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The Iraqi Threat

Saddam sees himself as a pan-Arab leader and views his regime as the most glorious chapter in Iraqi history. Nurtured in a clannish, nationalist, and cutthroat political environment, Saddam's parochial, anti-Western outlook colors his domestic and foreign policies. His decisionmaking is guided by opportunism, distrust of others, a personal need for power, and the sense that he is an historic figure who must take bold risks to advance Iraq's interests. He views state power primarily in military terms—twice launching wars against neighbors—and his strategic aim is to establish Iraq as the preeminent power in the Persian Gulf.

- He views the US and Israel as the chief impediments to his dominating the region and believes they want to divide and weaken the Arabs and control their oil resources.

Saddam's Threat to His People

Saddam maintains a vise grip on Iraq through his multilayered and pervasive security apparatus, which brutally enforces his authority and cultivates an image of invincibility. Throughout his 22-year presidency, Saddam has ruthlessly eliminated real and imagined adversaries to further his political goals and consolidate his power. He has ordered the assassination of numerous domestic rivals, former colleagues, family members, and dissidents in Iraq and abroad.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)

he initiated "cleansing campaigns" in 1999 at the large Abu Ghurayb and Radwanayah prisons that continued into this year.

- Saddam's obsession with ensuring regime security by force has led to repeated and devastating counterinsurgency operations. Saddam personally oversaw military operations against the Shia opposition in southern Iraq in 1991. His forces leveled numerous villages, killed tens of thousands, and displaced thousands more.

- He has overseen the destruction of Iraq's large marshlands and displaced their residents to deny opponents and insurgents a hiding place.

As commander-in-chief during the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam was responsible for the repression of the Kurds, including the infamous *Anfal* operation directed by his cousin Ali Hasan al-Majid in 1987-88, which included mass deportations, resettlement, torture, executions, and the use of chemical weapons. The Iraqi Government razed hundreds of Kurdish villages and forcibly relocated the displaced population to southern Iraq.

Saddam's Human Shields

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The Iraqi regime uses people as pawns and hostages. It has taken Iraqi citizens, prisoners of war, and foreigners as "human shields" to protect key political and military sites, most notably during the Gulf war.

- During a confrontation with the US over inspections in 1997, Saddam ordered ranking members of the Ba'th Party to bring at least ten families a day to sit in government and security

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installations as human shields. [E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)] [redacted]

**Conventional Military Capability**

Saddam has spent all but three years of his long tenure at war with his neighbors and the international community, squandering Iraq's vast oil and other resources in the process. He believes a large conventional military is essential to making Iraq a great power. [redacted]

The Iraqi military today is less than half its pre-Gulf war size, and Baghdad's military capabilities have deteriorated slowly as a result of UN sanctions, the arms embargo, and damage inflicted by Coalition and US military operations. Iraq has received no major military equipment—such as tanks, APCs, artillery, or aircraft—since the imposition of the arms embargo in 1990. It is importing increasing amounts of illicit spare parts and dual-use items, but these shipments are only sufficient to slow, not reverse, the overall decline in military capabilities. Despite these shortcomings, the Iraqi military retains the capacity to threaten US interests, and the Intelligence Community assesses it capable of:

- Defeating any combination of internal opposition groups and reasserting regime control over key roads and cities in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq.
- Overrunning Kuwait—absent opposition from Western forces—and threatening other regional Arab states. [redacted]

**Conventional Forces in Decline.** Iraq maintains 23 divisions in its ground forces, down from the high of 67 just before Operation Desert Storm.

- The six Republican Guard divisions remain the most capable ground force units, and [redacted] these forces are equipped to roughly 90 percent of their authorized strength of combat vehicles.
- The 17 regular Army divisions vary widely in strength. [redacted] the six armored and mechanized divisions have roughly 80 percent of their authorized equipment, but [redacted] some of the remaining infantry units have as little as half their authorized manpower.
- The key vulnerability for the ground forces remains logistics, leaving them dependent on the national rail network for movement in the country and limiting power projection capability beyond Iraq's borders. [redacted] a shortage of some 36,000 trucks at the division level, and Iraq's fleet of about 500 operational heavy equipment transporters is sufficient to move only one armored division at a time. [redacted]

The Iraqi Air Force has only 200 or so mission-capable fighter aircraft, and training sorties have declined steadily since the end of the Gulf War. Morale among pilots remains low; Iraqi defectors have said some pilots must take second jobs or engage in smuggling to earn extra income. [redacted]

Iraq's air defense forces continue to challenge US enforcement of the No-Fly Zone but are using less capable weapons than in the immediate aftermath of Operation Desert Fox in December 1998. Iraq periodically rotates fully-operational surface-to-air missile systems—with fire control radars—into the

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NFZs, but most SAMs are fired ballistically, without missile guidance, to avoid detection. Iraq has so far failed in its efforts to acquire advanced air defense systems such as the SA-10 or SA-20. [redacted]

**Military Improvements.** Although Iraq has been unable to reverse the overall decline in military capability, it has made some important advances:

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- Since September of 1999, the government has been installing a fiber-optic network throughout the country, significantly enhancing military command, control, and communications infrastructure, as well as reducing the Intelligence Community's ability to intercept key communications.
- [redacted] Iraq is diverting vehicles imported under the UN oil-for-food (OFF) program to military uses and illicitly importing vehicles outside of the program. Since January of last year, the UN has approved Iraqi purchases of about \$2.6 billion for at least 60,000 vehicles, according to UN documents. Most vehicles approved under OFF have not yet arrived, and even with these vehicles, it will be three to five years before Baghdad can resolve its military transportation shortage.
- Iraq is supporting its military and WMD programs with limited amounts of dual-use goods acquired through the OFF program and—in some cases—with embargoed materials. [redacted]

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**Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs**

[redacted] E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c) [redacted] Saddam's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction an addiction. Saddam believes such weapons are vital to deter longtime adversaries Iran, Israel, and the US, as well as to showcase Iraq's—and the Arab world's—scientific prowess and military potency. [redacted]

**Biological weapons program.** Iraq maintains an active and capable BW program that includes research, production, and weaponization of BW agents. Iraq told UNSCOM it had worked with several BW agents, anthrax and botulinum toxin. We assess these two agents are the most probable candidates for Iraqi weaponization, but other agents such as smallpox and plague remain a serious concern. We assess the program is currently capable of producing thousands of liters of anthrax and botulinum toxin agent per month and, if necessary, can dry this agent for better dissemination. [redacted]

Credible, but unconfirmed, sensitive reporting indicates that Iraq since 1997 has been producing BW agents using mobile laboratories. Iraq maintains or has reconstituted several dual-use facilities capable of producing even more BW agents.

[redacted] E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c) [redacted]

- We have detected increased levels of activity at Amiriyah Serum and Vaccine Institute—a suspect BW-related facility that can research, produce, store, and test vaccines, viruses, and bacteria. [redacted]

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**Chemical weapons program.** [redacted] Iraq in the past several years has rebuilt a covert chemical weapons production capability by reconstructing dual-use industrial facilities and developing new chemical plants. It is trying to procure CW-related items. We judge Iraq is most likely to produce mustard, sarin, GF, or VX if agent production is ordered.

- [redacted] both the chlorine and phenol plants at Habbaniyah II/Fallujah II outside Baghdad are operational, and Iraq has built at least three facilities—never discovered by

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UNSCOM—since the Gulf war that may be involved in CW production.

- [redacted] Iraq is seeking foreign equipment and technical assistance to rebuild its CW program from firms [redacted]

*Nuclear program.* We believe Saddam has never abandoned his nuclear weapons program. Iraq retains a significant number of nuclear program scientists, program documentation, and, probably, the manufacturing infrastructure to support a reinvigorated nuclear weapons program.

- Procurement activities detected within the past year show Iraq is trying to jump-start a clandestine uranium enrichment program to produce the fissile material for a weapon, potentially by late this decade, assuming it produces the necessary components indigenously.
- This time frame could be shortened to mid-decade if Iraq obtains significant foreign assistance or has clandestinely built the front end of the nuclear fuel cycle. We believe a shipment of high tolerance 7075-T6 aluminum tubes [redacted] was destined for use in Iraqi gas centrifuges.
- We have not detected a dedicated Iraqi effort to obtain fissile material from abroad, but Baghdad could produce a crude nuclear weapon within a year if it obtains fissile material on the black market. [redacted]

*Delivery Systems.* Iraq is nearing deployment of its two UN-authorized ballistic missiles—the liquid-propellant Al Samoud SRBM and the solid-propellant Ababil-100 SRBM—and continues to pursue longer-range, ballistic missile capabilities.

- [redacted] Baghdad since January of last year has been developing large diameter motor cases for a solid-propellant ballistic missile that could deliver a 500-kg payload 500 to 700 km as a single-stage SRBM or 1,600 km as a two-stage MRBM.
- With substantial foreign assistance, Iraq could flight-test an SRBM configuration by 2004 and an unauthorized MRBM configuration by 2006, which would put targets in Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey within range.
- [redacted] Iraq is building a new test stand that would be more than capable of testing large, liquid-propellant engines for a proscribed system. Iraq already has an engine test stand for the Al Samoud. [redacted]

Iraqi defectors have said Baghdad continues work on unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that it could fit with a dissemination device for BW agents or, less likely, chemical agents. Iraq also could use missile warheads, aerial bombs, and spray tanks already in its arsenal as other means to deliver BW agents.

- From 1995 until at least October of last year, Iraq's UAV effort was focused on converting L-29 aircraft—out-of-production Czech jet trainers—to UAVs that could be used as BW/CW delivery vehicles. [redacted] E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c) [redacted] Iraq has been capable of using the L-29 since at least November 1997.

[redacted] E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)

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**The Terrorist Threat from Iraq**

Iraq has a long history of supporting terrorism, altering its targets to reflect changing priorities and goals. Over several decades, Baghdad has evolved from an indiscriminate sponsor of anti-Western terrorism to more narrowly focused efforts, targeting primarily Saddam's political opponents—including his attempt to assassinate former President Bush in 1993—and, secondarily, local regional foes. Baghdad has reduced its reliance on surrogates, preferring instead to use its own intelligence services for sensitive terrorist operations.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)

Baghdad continues to provide safehaven, financial support, and low-level terrorist training to a number of terrorist groups. It also has worked to rebuild intelligence networks abroad to increase its capability to work against Western interests, procure weapons, and further penetrate and undermine its opposition. Iraq is intensifying its contingency planning activities for attacks on US or Western targets—a likely response to US attacks against Iraq.

- Iraq continues to support to varying degrees the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK), the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Abu Ibrahim of the 15 May Organization, the Arab Liberation Front, and the Abu Nidal Organization, which appears to be rebuilding with help from Iraq.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(c)

- Some reporting suggests Iraq has attempted to establish new networks of Iraqi nonofficial cover agents for some intelligence activities that also could be employed for terrorist purposes.

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