provided the following information:

~~(S)~~ Prior to the start of interview, Hussein was informed this session would be a continuation of the previous discussions regarding Kuwait.

~~(S)~~ Regarding information from the Kuwaiti government indicating that the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait caused \$180 billion in damages to the country, Hussein asked for the source of this information. When told the source was Kuwait, Hussein asked which neutral and legal entity questioned Kuwait regarding the basis of their conclusion. He opined that "no one" asked Kuwait for the details of their investigation of this matter. Hussein again questioned the existence of evidence supporting these Kuwaiti assertions.

~~(S)~~ Hussein reiterated information provided in a previous interview stating, "Kuwait is Iraqi." According to Hussein, Kuwait was "stolen" from Iraq by a British resolution. He added that if Kuwait had not been a country with oil, it would not have been "stolen." Hussein stated that the arrogance of the Kuwaiti rulers made them "stupid" and ignited the war. He further stated that he understands that the United States, located across the Atlantic Ocean, would want Iraq to be poor. However, he cannot understand how Kuwait would want to exist next to a "hungry country."

~~(S)~~ Hussein emphasized that he is not saying that Kuwait did not have the right to make these statements. He again questioned the identity of the neutral entity which examined this matter and whether it was discussed with Iraq. Hussein suggested

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that something similar to a court should have been formed to hear the details from both sides and to decide this matter. However, this did not happen.

~~(S)~~ Hussein stated that just prior to the latest war, American officials said all Iraqi debts would be forgiven including monies owed to Kuwait. In Hussein's opinion, this proved any amount reportedly owed to Kuwait was not a legal debt and was a "political" matter. He added that this policy was driven by the United States and not the United Nations (UN), Kuwait, or any other entity.

~~(S)~~ The interviewer told Hussein that Kuwait never asked for compensation for the damages suffered during the Iraqi invasion and occupation. Kuwait did, however, ask for the return of 605 prisoners of war (POWs). To date, these POWs have not been returned. Hussein stated these Kuwaitis were not "captives" and are missing as characterized by a UN resolution. He stated that many "stories and novels have been woven" around this issue, similar to the matter of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The Kuwaiti POW accusations have been proven to be false, however, similar to the WMD rumors. Hussein stated that individuals often become "missing" during a war. He provided as examples the one coalition individual still missing from the first Gulf War and the thousands of Iraqis and Iranians missing from the war between the two countries. As for the 605 Kuwaitis, Hussein stated that Kuwait knows their fate. Hussein denied knowledge that 605 Kuwaitis were captured in circumstances other than combat after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

~~(S)~~ Hussein acknowledged that Aziz Saleh Al-Numan was Governor of Kuwait during the Iraqi occupation. As such, he reported directly to the Iraqi Minister of Interior, a position held by Ali Hasan Al-Majid at that time. Al-Numan's duties as Governor were set forth in Iraqi provincial laws. Hussein does not remember whether Al-Numan was appointed by him or by decree of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). In Iraq, the Constitution sets forth the authority of the RCC and the President who is also the Chairman of the RCC. Some governmental appointments such as those given to high-ranking officers in the military, judges, and general directors are based on a "republican" directive. Hussein explained that the Iraqi system does not prevent the President from submitting a name for consideration of appointment and requesting subsequent feedback

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from the RCC. Decisions in Iraq are signed by the President. It is his prerogative to consult or not to consult anyone. Hussein stated "his style" was to always consult with others when the time came to make a decision. Governors were assigned based on a "republican" or Presidential directive. Hussein does not remember if he discussed the appointment of Al-Numan with the RCC.

(S) When questioned regarding Iraq's usage of Kuwaitis, Japanese, and westerners as human shields during the first Gulf War including the positioning of them at key sites such as communications centers and military positions, Hussein denied that such individuals were taken to Iraqi military positions. He added that the Iraqi government did not, however, prevent individuals from volunteering as human shields to protect facilities such as communications centers. When questioned whether such volunteers existed in 1991, Hussein replied, "I do not remember."

(S) The translator read to Hussein an Iraqi government communication from Qusay Hussein concerning the usage of Kuwaiti prisoners as human shields. Hussein stated that he has no information about this letter. When noted to Hussein that the document was recovered by American forces from an Iraqi government building and is deemed legitimate, Hussein stated, "I answered." He asked whether the captives discussed in this communication were ever questioned about being held in Iraqi captivity or being used as human shields. Hussein stated that Iraq released all the Kuwaiti captives. Upon being told the document was dated March 14, 2003, Hussein stated, "It is a forgery. It is impossible." He suggested that the communication should be examined closely to determine authenticity and that he had thought it was dated 1991. Hussein stated that if the date of the document is 2003, it is a forgery. He added that Iraq did not have captives at that time. Hussein stated that Qusay was not the type of person to "make up things." He reiterated that experts in the United States and in Iraq should scrutinize this document for authenticity.

(S) Regarding chemical weapons and why Iraq did not use them in the first Gulf War, Hussein replied that he had been asked this question previously and had answered. When noted to him that the interviewer had not previously asked this question, Hussein replied that he believed it was strange that the

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interviewer or anyone else would ask this question, not just at this point but at any time. He stated that it is not Iraqi policy to use chemical weapons against coalition forces. Hussein commented that this was a discussion of history, not unrealistic hypotheticals. He asked how Iraq would have been described if it had used chemical weapons. Hussein replied to his own question, "We would have been called stupid." According to Hussein, chemical weapons, and their use, were never discussed by Iraqi officials before or during the 1991 war.

~~(S)~~ As stated during a previous interview, Hussein acknowledged a meeting in January, 1991 just before the war between US Secretary of State James Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz. Hussein remembers a statement by Baker to "take Iraq back to the pre-industrial age." He stated that Iraq would not be intimidated by threats, however, especially when coming from someone in "a strong position." Hussein denied knowledge that part of this discussion concerned the position of the United States regarding Iraq's possible use of chemical weapons should hostilities occur. According to Hussein, "We decided the right thing to do." He stated that the use of chemical weapons did not "cross our mind."

~~(S)~~ Hussein stated that Sultan Hashem, Iraqi Minister of Defense, and Saleh, Second Corps Commander, represented Iraq at the cease fire talks during the first Gulf War. Their positions and viewpoints were the same as those of the Iraqi leadership, to secure a cease fire and to start the withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq. Hussein stated Iraq had no goal of continuing the war and desired a cease fire.

~~(S)~~ When questioned about other items discussed by Iraq at the 1991 cease fire talks, Hussein stated that he does not remember any additional Iraqi requests other than the withdrawal of foreign forces from their territory. In Hussein's opinion, the fighting would have continued without this withdrawal. Hussein denied knowledge that Iraq asked for, and received, permission to continue flying helicopters. He further denied knowledge of the purpose of such an Iraqi request.

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