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Iraqis Say Coalition Troops are Vital Now, But Prefer Handoff to Own Security Forces

Nearly all say that Jobs Would Also Increase Security

This late November Office of Research poll – conducted prior to the capture of Saddam Hussein – among urban residents of five cities in Iraq shows that most Iraqis consider resistance-initiated violence a counterproductive strategy. As other surveys have shown, most Iraqis are against an immediate withdrawal of Coalition Forces, but these results indicate that Iraqis are anxious for the New Iraqi Army and police to assume greater responsibility.

- Large majorities in these five cities believe attacks against Iraqi civilians, police, and international organizations are more harmful than helpful for Iraq's future. Somewhat smaller majorities say attacks against civilian CPA officials and U.S. forces are harmful, with minorities up to 31 percent saying attacks against the U.S. forces are helpful.
- About two-thirds in all cities say the attacks emphasize the need for the continued presence of Coalition Forces in Iraq. At the same time, majorities agree that the troops should depart after a permanent government is elected by the Iraqi people.
- Increasing patrols of Iraqi police rather than of Coalition soldiers would make people feel safer in their neighborhoods. Iraqis say that the new police are trusted by and accessible to most members of their communities, and few think they are tied too closely to the previous regime.
- When asked which actions would be most effective in improving security, the top recommendation from Iraqis is to provide jobs for the unemployed, followed by hiring and training more police and transferring political sovereignty to an Iraqi government.

Security Is the Greatest Worry Among Urban Residents

The attacks against various targets both before and after Ramadan have reinforced public concerns about safety and security. Urban residents of Baghdad, Basrah, Kirkuk, Hilla and Diwaniya name safety and security as the greatest worry (62% overall), followed by economic issues (18% overall) and infrastructure repair (14% overall, see also Appendix Table 1). In Hilla and Diwaniya, residents feel safe in their own neighborhoods (Table 1, next page), but half in Hilla and a third in Diwaniya worry that attacks might take place near their homes (Table 2, next page).

Preliminary findings from the second State Department survey in Iraq are based on face-to-face interviews conducted among 1,167 urban Iraqi adults, ages 18 and over, in Baghdad (N=543), Basrah (N=217), Kirkuk (N=125), Hilla (N=139), and Diwania (N=143). The poll was commissioned by the Office of Research and carried out between November 19-28, 2003. The margin of error for the entire sample is approximately ± 6 percent, but varies among cities separate cities.

In the other three cities, Iraqis fear for their safety on their neighborhood streets as well as being concerned about the possibility of attacks. Similar to views expressed last August, majorities in Baghdad (68%) and Basrah (80%) say they feel “not very safe” or “not safe at all” in their own neighborhoods; half in Kirkuk (52%) also feel somewhat or very unsafe. Similar majorities in these cities also express concern about violent attacks occurring in their neighborhood (58% in Baghdad, 74% in Basrah, 57% in Kirkuk).

Table 1. How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Very safe	31%	18%	42%	65%	71%	39%
Not very safe	56	68	40	30	22	49
Not safe at all	12	12	12	4	7	11
Don't know/no answer	1	2	5	2	0	2
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Table 2. Concern about Attacks in Neighborhood						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Very concerned	21%	42%	19%	37%	18%	27%
Somewhat concerned	37	32	38	19	14	31
Total concerned	58	74	57	51	32	58
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Public Sees Attacks as Detrimental to Iraq's Progress

Attacks have prompted public anxiety about security rather than support for the violence. Virtually all Iraqis in these five cities believe attacks against Iraqi civilians and police are more harmful than helpful for Iraq's future (Table 3). Large majorities also view negatively attacks taken against international organizations, foreign embassies, the Governing Council, Iraqi civilians working with the CPA, power and water stations and oil refineries (see also Appendix Table 2). Smaller majorities disapprove of attacks against civilian CPA officials and U.S. forces, with minorities up to 31 percent saying attacks against the U.S. forces are helpful.¹

Table 3. Percent Who Say Attacks Against Targets Harmful to Future Development of Iraq						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Iraqi civilians	99%	96%	97%	99%	99%	99%
Iraqi police	98	93	94	99	99	97
International organizations	97	85	89	98	99	94
Iraqis working with the IGC and CPA	85	72	88	96	98	86
Attacks against civilian CPA officials	84	63	81	92	90	81
Attacks against U.S. forces	68	52	61	74	82	67
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Iraqis distinguish little between the perpetrators of attacks against various targets, and tend to say that a mix of both outside and inside groups is responsible for the attacks (Appendix Table 3a and 3b). Majorities in each city believe that the attacks are an effort by foreign-based groups to create instability in the country; up to about half also agree (or did, at the time of the survey), that they are part of an effort to reinstate Saddam or to liberate Iraq from occupation (Table 4, next page).

¹ Ten percent overall say attacks against CPA officials are helpful (9% in Baghdad, 19% in Basrah, 11% in Kirkuk, 4% in Hilla, and 6% in Diwaniya). Twenty-three percent overall say that attacks against U.S. forces are helpful (23% in Baghdad, 31% in Basrah, 27% in Kirkuk, 16% in Hilla, and 13% in Diwaniya). Caution should be taken to avoid overstating differences among cities given these small percentages and different sample sizes. See methodology section for margins of error.

Table 4. Public Perceptions of Attacks <i>Percentage agreeing with following statements:</i>						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
The attacks are an effort of groups outside of Iraq to create instability in our country	82%	76%	72%	81%	85%	80%
The attacks are part of an effort to reinstate Saddam into power	40	53	52	45	47	46
The attacks are an effort to liberate Iraq from U.S. and coalition occupation.	37	48	58	14	11	35
The attacks emphasize the need for continued presence of Coalition Forces in our country	61	69	68	71	72	66
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Attacks Underscore Importance of Coalition Troop Presence

About two-thirds in all cities agree with the statement that the attacks emphasize the need for the continued presence of Coalition Forces in Iraq (Table 4 above, last statement). Majorities across all cities also say they would feel less safe if Coalition Forces left immediately (Table 5). Yet Iraqis do not want the troops to remain in Iraq for too long: majorities in all five cities agree that the troops should depart after a permanent government is elected by the Iraqi people (78% overall, with no fewer than 72% in any city). Only a few (no more than 14% in any city) want the troops to stay until Iraq has been stabilized; no more than 10 percent call for troops to withdraw now.

Table 5. If Coalition Forces Left Immediately, Iraqis Would Feel						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
More safe	12%	6%	15%	7%	13%	11%
Less safe	71	85	62	83	83	75
No difference	13	8	14	5	1	10
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Residents Would Feel Safer With Iraqi Security Forces Taking the Lead

Iraqis would like their own police and army to have greater responsibility in their country's protection. Presently urban residents report seeing more Iraqi police than coalition patrols in their neighborhood. And eight in ten or more across the cities say they would feel safer if Iraqi police patrols were increased, compared to no more than half who would feel safe with increased coalition patrols (Tables 6a & 6b; see also Appendix Table 4).

Urban residents express confidence in both the new Iraqi Army and the new Iraqi Police Force, with about three-quarters overall agreeing that the police are trusted by communities and that the police are accessible to help resolve community problems (Table 7 next page and Appendix Table 5). Few think the police force is too closely tied to the past regime; in fact, Iraqis tend to believe the police are too closely affiliated with the American forces.

Table 6a. In your neighborhood, how often do you see patrols of ...

	<u>Coalition</u>	<u>Iraqi police</u>
Once a day or more	20%	33%
A few times a week	20	19
Once a week	9	5
Every other week	10	9
Less often	39	33

Table 6b. Would you feel more or less safe in your neighborhood if there were more frequent patrols of ...

	<u>Coalition</u>	<u>Iraqi police</u>
More safe	38%	86%
Less safe	41	4
No difference	19	8

Overall percentages, Office of Research poll

Table 7. Public Has Good Impressions of the New Iraqi Police*Percentage who strongly or somewhat agree:*

	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Too many members of the local Iraqi police are tied to the past regime.	17%	24%	21%	29%	27%	22%
The Iraqi police force is too closely tied to the American forces	55	58	68	58	59	58
In general, the local Iraqi police force is trusted by most members of the community	80	70	76	78	82	77
The local police are accessible to community members to help resolve problems.	63	66	78	85	87	70

Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003

When asked to choose from a list which actions would be most effective in improving security in their country, the public unanimously agrees that creating job opportunities for the unemployed would be the most effective step (Table 8). Large majorities also think that training and hiring police, transferring political authority to an Iraqi government and retraining and rehiring the former military would help. Relatively few think that either the departure of the coalition troops or increasing coalition patrols would be effective; and few feel that increasing the authority of independent militias would have a positive impact.

Table 8. Iraqis Say Jobs, Hiring Iraqi Security Forces and Transferring Sovereignty Are Best Ways to Increase Security*% who say following actions would be VERY effective*

	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Creating job opportunities for the unemployed	95%	98%	98%	100%	99%	97%
Training and hiring more Iraqi local police	84	66	86	91	92	83
Transferring all political authority to an Iraqi government	79	69	89	77	83	79
Retraining and rehiring military officers and soldiers from the old regime	50	28	73	56	55	50
Increasing foot patrols of U.S. and Coalition Forces in Iraqi neighborhoods	21	21	27	19	21	21
Immediate departure of Coalition Forces	23	14	30	15	10	20
Giving more authority to independent neighborhood militias	25	10	10	18	9	18

Office of Research Survey, December 19-28, 2003

No Sectarian Divide When It Comes to Best Measures for Safety

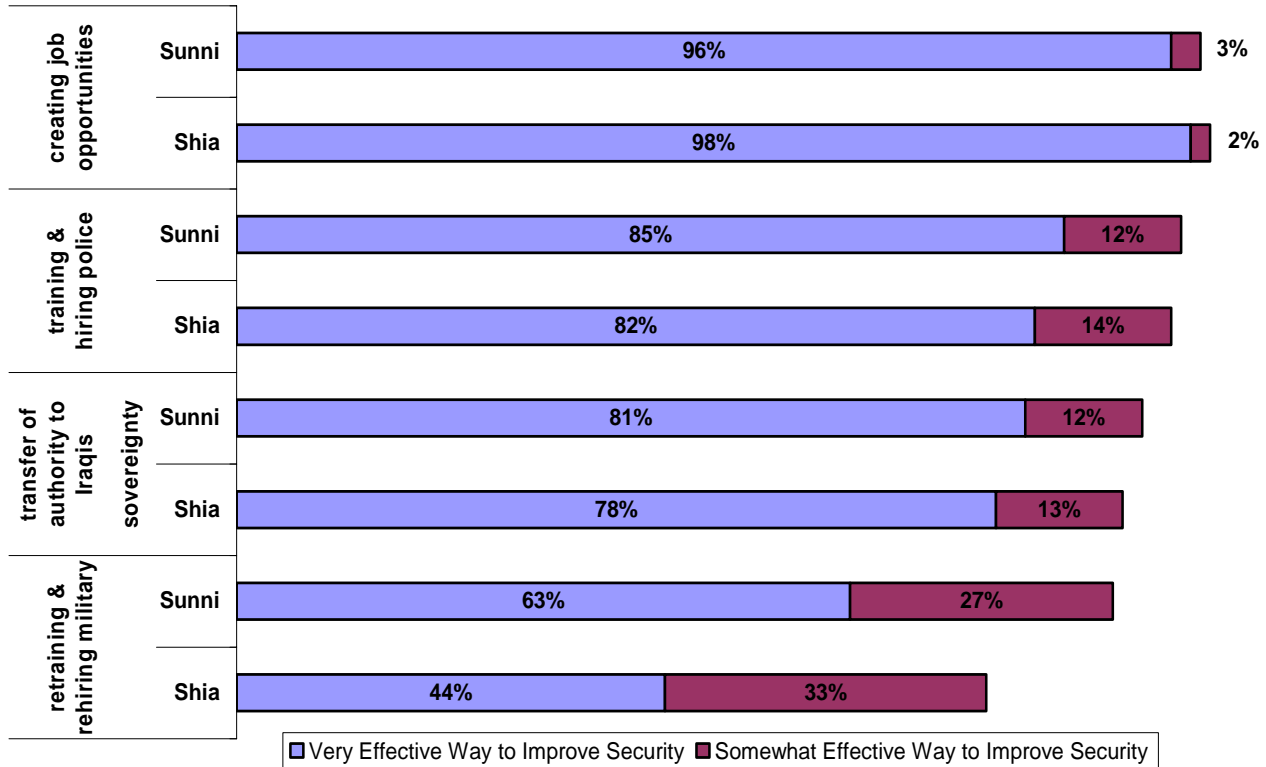
Those who identify themselves as Sunni and Shia² are of the same mind when it comes to the best way to improve the security situation. Both Sunni and Shia have substantial confidence in the new Iraqi army and the new Iraqi police, and both see transferring security responsibility to Iraqis as an effective method to increase security (See Figure 1, next page). Sunnis are somewhat more likely than Shia to say that retraining and rehiring the former military would be *very* effective.

Though Sunnis are more likely than Shia to agree that “the attacks are an effort to liberate Iraq from U.S. and coalition occupation,” (52% Sunni vs. 27% Shia), they generally express views in line with public criticism of the recent attacks. Eight in ten or more within each sect say that attacks against Iraqi civilians (including those who work with the CPA), the Iraqi police, international organizations, foreign embassies

² For specific percentages of self-described Sunni/Shia per city, see methodology.

and CPA officials are more harmful than helpful. Six in ten Sunnis (and seven in ten Shia) disapprove of attacks against Coalition Forces. Two-thirds of Sunni say they would feel less safe if the Coalition Forces withdrew immediately and six in ten agree that the recent attacks emphasize the importance of the coalition troop presence.

Figure 1. Sunni and Shia Preferences Coincide on Best Way to Improve Security



METHODOLOGY

Face-to-face interviews were conducted among 1,167 Iraqi adults residing in the cities of Baghdad, Basrah, Kirkuk, Hilla, and Diwania. Interviews were carried out between November 19 and November 28, 2003. Please note that the size of the sample for each city is not proportionate to the overall population.

A multi-stage probability-based sample was drawn, utilizing residential listings from Iraq's 1997 Population and Housing Census. Census sub-districts were utilized as primary sampling units (PSUs), with 80 PSUs being selected using probability-proportional-to-size procedures. Due to the size of Baghdad, the city was stratified by neighborhood to ensure that all city areas were represented in the sample. Interviewers were given all address details for households at four sampling points within each PSU. Five interviews were conducted at each sampling point. Within each selected household, one respondent was randomly selected using the last birthday method.

The margin of error, assuming a 95% confidence level and the clustering effects of a multi-stage design, is approximately $\pm 6\%$ for the overall sample. The margin of error varies across the samples of the individual cities as shown in the table below. These figures are estimates.

City	Sample Size	Margin of Error
Baghdad	543	$\pm 5.9\%$
Basrah	217	$\pm 13.3\%$
Kirkuk	125	$\pm 17.5\%$
Hilla	139	$\pm 16.6\%$
Diwania	143	$\pm 16.4\%$
Total	1167	$\pm 5.7\%$

The demographic characteristics of survey respondents for each city are listed in the tables below, showing respondents' religious affiliation, age and education. To record religious affiliation, respondents were shown a card listing several religious groups and asked to point or name the category that best described them.

Religious affiliation by city						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Sunni	25%	15%	42%	4%	1%	19%
Shia	51	77	20	96	98	64
Other	17	7	32	1	1	12
Orthodox	2	1	0	0	0	1
Catholic	4	1	0	0	0	2
Protestant	--	0	0	0	0	--
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Age group by city						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
18-29	35%	34%	32%	30%	36%	34%
30-39	25	29	22	25	24	25
40-49	20	17	17	27	24	20
50-59	10	10	22	14	12	12
60+	11	10	7	4	4	9
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Education by city						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
None	6%	4%	8%	7%	10%	7%
Primary	6	9	7	5	9	7
Intermediate	16	17	26	23	32	20
Secondary	23	19	14	17	12	19
Diploma	18	20	18	22	18	19
University	14	13	14	12	12	13
Post Graduate	14	17	10	14	6	13
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Appendix Tables

Appendix Table 1. Top Three Concerns Facing Community

	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Security and safety	64%	65%	55%	50%	64%	62%
Economic issues, unemployment, poverty	13	26	22	17	19	18
Repairing infrastructure	15	5	16	22	12	14
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Appendix Table 2. Full listing: Percent Who Say Attacks Against Targets Harmful to Future Development of Iraq

	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Attacks against Iraqi civilians	99%	96%	97%	99%	99%	99%
Attacks against power and water systems	99	96	96	99	99	98
Attacks against Iraqi police	98	93	94	99	99	97
Attacks against oil pipelines and refineries	98	92	94	99	99	97
Attacks against international organizations	97	85	89	98	99	94
Attacks against foreign embassies	93	77	90	95	95	90
Attacks against Iraqi civilians on the IGC and working with the CPA	85	72	88	96	98	86
Attacks against civilian CPA <i>officials</i>	84	63	81	92	90	81
Attacks against U.S. forces	68	52	61	74	82	67
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Appendix Table 3a. Do you think the attacks against _____ have been carried out by:

	Groups within Iraq	Groups outside	A mix	Don't Know/ No Answer
Against international organizations	10%	27%	50%	14%
Against Iraqi police	25	20	42	14
Against Coalition Forces	22	16	49	14
Overall percentages, Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003				

Appendix Table 3b. And what specific group do you think is responsible for the attacks against
[open end; precoded responses; most frequent responses shown]

Groups Responsible	...International organizations	...Iraqi police	...Coalition Forces
Former Ba'ath party members	6%	9%	8%
Saddam	13	19	20
Radical Islamist groups	10	6	11
Terrorist organizations	17	13	4
Individuals paid to carry out	9	9	8
Common criminals	6	11	4
Kuwaitis	2	1	--
Syrians	4	2	3
Israelis	5	3	2
Iranians	2	1	--
U.S.	1	1	--
Coalition soldiers	1	1	0
Don't Know/No Response	21	22	32
Overall percentages, Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003			

Appendix Table 4. Iraqis Would Feel Safer With Iraqi Police Patrols Than with Coalition Patrols <i>% who would feel MORE SAFE in their neighborhoods if there were more frequent ...</i>						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
Coalition force patrols	31%	46%	30%	40%	56%	38%
Iraqi police patrols	84	86	82	80	93	86
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						

Appendix Table 5. Iraqis Confident in New Institutions <i>% who say they have a great deal or a fair amount of confidence in ...</i>						
	Baghdad	Basrah	Kirkuk	Hilla	Diwaniya	Overall
New Iraqi Army	29%	18%	37%	42%	52%	32%
A great deal	<u>38</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>37</u>
A fair amount	67	73	67	69	79	69
Total confident						
New Iraqi Police	46	27	54	51	62	46
A great deal	<u>41</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>40</u>
A fair amount	87	78	81	88	91	86
Total confident						
New Iraqi Ministries	27	19	24	36	49	29
A great deal	<u>38</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>36</u>
A fair amount	65	61	59	68	73	65
Total confident						
The Governing Council	28	21	19	37	47	29
A great deal	<u>36</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>36</u>
A fair amount	64	66	56	61	76	65
Total confident						
Office of Research Survey, November 19-28, 2003						