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Iraq - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 19 April 2011

Information on the current security situation including for Baghdad

In April 2011 *Reuters* assembled the following security issues in a news story, which includes mention of Baghdad, stating:

> "…A bomb attached to the car of a general director of the Education Ministry killed him and wounded two passers-by when it exploded in Baghdad's southern Doura district, an Interior Ministry source said.
> …A roadside bomb placed near a caravan used by guards belonging to an office attached to the Finance Ministry wounded six people, including four policemen, when it went off in Palestine Street, northeastern Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.
> …A member of parliament belonging to the Sadrist's bloc escaped unharmed after a roadside bomb exploded near his convoy in central Mussayab, 60 km (40 miles) south of Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source said.
> …Gunmen stormed a house late on Monday and killed three women, including two sisters, in southeastern Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said" (Reuters (19 April 2011) *FactBox-Security developments in Iraq, April 19*).

The *New York Times* in April 2011 comments on Baghdad stating:

> "Violence erupted repeatedly across Baghdad on Monday, including a double suicide car bombing outside a heavily fortified entrance to the Green Zone that killed at least 6 people and wounded 20" (New York Times (18 April 2011) *Bombers Hit Checkpoint and Convoy in Baghdad*).

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in April 2011 mentions Baghdad noting:

> "Iraqi authorities have eased an overnight curfew in Baghdad for the first time in two years, saying the new rules were made possible by an improvement in the capital's security" (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (18 April 2011) *Iraq Eases Baghdad Curfew As Five Are Killed In Car Bombings*).

A *BBC News* story from April 2011 noting Baghdad states:

> "Two suicide car bombs have exploded in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, killing nine people and wounding 25" (BBC News (18 April 2011) *Iraq suicide car bombs kill nine*).

This report also points out:

> "A BBC correspondent in Baghdad says these are the first suicide bombings in the capital this year. Violence in Iraq has dropped significantly from the height of the insurgency five years ago, but almost daily shootings and killings still continue" (ibid).

A report published in April 2011 by the *United States Department of State* commenting on events of the preceding year, notes in an introductory paragraph:

> “Extremist violence, coupled with weak government performance in upholding the rule of law, resulted in widespread and severe human rights abuses. Terrorist groups, such as al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI), and other extremist elements continued to launch highly destructive attacks, attempting to influence the elections and government formation process, fuel sectarian tensions, and undermine the government's ability to maintain law and order. Extremist and AQI attacks continued against ISF and government officials. AQI and other extremists also conducted high-profile bombings targeting urban areas, Shia markets, and mosques, and Shia religious pilgrims. Religious minorities, sometimes labeled "anti-Islamic," were often targeted in the violence” (United States Department of State (8 April 2011) *2010 Human Rights Report: Iraq*).

A representative from the United Nations notes in a news story published in the *United Nations News Service* from April 2011:

> “But he warned that the country’s stability is still under pressure, with terrorist attacks continuing and sectarian tensions lingering…While the overall trend of security incidents in recent months suggest a downward slope, still, an average of 25 incidents per day was reported over the last month” (United Nations News Service (8 April 2011) *Iraqis deserve to see dividends of recent democratic gains, UN envoy says*).

An article in *Human Rights Watch* from April 2011 referring to Baghdad states:

> “While authorities in Erbil and Baghdad profess the right of citizens to take to the streets, in practice both governments have brutally suppressed protesters and journalists covering the events. Since February 16 security forces have killed at least 17 protesters across Iraq and injured more than 250. Thugs acting with tacit official approval stabbed peaceful protesters in Baghdad, while their Sulaymaniyah counterparts beat demonstrators and set their tents on fire. Security forces and their proxies in Kurdistan and Baghdad have raided media outlets and the offices of a prominent press freedom group, confiscating or destroying equipment and documents” (Human Rights Watch (2 April 2011) *Returning to Tyranny*).

A report issued in March 2011 by the *United Nations Security Council* states:

> “The United Nations continues to operate in a volatile security environment in Iraq, with persistent and unpredictable changes in the situation. There were over 3,000 security incidents during the reporting period, which resulted in at least 950 civilian deaths. The increase in operational capacity and security operations of the Iraqi security forces has, however, contributed towards a reduction in overall attacks involving improvised explosive devices, as well as significant interdiction of supply routes and materials for those devices” (United Nations Security Council (31 March 2011) *Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010)*,p.12).

A *BBC News* story in March 2011 states:

> “Violence in Iraq has receded from the extreme levels seen in 2006-07, but attacks on civilians and security forces are still frequent” (BBC News (14 March 2011) *Iraq soldiers killed as suicide bomber hits army base*).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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