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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Joint written statement* submitted by the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations, the Women's International Democratic Federation, non-governmental organizations in general consultative status, the International Organization for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Union of Arab Jurists, the Arab Lawyers Union, the General Arab Women Federation, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, North-South XXI, the United Towns Agency for North-South Cooperation, the Indian Movement “*Tupaj Amaru*”, the Asian Women Human Rights Council, the Organisation pour la Communication en Afrique et de Promotion de la Coopération Economique Internationale - OCAPROCE International, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, the International Educational Development, Inc., a non-governmental organization on the roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 February 2012]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Iraqi children health situation**

** The BRussels Tribunal, Arab Lawyers Association- UK, Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ), Association of Humanitarian Lawyers (AHL), The International League of Iraqi Academics (ILIA), The Iraqi Commission on Human Rights (ICHR), Women Will Association (WWA), Organization for Widows and Orphans (OWO), Ikraam Center for Human Rights, Belgian Peace Movement, Ligue camerounaise des droits de l'homme, Monitoring Net of Human Rights in Iraq (MHRI), Women Solidarity for an Independent and Unified Iraq, Geneva Global Media Centre, International Coalition against War Criminals (ICAWC), Medical Aid for the Third World, Association of Iraqi Diplomats (AID), The African Association of Human Rights (AAHR), Protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Arab World, Moroccan Association for the Right to a Fair Trial, Americans Against the War (France), General Federation of Iraqi Women (GFIW), The International Action Center (IAC), American Worker, Association of Iraqi Intellectuals and Academics, The International Network of Arab Human Rights NGOs, America In Solidarity, Federacion De Mujeres Cubanas, Association of Victims of American Occupation Prisons, International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON), International Lawyers.org, International Society of Iraqi Scientists, The Perdana Global Peace Foundation, Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War, Spanish Campaign against the Occupation and for Iraq Sovereignty- CEOSI, Arab Cause Solidarity Committee, Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, El Taller International, World Courts of Women, Center for Development Studies- India, Wariscrime.org, Action Center for Justice, 1% A Peace Army.org, A Bigger Tent.org, Agir contre la guerre (France), American Voices Abroad (Berlin, Germany), American Voices Abroad Military Project (Europe), Anti War Fair, Arizona Christian Peacemakers, Armbands for Peace, Arms Against War, Artists Against the War, Backbone Campaign, Be the Change, Become Active, Bike for Peace (Germany), Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Bird Dogger Org., Children of Iraq Association (UK),Bloomington Peace Action Coalition (IN), Blue State News Only, Boston Mobilization, Bring Democracy Back, Bring Them Home,Butterfly Gardeners Association, Citizens for Accountability on Iraq, California for Democracy, Camp Casey Blog, Camp U.S. Strike for Peace Campaign, Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran, Canada Watch, Carolina Peace Resource Center (SC), Cartoon Free America, Catalysts of Hope, Central Colorado Coalition on the Iraq War, Chester County Peace Movement (PA), Cindy Sheehan Org., Cities for Peace, Citizens for Legitimate Government, Citizens for Peace & Justice, Human Rights for all-Morocco, Christian Clergy For Impeachment.com, Clothing of the American Mind, Coalition Against Election Fraud, Coalition for Impeachment Now (COIN), Code Pink, the Iraqi Association for Human Rights (IAHR), Al-Basa'er Media Association, Consumers for Peace.org, Dhafir Trial.org, DC Anti-War Network.org, Democracy Action, Democracy for America Meetup (Birmingham, AL), The Democratic Activist, Democracy Rising.org, Democratic Underground, Human Resources (Tbilisi, Georgia), Democratic Renewal, Democrats.com, Earth Day.org, Earth Island Institute, East Cobb Democratic Alliance (Cobb County, GA), Eastern Long Island Democracy for America (NY), ECU Peace and Justice NC, Election Solar Bus, Environmentalists Against War, Envision a New America, Foundation for the Development of Fox Valley Citizens for Peace and Justice (IL), Global Exchange.org, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, Global Resistance Network, Gold Star Families for Peace, Grandmothers Against the War, Grandmothers for Peace, Grass Roots Impeachment, Grass Roots Impeachment Movement, Grassroots North shoreWI, Green Delaware, Hawaii CD-01 Impeachment Action Coalition, Historians Against the War, Honk to Impeach, Idriss Stelley Foundation, Impeach Bush Cheney, Independent Progressive Politics Network, Impeach Bush Coalition, Impeach Bush TV.org, Impeachbush-cheney.com, Impeach Central, Impeach for Peace - Marshall, TX, Impeachable Treason, Impeach Duh, Impeachment Sunday, Inform Progressive Virginia, International Socialist Organization, Impeach Bush Cheney Net, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Iraq Veterans Against the War - Kansas City, Justice Through Music, Lake Merritt Neighbours Organized for Peace (Oakland, CA), Latinos for America, Leader of the Free Word - a great screen saver, Liberal Democracy Alliance, Liberal Kids, LIBERTY TREE Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, Los Angeles National Impeachment Centre, Louisiana Activist Network, Marijuana Policy Project, Massachusetts Impeachment Coalition, Men's Project for Peace, Michael Moore Online.org, Michigan Peace Works, Military Families Against the War (UK),

This report will focus on the violations by the occupying forces and the Iraqi authorities of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Geneva, 12 August 1949¹, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

CRC : Article 6 (survival and development), Article 24 (health and health services), Article 26 (social security)

For two decades, Iraqi children, along with the rest of the population, have been subjected to grave human rights violations, caused by decades of war, foreign occupation and international sanctions, Iraq has turned into one of the worst places for children in the Middle East and North Africa with around 3.5 million living in poverty, 1.5 million under

Military Free Zone, Stop the War Coalition (Bedford, UK), Million Musicians March, Mission Not Accomplished, Montgomery County Progressive Alliance (MD), Musicians and Fine Artists for World Peace, Muslims for Peace (Australia), National Lawyers Guild - Chicago chapter, National Lawyers Guild - Detroit & Michigan chapter, Northeast Impeachment Coalition, North Jersey Impeach Group (NJ), Northeast Georgia Peace Corner Group (Helen, GA), Northwest Ohio Peace Coalition, Northwest Progressive Institute (Pacific Northwest US), Not in Our Name.org, Not in Our Name (Aotearoa, New Zealand), Nyack Impeachment Initiative (NJ), Ohio Progressive Action Coalition, One Global Community, Olympia Citizens' Movement to Impeach Bush/Cheney (WA), One Million Reasons, Operation Cease Fire, Operation Impeachment, Orange County Grassroots (CA), Out of Iraq, Out of Iraq Bloggers Caucus, Patrick Henry Democratic Club, Patriotic Pulse, Patriots for Gore, Peace Action, Peace Action Wisconsin, Peace and Accountability, Peace Drum, Peace Majority, Peace Movement Aotearoa (New Zealand), Peace Reso.org, Peninsula Peace and Justice Center (Palo Alto, CA), People's Campaign for the Constitution, People Powered Impeachment, People's Email Network, People's Glorious Five Year Plan, Picnic to Impeach, Pixel4Peace.org, Playing in Traffic, PledgeToImpeach.org, Political Cooperative, Politics and Art, Plataforma Aturem la Guerra (Stop the War Catalonia), Progressive Action Alliance, Progressive Action Center, Progressive Avenues, Progressive Democrats of America, Progressive Democrats of Hawaii Project Filibuster, Project for the OLD American Century, Refusing to Kill.org, Rescue Our Democracy, Sacramento for Democracy (CA), St Pete for Peace (FL), Sampsonia Way, San Diego for Democracy, School of the Americas Watch, Sheehan for Congress, South Florida Impeachment Coalition, South Mountain Peace Action (Maplewood & South Orange, NJ), Springs Action Alliance (CO), Stop the War Coalition (UK), Students for Impeachment, Students Towards a New Direction (STAND), Summit County Progressive Democrats (OH), The Known UnKnowns, The Politically Incorrect Cabaret, The Rational Response Squad, Think Blue Dems, Time for Accountability, Toronto Coalition to Stop the War (Canada), Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International, True Blue Liberal.org, Trumansburg Impeachment (NY), Truth Empowered, Truthtelling Project, UC Nuclear, Underground Action Alliance, Unitarian Universalist Peace and Justice Group (Nantucket, MA), United Blue USA, United for Veterans (Wayne, MI), United Progressives, Upbeat Defiance, US Peace Memorial, US Tour of Duty: Iraq Veterans and Military Families Demand the Truth, Velvet Revolution, Vet Gulf March, Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27, Virginia Grassroots Coalition, Voters for Peace, We the People for Peace, We the People Network, We the People Now, We The People United Bangladesh.org, Peace Surge, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (WA), Stop the War (UK), U.S. Peace Council, World Can't Wait.org, World Prout Assembly, Komite Internazionale-Basque, Asociación Paz, Igualdad y Solidaridad Internacional, Arab Cause Solidarity Committee, Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, Málaga, Spain, Stop Fascism Action Network, The Asian Jurists Centre, Association of Human Rights Defenders in Iraq (AHRDI), The African Center for Human Rights (ACHR), Veterans for Peace, Your Declaration of Independence.org , Arab Lawyers Network-UK, Conservative Centre of Environmental & Reserves in Fallujah (CCERF), Willie Nelson Peace Research Institute, Studies Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, The Iraqi Centre for Human Rights, Association internationale des droits de l'homme, NGOs without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

¹ Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/full/380>

the age of five undernourished and 100 infants dying every day, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) .²

Since the invasion in 2003, the US/UK forces and the Iraqi authorities grossly failed to fulfil their most basic duties towards the children of Iraq in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Resolution 25/ Session 44, November 1989.³

Principles of the CRC emphasize the need to protect children's rights' to life and physical, mental, moral, and spiritual development in a safe environment.

The Occupying powers bear full responsibility for the violations of these provisions and Conventions related to children. They should be held fully accountable for the harm they have inflicted upon the Iraqi children. They have deliberately changed the social fabric of the country, used ethnic cleansing to break up the unity of the country, destroyed water purification systems, health and educational facilities and indiscriminately bombed dense populated areas, leaving the children extremely vulnerable on all levels. Living in a country at war also causes mental disturbance to virtually all children, and acute anxiety and depression if not psychosis in a considerable number.

The Iraqi institutions and mechanisms that should ensure physical, social and legal protection for women, children and youth are dysfunctional and unreliable. As a result, the most vulnerable are exposed to exploitation and abuse, such as killing and maiming, kidnapping, gender based violence, human trafficking, recruitment and use by armed groups, child labour and deprivation of liberty.⁴

The international community and international Human Rights bodies also bear considerable responsibility for this alarming situation because they failed to adequately address the grave violations inflicted upon the young and vulnerable in the Iraqi society and failed to identify the real culprits.

Article 6 (survival and development)⁵

Direct killings

Official figures and media-based estimates in Iraq, such as Iraq Body count, have missed 70-95% of all deaths. A more realistic and scientific estimate of war-related deaths comes from JustForeignPolicy.org, claiming 1.455.590 victims as of January 2011⁶.

Analysis carried out for the research group Iraq Body Count found that 39% of those killed in air raids by the US-led coalition were children. Fatalities caused by mortars, used by American and Iraqi authorities forces as well as insurgents, were 42% children.⁷

Of the 45,779 violent deaths for which IBC was able to obtain age data, 3,911 (8.54%) were children under age 18. Of the 4,040 civilian victims killed by the US-led coalition forces for whom age data was available, 1,201 (29%) were children. ⁸

² IRAQ: A bad place for children <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=93133>

³ The convention was ratified by 194 United Nations countries, except the USA and Somalia.

⁴ Fallen off the agenda? More and better aid needed for Iraq recovery <http://reliefweb.int/node/360643>

⁵ FACT SHEET: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30228.html

⁶ Iraq Deaths <http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/iraq>

⁷ Iraq air raids hit mostly women and children , Kim Sengupta, 2009 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/iraq-air-raids-hit-mostly-women-and-children-1669282.html>

Indirect killings

Many more children have been indirect victims, falling prey to disease, malnutrition or starvation.

Widespread poverty, economic stagnation, lack of opportunities, environmental degradation and an absence of basic services constitute 'silent' human rights violations that affect large sectors of the population", a UN report released on 08 August 2011 concludes.⁹

The WHO, the United Nations environment program, The British Royal Society, and the U.S. National Academy of sciences have published some general studies on the health effects of DU that suggested that the greatest health risks are found among children in post conflict zones (Harper 2007), such as Iraq¹⁰.

Toxic environment

The wartime destruction of military and industrial infrastructure has released heavy metals and other hazardous substances into the air, soil, and groundwater. Sites where municipal and medical wastes have accumulated carry the risk of disease epidemics. Contamination from Depleted Uranium (DU) and other military-related pollution is strongly suspected of causing a sharp rise in congenital birth defects and cancer cases in Iraq¹¹ and makes the country unliveable. Low water levels in lakes and rivers have spelt disaster for water sewage systems and simultaneous poisoning of water rendering it unfit for human and animal consumption. Water supply from Euphrates and Tigris has dramatically dwindled, affecting Iraq's fertile agricultural lands and the underground water supplies that have depleted with no signs of recovery. Consequently, drought has become a national issue¹². "

Doctors in Fallujah are witnessing (2010) unprecedented numbers of birth defects, miscarriages and cancer cases. According to gynaecologists, paediatricians and neurologists in Fallujah the numbers of these cases have been increasing rapidly since 2005 – less than 1 year after the bombing campaign by the occupying forces in 2004.^{13 14 15}

Malformed new-borns

Preliminary data based on cases documented in January of 2010 shows the rate of heart defects in Fallujah to be 13 times the rate found in Europe. And for birth defects involving the Nervous System based on data reported for February of this year the rate was calculated to be 33 times that found in Europe for the same number of births.¹⁶

⁸ Iraqi deaths from violence 2003–2011 Analysis and overview from Iraq Body Count (IBC), 2012 <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/analysis/numbers/2011/>

⁹ UN Calls Rights Situation in Iraq 'Fragile' <http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2011/08/08-3>

¹⁰ Merrill Singer, G. Derrick Hodge, The war machine and global health: a critical medical anthropological examination of the human costs of armed conflict and the international violence industry. Elaine A. Hills, Dahlia S. Wasfi, The causes and human costs of targeting Iraq, p119.

¹¹ <http://www.iauiraq.org/documents/1375/images...unitionsHumanHealthinIraq.pdf>

¹² <http://waterwebster.org/IraqWater.htm>

¹³ Humanitarian Disaster In Fallujah: Unprecedented Numbers of Birth Defects, Miscarriages and Cancer Cases by MalakHamdan<http://www.brussellstribunal.org/Fallujah120410.htm>

¹⁴ Genetic damage and health in Fallujah Iraq worse than Hiroshima <http://www.brussellstribunal.org/Fallujah020710.htm>

¹⁵ The cause of congenital anomaly and cancer in Fallujah Iraq is identified as Enriched Uranium from novel weapons systems deployed by the US by Chris Busby and MalakHamdan<http://www.brussellstribunal.org/Fallujah171011.htm>

¹⁶ Four Polygamous Families with Congenital Birth Defects from Fallujah, Iraq, Samira Alaani , Mozhgan Savabie asfahani , Mohammad Tafash , and Paola Manduca,

Cancer

Increases in cancer, leukaemia and congenital birth anomalies in Iraq (2010) have been blamed on mutagenic and carcinogenic agents (like depleted uranium) employed in the wars of 1991 and 2003. Increases in childhood leukaemia in Basra have recently been investigated (Busby, Hamdam, Ariabi 2010) and the findings confirm that there has indeed been a significant increase since 1991¹⁷.

"We conclude that the results confirm the reported increases in cancer and infant mortality, which are alarmingly high. The remarkable reduction in the sex ratio in the cohort born one year after the fighting in 2004 identifies that year as the time of the environmental contamination."¹⁸

"... these findings suggest the enriched Uranium exposure is either a primary cause or related to the cause of the congenital anomaly and cancer increases. Questions are thus raised about the characteristics and composition of weapons now being deployed in modern battlefields."¹⁹

A study published by the University of Washington and the University of Basra concluded that Basra's childhood leukaemia rates more than doubled over a 15-year period. The study noted that the incidence of cancer was significantly higher in Basra province than in other parts of Iraq²⁰.

Clusters and landmines

Landmines and explosive remnants of war have a devastating impact on Iraq's children with around 25 per cent of all victims being children under the age of 14 years (2011).²¹

Casualties from failed cluster sub munitions rose between 1991 and 2007 from 5,500 to 80,000, 45.7% between the age of 15 and 29 years of age, and 23.9% were children under the age of 14. Both UNICEF and UNDP believe these figures are an underestimation.²²

This last decade the Al Munthanna and Basra provinces of Iraq have challenged Angola for the highest proportion to total population of children amputees.²³

<http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/Fallujah040111.pdf>, It is worth to mention that Japanese doctors believe birth defect rates are related to radiation from the US nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Birth defect incidence rates there are between 1-2 per cent. Cases of birth defects amounts to a rate of 14.7 per cent of all babies born in Fallujah, more than 14 times the rate in the affected areas of Japan (Uranium and other contaminants in hair from the parents of children with congenital anomalies in Fallujah, Iraq. Samira Alaani, Muhammed Tafash, Christopher Busby, Malak Hamdan and Eleonore Blaurock-Busch <http://www.conflictandhealth.com/content/5/1/15>)

¹⁷ Cancer, Infant Mortality and Birth Sex-Ratio in Fallujah, Iraq 2005–2009 Chris Busby , Malak Hamdan and Entesar Ariabi Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health 2010, 7, 2828-2837 <http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/7/7/2828>

¹⁸ Cancer, Infant Mortality and Birth Sex-Ratio in Fallujah, Iraq 2005–2009 Chris Busby , Malak Hamdan and Entesar Ariabi Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health 2010, 7, 2828-2837 <http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/7/7/2828>

¹⁹ Uranium and other contaminants in hair from the parents of children with congenital anomalies in Fallujah, Iraq. Samira Alaani1, Muhammed Tafash1, Christopher Busby, Malak Hamdan and Eleonore Blaurock-Busch <http://www.conflictandhealth.com/content/5/1/15>

²⁰ Occupation could link to high child cancer rates ,2011 <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,15615222,00.html>

²¹ Moving ahead to improve lives of Iraqis affected by landmines, 2011 <http://www.uniraq.org/newsroom/getarticle.asp?ArticleID=1495>

²² Moving ahead to improve lives of Iraqis affected by landmines ,2011 <http://www.uniraq.org/newsroom/getarticle.asp?ArticleID=1495>

Doctors insist that it's the responsibility of the US to try undoing part of the damage it has caused. "The US government has spent billions on this war but none to revert the problems caused by its dangerous weapons," fumes Dr. Bashier Mazim, another doctor in Baghdad University. "I can say that those new-born are the result of the American disaster that befell our land."²⁴

Mounting evidence of the radiological and chemical toxic effect of the use of uranium weapons forces us to speak out and ask our national governments and the international organizations to protect their civilians and soldiers, and to apply the precautionary principle. This means that when the health of humans and the environment is at stake, it may not be necessary to wait for scientific certainty to take protective action. The principle applies to human health and the environment. The ethical assumption behind the precautionary principle is that humans are responsible to protect, preserve, and restore the global ecosystems on which all life, including our own, depends.²⁵

Article 24 (health and health services)

The breakdown of health and community infrastructures has led to the death of children from avoidable causes.

Intentional killing and forced migration of medical doctors and health care personnel²⁶

Up to 75 per cent of Iraq's doctors, pharmacists and nurses have left their jobs since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. Almost 70% of critically injured patients with violence-related wounds die while in emergency and intensive care units due to a shortage of competent staff and a lack of drugs and equipment.²⁷ Without healthcare, more people died including children, women and the elderly.

The Red Crescent Society warns that child malnutrition rates have risen from 19 per cent before the US-led invasion in 2003 to 28 per cent now. Only one in three Iraqi children under five has access to safe drinking water, and one in four is chronically malnourished.²⁸

Microbial pollution and lack of sanitation including drinking water shortages for up to 70% of the population²⁹ caused the death of "one in eight Iraqi children" before their fifth birthday. Death of young children in Iraq has been attributed to water borne diseases such as diarrhoea, cholera, typhoid, hepatitis, etc.³⁰ The Government of Iraq, in cooperation with UNICEF and the European Union, findings show that 79% of the population has access to the drinking water distribution network, leaving one in every five Iraqis without access to

²³ IRAQ – landmines, bombs, depleted uranium – devastation – children amputees.

<http://www.indymedia.org.au/2011/12/04/iraq-%E2%80%93-landmines-bombs-depleted-uranium-%E2%80%93-devastation-%E2%80%93-children-amputees-how-you-can-hel>

²⁴ Iraq's War Disfigured Babies ,2009 <http://www.heyetnet.org/eng/reports/3964-iraqs-war-disfigured-babies-.html>

²⁵ The European political landscape regarding the ban on uranium weapons – with focus on Belgium, Ms. Ria Verjauw, ICBUW, Belgium-www.rauhanpuolustajat.fi/.../seminaariraportti.pdf

²⁶ DahrJamail, "Iraqi Hospitals Ailing under Occupation" World Tribunal on Iraq, Istanbul, Turkey , 2005. <http://www.brusseltribunal.org/pdf/HealthcareUnderOccupationDahrJamail.pdf>

²⁷ The Iraq health crisis <http://gorillasguides.com/2008/01/16/medact-wmd-conflict-the-iraq-health-crisis/>

²⁸ Women, children and youth in the Iraq crisis: a fact sheet, 2008

http://www.rhrc.org/resources/Iraqi_women_girls_factsheet%20FINAL%20Jan08.pdf

²⁹ Michael Haas. "Children and Unlamented Victims of Bush's War Crimes". ICH. May 1, 2009. <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article22529.htm>

³⁰ Dr. Souad N. Al-Azzawi <http://www.brusseltribunal.org/pdf/IraqiChildrenSuffering2010.pdf>

safe drinking water. In rural areas, those without access to safe drinking water doubles to two in every five Iraqis.³¹

Half of Iraqi schools expose children to an unhealthy environment. Half of all schools in Iraq do not fulfil minimum standards to ensure a safe and healthy environment for students, and 63% do not have chlorine testing for drinking water, putting children at risk for waterborne diseases.³²

Article 26 (social security): Children have the right to help from the government if they are poor or in need

A report of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) placed Iraq among the 22 countries that suffer from acute poverty and lack of food security because of war and the failure of government institutions to provide the necessary sustenance³³.

The impact of conflict is reflected in the increased proportion of slum dwellers in Iraq. There, the proportion of urban residents living in slums has more than tripled—from 17 per cent in 2000 (2.9 million people) to an estimated 53 per cent in 2010 (10.7 million people).³⁴

Poverty due to economic collapse and corruption caused acute malnutrition among Iraqi children. As was reported by Oxfam in July 2007, up to eight million Iraqis required immediate emergency aid, with nearly half the population living in “absolute poverty”.

Starving whole cities as collective punishment by blocking the delivery of food, aid, and sustenance before raiding them increased the suffering of the young children and added more casualties among them.³⁵

Parents also often ask their children particularly boys- to help to financially support the family instead of going to school. UNICEF estimates that 1 in 9 children aged 5 to 14 years old work. Children are polishing shoes; selling in streets, pushing carriages.³⁶

The financial status of most of these families is much below the average standard of living, even though the majority of the children’s parents are university level degree holders (i.e. teachers, engineers, etc.).

We can also conclude that most of these families cannot afford the most basic of necessities like quality food, medical care, and a safe, healthy residence³⁷

³¹ Survey on the state of the environment in Iraq launched; BAGHDAD, 22 September 2011 - http://www.unicef.org/media/media_59892.html

³² The figures come from a survey conducted in 2007-2008 by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and their KRG counterparts, in cooperation with World Health Organization (WHO) Humanitarian Update Iraq No.6 April 2009 <http://ochaonline.un.org/OchaLinkClick.aspx?link=ocha&docId=1111049>

³³ <http://iraqdailytimes.com/iraqi-trade-ministry-introduces-income-based-rationing-assessment/>

³⁴ The Millennium Development Goals Report 2010 UN

³⁵ Dr. Souad N. Al-Azzawi <http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/IraqiChildrenSuffering2010.pdf>

³⁶ Fallen off the agenda? More and better aid needed for Iraq recovery <http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B>

³⁷ Dr. Souad N. Al-Azzawi <http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/IraqiChildrenSuffering2010.pdf> In 2010, lack of donor funding has forced the United Nations to cut back on its humanitarian efforts in Iraq, with its food aid agency halting distributions to hundreds of thousands of women and children. It was expected that the halt in food aid will affect some 800,000 pregnant and nursing women and malnourished children, as well as up to 960,000 schoolchildren, according to Edward Kallon, the U.N. World Food Program's representative for Iraq, <http://www.aolnews.com/2010/07/19/un-forced-to-cut-food-aid-to-iraqi-women-children/>

Recommendation by the NGOs signatories to this statement:

- Ensure that all human rights violations in Iraq during the invasion and occupation be investigated by an international independent body.
- All measures must be taken to end the current state of impunity, both within Iraq, and with regard to the culpability and responsibilities of the occupying powers in particular.
- Appoint a UN Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights situation in Iraq.
- Request the High Commissioner to present to the Council a detailed report on the Human Rights violations in Iraq since 2003 according to UNAMI and the civil society reports.
- Request the Special Representative of UN Secretary General on violence against children, and the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, to take the situation of the Iraqi children in account in their reports.
