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The Future of Humanitarian Action
Implications of Iraq and Other Recent Crises

Report of an International Mapping Exercise

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1. The consultation process.

This report summarizes a round of consultations organized by the Feinstein International Famine Center (FIFC) in cooperation with other institutions the InterAgency Standing Committee, The Overseas Development Institute, Oxfam, and the Brookings Institution, on the implications of Iraq and other recent crises for the future of humanitarian action. It builds on an Issues Note prepared by FIFC for a workshop convened by the FIFC on October 9, 2003 in Boston and incorporates material from subsequent meetings and consultations as well as comments received from a wide range of humanitarian practitioners. The dates and locations of the consultations are described in Annex II.

The Boston workshop was attended by a select group of UN, Red Cross Movement and NGO practitioners, donors and academics. It was preceded by a number of interviews of donors and practitioners conducted by FIFC consultant Antonio Donini in Geneva and New York that provided an early reconnaissance of the post-Iraq malaise in the humanitarian community.

The initial issue-mapping exercise in Boston, designed to establish the lay of the land, was followed by four other consultations. The first was an informal meeting of IASC member organizations hosted by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva on November 11 and co-sponsored by ICVA. Senior staff from UN humanitarian agencies, ICRC and IFRC as well as the various NGO groupings were in attendance. This session was followed on November 17 by a meeting held at ODI in London and co-sponsored by ODI, Oxfam UK, and FIFC. Participants included UK government officials (DfID, MoD and the PM's office), ECHO, VOICE and UK as well as French NGOs. A note on the London meeting is available at the ODI website (www.odi.org). A briefing was held on December 10 in Washington D.C. for officials from the State Department and USAID. On the same day the Brookings Institution hosted a meeting with diplomats, academics and practitioners.

The discussions varied according to location and participants, although certain common themes emerged with remarkable consistency. Issues discussed at the Boston meeting were more UN-centric, those at the London session more UK- and euro-centric. The Washington briefing served to clarify the perceptions of US government officials while the Brookings meeting highlighted the concerns and sometimes contrasting views in the humanitarian community. Throughout these meetings, the prevailing concerns – the malaise in the humanitarian community and the uneasy feeling that the community is caught in a chain of events over which it has no control – were much the same. Views differed, sometimes sharply, on what should be done. The range of positions expressed echoed similar debates held in other fora in recent months (e.g., the October 16-17 meeting of ALNAP at Tufts University and the October meeting at the Carnegie Council on International Ethics in New York).

In reviewing the highlights of the mapping exercise, this report concludes – for now – the process of consultation facilitated by FIFC and its partners. The report does not aim to be a faithful rendition of the range of positions encountered on the war in Iraq and its aftermath. It is more selective and analytical, offering the Famine Center's interpretation

of a particularly complex set of issues that are likely to remain on the table for months and even years to come. It also sketches out some ideas for moving the humanitarian agenda forward. This paper is aimed at stimulating continued reflection among policy makers and practitioners from across the humanitarian community on the nature of this illness and its likely evolution. Whether there is a cure – through self-medication by the agencies or more invasive structural therapies – remains to be seen. In the meantime, there is no substitute for solid reflection and analysis.

Humanitarian organizations that have launched their own internal processes of review and soul-searching saw the mapping initiative as providing grist for their mill. Some organizations have expressed a reluctance to discuss events that are still so recent and around which the dust has yet to settle. They feel the need to keep a low profile, particularly as they have yet to determine how to precede vis-à-vis Iraq. The fact that they were reluctant to express, even in off-the-record settings, the alarm that they shared privately, is a worrisome sign. <u>There are clearly unusually high levels of tension between principles and institutional survival cutting across the humanitarian and wider international communities.</u>

All in all, this process has involved some 200 practitioners from a wide variety of institutions across the humanitarian community.   The Famine Center hopes that this report will be widely circulated and discussed in different fora, thus helping to shape a community-wide agenda for further policy development and research aimed at the redress of humanitarian action. Participants and convenors alike have expressed the hope that the mapping exercise will reduce the need to retrace steps across the broad landscape surveyed in this process. Other outputs including articles in academic journals are also planned. Materials related to this consultation process may be found on the web sites of the Feinstein International Famine Center (famine.tufts.edu) and the Humanitarianism and War Project (hwproject.tufts.edu) which will be updated regularly.

2. Background.

The Iraq crisis presents a number of critical challenges to the humanitarian community. As in Afghanistan but now in starker and deeper fashion, humanitarian agencies are confronted with a contested environment, a security crisis, major policy quandaries, and a host of issues arising from the need to interact with Coalition forces whose intervention is seen as illegitimate by significant segments of public opinion, in the region and beyond. The lack of a clear UN mandate is an additional complicating factor. In Afghanistan and Iraq alike, the UN and the other humanitarian agencies have been seen as taking sides. Lines have been blurred and humanitarian principles devalued, with tragic consequences for the security of staff and an ongoing threat to humanitarian operations, which continue to struggle in both countries.

The policy and operational choices made by humanitarian agencies in the Iraqi context, both at their headquarters and on the ground, are likely to have a lasting impact in Iraq and beyond. The issues of "whether" and "how" to work in Iraq are ones over which humanitarian agencies have agonized greatly since well before the US-led intervention. Views have diverged widely on how to relate to the Occupying Power (OP) and on the

extent to which the OP should be held to its responsibilities under international humanitarian law (IHL) to provide for the security and well-being of the civilian population as well as to ensure a secure and enabling environment for aid activities. The atmosphere in which these discussions have taken, and are taking, place is laden with political and institutional sensitivities. The agencies' dilemma regarding whether to "stay" or "go" has obvious implications for their profile, perception, and security as well as for the delivery of assistance and protection to vulnerable Iraqis. The debate among humanitarian organizations underscores not only the absence of, but also the desirability of, shared criteria on the basis of which such pivotal determinations may be reached. As relief agencies struggle to be faithful to their understandings of the "humanitarian imperative," the Baghdad blast of August 19 has brought home to one and all the risks and the consequences of the choices made.

In grappling with these issues, the humanitarian organizations of the United Nations system have enjoyed if anything less latitude than non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (RCM). While the UN and the RCM are mandated to be present wherever there is an emergency, the matters of where, when and how to respond is for the NGOs essentially voluntary. As one discussant put it, "the dilemma they face in Iraq is largely of their own making." The predictable lack of unity in NGO positioning vis-à-vis the OP and the insistent pressures on NGOs to accept funds are of course at the heart of the problem.

Many in the humanitarian community view the present quandaries regarding humanitarian action in Iraq as indicative of a serious, and deeper, illness within the humanitarian enterprise. They feel that humanitarian action has been politicized to an extent rarely seen and tainted by its association with the Coalition intervention: it has become a partisan action. Coming shortly after the Afghanistan and Kosovo crises, the Iraq issues are seen as deeply troubling. Some analysts, taking a broader historical view, find in the current situation the culmination of a longer-term inability or unwillingness to address structural problems related to the shape and functioning of the humanitarian enterprise. Others see the inevitable consequences of the move in northern state foreign policy from a multilateral post-WWII stance to a more unilateral set of positions driven by national security, political and business interests.

3. Diagnosis.

While there are different nuances in assessments of the situation, most humanitarian actors seem to agree that the Iraq crisis has resulted in a dangerous blurring of the lines between humanitarian and political action and in the consequent erosion of core humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence. Serious compromises from which it will be difficult to disentangle have been made. The bombs directed against the UN headquarters in Baghdad, and against the ICRC a few days later, have added a tragic element to widespread fears and concerns about the future of independent and effective humanitarian action.

Agencies are also split within and among themselves as they struggle with the contending pressures of principle vs. institutional survival. Well-established NGOs, particularly those

based in the US, have faced stark choices and arm-twisting from their governments as well as competition from less principled quarters in the community, "for profit" contractors, and the military. In contrast to their European counterparts, very few US NGOs could afford to say No. Moreover, practically no-one in the global humanitarian assistance community was prepared to express the view openly that "we should not be in Iraq -- let the Occupying Power deliver on its IHL responsibilities and sort out the mess it has created." In private, however, fundamental questions are being asked about whether the UN's humanitarian apparatus should have been operational within Iraq and whether NGOs should have relied on the UN as a "buffer" vis-à-vis the OP. Conversely, the view taken by some – that "we have no choice but to be there" – obscures a wider range of options that did exist and deserved consideration.

This is not the first time that the lines between humanitarian and political action have been blurred. Afghanistan and Kosovo provided a foretaste of unpalatable pressures on humanitarian action. And from Angola to Timor Leste and points in between, humanitarians have functioned in highly politicized landscapes. That said, many in the community believe that the Iraq crisis represents a new level of intrusiveness into, and instrumentalization of, the humanitarian enterprise, differing not only in degree but also in kind from its predecessors. Key differences cited are the lack of a UN imprimatur on the Iraq war, the extent to which interactions should be pursued with an Occupying Power whom many in the region and beyond view as illegitimate, and the short leash on which operational agencies are being held by some donor governments.

On the basis of the interviews and consultations held, the following components of the illness have been identified:

(a) Perceptions

- **Double standards.** There is a widespread feeling that the global war on terror has resulted in an erosion of humanitarian principles and IHL (US detentions in Guantanamo, the reported increased tolerance for torture and Russian heavy-handedness in Chechnya are examples, among others). US NGOs feel that they have been coerced into supporting US foreign policy objectives. The perception that double standards are being applied by the North to suffering in the South are reinforced by the wide disparity in funding patterns. High profile crises "suck up the cash" while forgotten and often more deadly emergencies languish.

- **Northern agenda.** The deepening "us vs. them" divide and the lack of counterbalance threaten the essence of humanitarian action. Events in Iraq, on the heels of Afghanistan, have confronted the humanitarian community with the reality that the humanitarian enterprise is "of the North" and that aid agencies are seen as the "mendicant orders of Empire." Many view this trend, which, once again, is not altogether new, as increasingly problematic. The intrinsic linkages between northern politics, economics, and values on the one hand, and Official Development Assistance (ODA) and humanitarian action on the other, are of course not new either. However, the fact that aid workers are seen as "the enemy" by some in Islamic countries (and beyond) has brought this reality into much starker relief.

- **Funding and donor behavior**. The fact that traditional humanitarian agencies and activities are funded by a small club of western donors, and the ready availability of huge donor funds for Iraq, reinforce the perception, and the reality, that humanitarianism is rooted in the North. The sheer size of the Iraq appeal, issued by the same UN system that struggles to raise funds for forgotten emergencies, is a stark reminder of the triumph of donor pressure and agency operationalism over principle, and sits uncomfortable alongside the largely unrecorded and unrecognized growing funding from the Islamic world and from southern and Islamic humanitarian agencies. Also, unlike peacekeeping operations which are funded from assessed contributions, the countries of the Third World have no visible stake in the policies and management of the humanitarian enterprise.

- **Profile.** The questionable profile and poor reputation of the UN in Iraq and in the region before the war were not understood or factored into the discussion of the UN's post-intervention role. Ordinary people in Iraq blame the UN for a decade of sanctions. The UN had added to their misery and was now helping the occupier. Aid agencies did not attempt to counter the perception that the UN and associated aid agencies were part of a "western conspiracy" or were serving as vectors of western values. International NGOs were seen by many on the ground as part of the western "crusade." As in other crises, elements of the local population are unable to discriminate among international players. The militant/terrorist forces are unwilling to do so and use the confusion to their advantage.

- **Absence/presence.** The weak posture of the UN was compounded by the comings and goings of UN expatriate staff. The evacuation of all staff just before the US-led military action, according to some, "gave the green light for war" and reinforced the view that aid agencies were a tool of Washington. Their subsequent return as the war seemed to be winding down, and with US acquiescence, compounded the problem since it appeared to legitimize the occupation. Some staff believe that the August bombing of UN headquarters in Baghdad represented a "payback" for such UN vacillation. They expressed the view that the chances of such an incident would have been reduced (but, of course, not eliminated) had the UN, like the ICRC, stayed the course during the war. In any event, the implications of leaving and the difficulties of returning, the role of the UN's security coordination office (UNSECOORD), and how such movements were perceived within the country need to be better understood.

(b) The politicization of security

- In Iraq, as in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the application of UN security "phases" is widely perceived more as a function of politics than of actual risk levels on the ground[1]. If this were the case, it would further endanger programs and staff. The UN Minimum Operational Security Standards (MOSS) were badly compromised as was subsequently confirmed by an independent investigation on the bombing of the Canal Hotel. It is noteworthy that the UN staff association has criticized the UN for not having withdrawn its personnel before the bombing, and the High Commissioner for

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[1] One respondent recalled how in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan the UN evacuated southern Afghanistan when a Taliban official threw a coffee pot at a UN aid worker. In post-9/11 Afghanistan, a much higher level of risk is now deemed acceptable.

Refugees has challenged the Secretary-General for being more sensitive to pressures from Security Council members than to risks run by exposed UN staff

- Clearly, there are different security "cultures" in the aid community, sometimes within the same institution (including the UN). Development professionals tend to be more "risk averse" than humanitarians; the latter range from "passive-defensive" security postures to a more proactive security management approach. Many in the military tend to be more risk-averse still. One of the likely consequences of the Baghdad bombing is that the UN will become even more defensive in deploying staff in volatile contexts.

  The absence of an aid community-wide coordinated or collective security approach and of agreed, objective, and measurable security indicators and criteria added to the confusion (and risks for staff) on the ground. There are also differences in the understanding of security and in the responses to insecurity between the humanitarian and military cultures.

(c) The devaluation of humanitarian emblems

- Emblems protect in two ways. First by identifying to warring parties which buildings, vehicles and people are off limits – they help clarify already agreed rules of engagement. Second, emblems seek to identify for the general public people and institutions they can trust to act out of humanity. In Iraq and Afghanistan neither protection seems to prevail. It is unclear whether this is related to the posture of humanitarian actors in Iraq (and Afghanistan) and their overall acceptability to the local population or whether the issue is war tactics. Is there a direct link between the attacks against the UN, ICRC and NGOs in Iraq and Afghanistan and the perception of cooption into the Coalition strategy? Would a clearer separation of roles have provided more protection or are humanitarians attacked simply because they are soft targets and fit the objectives of the belligerents to create chaos and to scare the foreigners away? While here are no easy answers to these questions, it is clear that the emblems have lost their protective nature and that humanitarian agencies have lost their ability to interact with one set of belligerents (as well as with the communities that tolerate or support them)

(d) The UN role

- The UN mandate in Iraq was vague and subject to different interpretations from the outset. There was lack of clarity at HQ beyond the agreed assumptions that (i) the UN would be there and (ii) that humanitarian activities were the only activities allowed in the absence of a Security Council mandate.

- Past history formed perceptions and reinforced biases. There was no consensus (either within or outside the UN) on what its role should be. This confusion was based to a large extent on the perceived conflation between pre-war roles (Oil-For-Food, sanctions, arms inspections) and post-war roles. This in turn plagued the relationship with the Occupying Power from the start, with some UN agencies and NGOs keen to cooperate and others maintaining their distance. The OFF program itself was a

source of ambiguity as several UN agencies and thousands of staff had a vested interest in its continuation.

- The UN also received conflicting signals from the OP. Initially, the Occupying Power was not disposed to see the UN back in the country, only later to apply pressure because the UN was not seen as doing enough. There were also differing expectations among member states, which put forward a range of different options to the SG. For their part, NGOs expressed concern because of compromises made by the UN but also needed UN coordination as a buffer so they would not have to interface directly with the OP. A more lose-lose situation than that faced by the UN system is hard to imagine. The issue of the role of the UN for the moment is moot as it has effectively withdrawn its staff from Iraq and is unlikely to return soon.

(e) The nature of the crisis

- There was no consensus among discussants on the nature of the crisis. The starting point was that humanitarian agencies would respond only to humanitarian need. When it became clear that there was no major food or displacement crisis and only pockets of vulnerability among civilians, the issue was fudged for reasons of institutional survival. Aid agencies whose services were not essential at the time found it important to continue to be engaged in Iraq. The stark choice was between cooption and irrelevance: for fear of losing funds and contracts, many agencies found reasons to stay on, regardless of their particular mandate. According to some, the "fictional" definition of the crisis as "humanitarian" resulted in the de facto cooption of humanitarian agencies into the OP strategy. Certainly the extent and severity of human need in Iraq paled by comparison with other crises of the day.

- Additional confusion resulted from the blurring of the lines between humanitarian and development assistance. If the crisis was humanitarian, why were development agencies there? Why did some stay on even after it became clear that security risks were well beyond what development agencies normally accept? Were agencies more interested in "peddling their wares" than in identifying priority needs? If there was indeed a humanitarian crisis, how should this be disaggregated from the generalized need of virtually the entire population?

- Further frustration was caused by the procrastination of agencies that had withdrawn to Larnaca, Cyprus regarding a decision to return -- and then the hurried return of UN and NGOs once a decision had been made. This led to competition and jockeying for position (and contracts) vis-à-vis the OP, to the detriment of protection, which was accorded lower priority.

- Procedures for interacting with the OP proved difficult to define and implement. On the positive side, the UN had drafted and secured IASC agreement on "Do's and don't's" for interacting with the OP, which it disseminated on Relief Web. However, agencies on the ground showed varying degrees of knowledge of and respect for these guidelines. The OP itself gave conflicting messages regarding interaction with aid agencies and never did sign the MOU that had been processed through the UN.

(f) Coordination

- Coordination of the humanitarian effort in such crises is always a challenge.   In Iraq, the task was complicated by the divergent positions taken by NGOs. Some, primarily American, NGOs chose to "engage" and therefore agreed to comply with the funding requirements and other dictates of the OP. Others, primarily European, "kept their distance" and refused US (and UK) funding and/or declined to interact with the OP.

- Intergovernmental organizations sometimes added to the problem. For example, at the behest of the OP, IOM agreed to handle land and property claims in the North and tasked its implementing partner, the Norwegian Refugee Council, to do so. NRC refused and renounced its contract with IOM on the grounds that neutrality was breached and security of its staff compromised. Some observers questioned whether IOM understood the complexities of the situation well enough to play a specific role.

- A major gap in coordination was the absence of advocacy and public information campaigns and a communications strategy in local languages to explain the objectives of the UN and of the wider assistance community in Iraq as well as the lack of Iraqi media to broadcast such messages. As a result, the UN (and the NGOs) did little to counter negative publicity and rumors associated with it. The circulation of rumors and misinformation would become a larger issue over time.

(g) National and international staff

- The issue of the nationality of key international staff of the UN was perceived by some as problematic. The UN apparently made no conscious attempt to avoid deploying in Iraq nationals of Coalition countries. Obliviousness to nationality is an interesting reversal of the situation in Afghanistan, where for several years the US and UK put pressure on the UN not to appoint nationals of their countries to work in Afghanistan. The question of the independence of the international civil service and of the political pressures to which certain nationalities are subjected is thus back on the agenda. The issue goes to the point of the integrity of the UN system and the wider perception of it. To what extent should, or should not, the nationality of UN staff be taken into account?

- Iraq, as Afghanistan and other crises before it, once again highlighted the risks faced by national staff, especially, but not only, when they are left to hold the fort after the departure of the expatriates. The extraordinary nature of this risk when the UN and the wider aid community are seen as "taking sides" does not seem to have been internalized by the system; national staff are often seen as "expendable" whether in terms of job or personal security. In an implicitly two-tiered organization of personnel, the continuity of programming in major crises increasingly rests with national staff, who are often taken for granted. Standard claims that UN programs were never interrupted by the departure of international staff often understate the nature of national staff vulnerability and courage. This stance only adds to the perception of a Northern-controlled humanitarian enterprise.

4. Prognosis

While there are the beginnings of a consensus on the symptoms of "what went wrong" in Iraq and, indeed, on how Iraq now sheds light on a number of similar issues that emerged but which were less clear in Afghanistan, the bigger picture and likely evolution of the malady affecting humanitarianism are more difficult to put into focus. Humanitarian action seems to be taking place in an increasingly murky landscape beset by manipulations and tensions between policy choices and even philosophies of humanitarianism.

A feeling of powerlessness is also evident, both because of the sheer intractability of some of the issues – the global war on terror and the large shadow it casts on humanitarian work in places like Iraq and Afghanistan – and because of the increased institutional odds that necessary and overdue reform of the aid system, never an easy proposition, is now likely to encounter.

Moreover, the humanitarian message is not getting through to policy-makers and politicians, as well as to actors on the ground. Many agree that there has been a massive failure of advocacy for humanitarian principles vis-à-vis the "spoiler" belligerents in both Afghanistan and Iraq. They are simply not there to talk to – or humanitarian actors have been unwilling or unable to find them. This failure has been compounded by structural weaknesses in the system's ability to analyze complex situations and "read" the mind of the communities in which agencies work. "How many Arabic speakers did the UN have in Baghdad?", one discussant asked. "Did they interact with Iraqis beyond the walls of UN compounds?" In a broader sense, to what extent is the understanding of crises and the framing of options dependent on the integrity of locally available interpreters?

The murkiness of the situation is also compounded by two additional factors for which humanitarians themselves are responsible. The first is the lack of a clear understanding of the nature of the situation on the ground which was arbitrarily defined as "humanitarian" in order to justify the presence of the UN and NGOs in the absence of a UN mandate.[2] This simple act immediately politicized subsequent perceptions of humanitarianism. The second factor is the conflation of humanitarian, development, and advocacy agendas to suit agency survival imperatives.[3] Both these considerations are important because they illustrate the extent to which humanitarian agencies have strayed out of the straight-and-narrow path of traditional humanitarian action into essentially political territory.

The box below summarizes a set of **key critical questions** that have emerged from the consultation process and that are likely to shape the future of humanitarian action and its

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[2] This is not to say that pockets of need did not exist in Iraq, nor that it was wrong to plan for a possible deterioration of the situation. Agencies needed a humanitarian cover in order to be present. The UN's Appeal for $2.3 billion in April 2003 was driven by political considerations (pressure from the Coalition for UN and NGOs to be there), institutional survival (if we don't go, someone else will) and the sheer magnitude of the funds that were being made available.
[3] According to the Geneva Conventions, authentic humanitarian agencies should not "engage in controversies." Thus, aid agencies should not have advocated against the war, other than perhaps pointing out the likely humanitarian consequences that might eventuate. Again, this is a point on which humanitarian agencies have differing views of their roles.

institutions. Much is at stake in how such questions are answered by humanitarian actors themselves and by the wider international crisis response community.

- Is the subordination or **instrumentalization** of humanitarian action to superpower political objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan a passing exception or the harbinger of hard times ahead for humanitarian principles?
- Has the push for **"coherence" and "integration"** in crisis management resulted in a temporary or permanent eclipse of the humanitarian dimension in the UN response to crises? Does the institutional location of the UN's humanitarian apparatus need to be revisited as part of a wider UN reform effort?
- How will the tension between the "UN as Security Council" and the "UN as *We the peoples*..." be resolved? Are reforms possible or likely that would give higher priority in the Council's deliberations to human rights and human needs, wherever they exist? In other words, is it possible to "humanitarianize politics without politicizing humanitarianism"?
- Is a **two-tiered crisis response regime** developing in which the superpower calls the shots and enbridles humanitarian action in the high profile situations where it is directly involved, while in less visible crises, which may well be more deadly but attract less attention and fewer funds, humanitarians are more able to go about their principled business? What are the implications in terms of funding for humanitarian action?[4]
- Are the **devaluation of humanitarian emblems** and the threats faced by humanitarian personnel and operations qualitatively or only quantitatively different from earlier experience? Are persons that target aid workers part of a globalized galaxy of adversaries, or are they homegrown actors. Should more be done to understand their grievances?
- Is it necessary to **redefine humanitarianism**? Is it truly universal? What is its essential core and how does it connect with other forms of international involvement in the South – development, human rights, trade, investment, political/military action? Does humanitarianism truly embrace the compassionate values and actions of Islam, Hinduism and other Southern traditions, or is it in fact a Northern concept and construct? Is it possible or desirable to de-link humanitarian action from western values and approaches to security in the broadest sense? What are the indigenous values and traditions that a more universal humanitarianism might tap into?

The following paragraphs provide a commentary on these questions. There are, for the time being, no hard-and-fast answers. Further unpacking of these and other issues will be required before a more collective and pervasive understanding on the future of humanitarian action can be reached. Participants in the mapping exercise expressed the hope that further discussions in other venues might take advantage of, rather than recapitulate, the gist of the workshops described in this report.

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[4] Nearly half of all the funds provided by donors in 2002 in response to the 25 UN appeals went to just one country, Afghanistan. Funding patterns are likely to be skewed by Iraq to an even greater extent in 2003/4.

(a) Principles under threat

The quality of mercy is now strained to the breaking point. The humanitarian enterprise does not know whether this is a temporary phenomenon – an anomaly in a more or less linear advance of humanitarian values - or the harbinger of a more durable decline linked to superpower domination and the war on terror. Some, taking an even more lugubrious view, have predicted that the prospects for humanitarianism in the age of terror and anti-terror will be increasingly grim.[5] Neutral humanitarian space appears to be shrinking generally and has practically disappeared in situations like Iraq and Afghanistan.

It has been noted that the Bush and Al Qaeda doctrines mirror each other. Both each saying, "You are either for or against us." This dualistic worldview leaves little space for neutral, impartial, and independent humanitarian action. The situation presents some similarities to Cold War polarization, with one ominous additional feature: the direct threat against aid workers who because of their mode of funding, nationalities, lifestyle, values, and perceived identification with the objectives of the "western conspiracy" are considered fair and soft targets by embattled, ruthless, and violent militant extremist groups. Recent developments also conjure up unsettling echoes of a bygone era of religiously approved "just wars".

While many argue that Iraq represents a peak to date in the erosion of respect for humanitarian principles by those who have subscribed to them or cannot claim ignorance of them, there are differing views on whether this development is here to stay. Some, point to the dangers of focusing only on the implications of Iraq. There are many other, and more deadly, crises where the humanitarian enterprise still functions reasonably well, though it may be strapped for cash. Others point to the qualitative changes that are occurring, including never-seen-before pressures; increased conditionality in funding tied to foreign policy objectives; a surge in bilateralization; and the ominous appearance of for-profit "humanitarian" contractors. They note as well a quantum leap in risk brought about by the perception that humanitarian action is linked to a new agenda of imperial policing in the periphery and to the promotion of western values. Moreover, these increased risks and perceptions of instrumentalization are not limited to parts of the Middle East and Afghanistan. They are creeping across the Islamic world and even beyond, as in West Africa and Southeast Asia.

Whatever their degree of permanence or transitoriness, Iraq shows how crucial these developments are and how serious, even tragic, the consequences of devaluating humanitarian principles can be. From the "purist" perspective, humanitarian principles have been degraded in Iraq. By accepting to work there in the context of the US-led occupation without the necessary attention to the consequences, humanitarian agencies have put themselves in an ambiguous and dangerous position. Enormous pressure has

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[5] See, for example, the analyses and views provided on the web site of BOND, a network of some 280 UK-based voluntary groups active in international development and development education (www.bond.org.uk). Also, Joanna Macrae and Adele Harmer, eds., *Humanitarian Action and the 'Global War on Terror:' A Review of Trends and Issues*, (HPG Report 14: Overseas Development Institute, 2003); and "Humanitarian Action in a Time of Terrorism," [epilogue in] Larry Minear, *Dilemmas and Discoveries* (Bloomfield, CT: 2002).

been brought to bear on the UN, including its humanitarian wing, to perform a subordinate role to the US-led intervention -- this despite the lack of a formal SC blessing to the military operation. Financial and political pressure on US NGOs to act as "force multipliers" for US foreign and military policy objectives has been even more overwhelming. Such pressures have resulted in the widespread perception in the region that the UN, the assistance community, and even the ICRC have taken sides. They led to considerable internal hand-wringing -- but little open debate -- on how to confront such pressures in the future. European NGOs who by and large rely less on bilateral government funds have had a less rough ride but are themselves alarmed about what the future may hold.

There is, of course, no unity in the humanitarian community on the issue of how to interact with the OP in Iraq. In fact, most humanitarian workers have not had experience functioning in a setting with an Occupying Power in charge, particularly an Occupying Power that is also the chief holder of the purse-strings for humanitarian action. Some actors are comfortable (they say, realistic) in holding that "principles are for reference only, not absolutes." There is growing acknowledgement in some UN humanitarian agencies that while their connection to the "political UN" renders neutrality impossible, impartiality is still possible and desirable. In other words, that as one respondent put it "it is OK to be impartial but not neutral". Others see such slippage in the area of principles as indefensible, with serious consequences for the future.

The range of present positions echoes earlier debates on whether the civilian nature of humanitarian action is a *sine qua non* or simply a desirable feature. Agencies differ among themselves on whether or not it is advisable to accept funds from and cooperate with the military forces of the belligerents and whether or not these should be involved in the delivery of relief. The issues of funds, the pressure to accept them, and the fear of losing contracts to private companies contracted by the OP, or to the military, is likely to have a lasting impact on how NGOs envision their future roles in crisis settings.

Moreover, deteriorating security in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere is likely to bring back the vexed issue of armed guards and military escorts, i.e. the ostensible militarization of humanitarian action. A number of those interviewed as part of the mapping process noted that international humanitarian law (IHL) clearly sets out the responsibilities which the OP is required to meet. However, politically and financially, the UN and most NGOs felt that they were unable to defer action themselves while holding the OP accountable to such responsibilities. And now NGOs, in addition to the UN, have left, with some citing as a reason "the weak position of the UN in the occupied country"[6]

(b) The currency of emblems

There is a an embryonic convergence of views on the ominous implications of the global "war on terrorism" for humanitarian action and in particular on the nature of what one respondent called the "new 'new wars'" where the unwritten social contract that allowed humanitarian actors to operate no longer exists. It used to be that belligerents saw an advantage to the presence of humanitarian actors because of their own interest in

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[6] Norwegian Refugee Council statement, September 8, 2003.

protecting and assisting non-combatants in the areas they controlled. In wars where mobile and clandestine extremist groups control no territory and do not necessarily aspire to control any, the presence of humanitarians may be perceived as more of a nuisance than an asset.

Some discussants feel that too much is being read into the failure of humanitarian emblems to protect. Recent loss of life among the aid community did not represent an attack on humanitarians *per se*, but rather the nature of the tactics in the wars being fought. Nevertheless, the fact that such attacks are seen as permissible by those who undertake them is cause for serious concern: the attackers feel they can get away with them vis-à-vis their supporters and/or the communities they originate from. This raises serious questions with respect to the fundamental protection provided by the "acceptability" of humanitarian action to local communities as well as to why this acceptability disappears in certain settings but not in others (e.g. Palestine).

It is urgent to analyze and understand the roots of the threat but also to find ways to re-start some kind of conversation with the belligerents, perhaps through proxies or Islamic scholars, to try to reestablish the *bona fides* of humanitarians vis-à-vis militant/extremist groups and their supporters. Given the widespread perception of a western crusade against Islam, this is likely to be a tall order.

(c) Has "integration" run its course?

Humanitarianism in settings such as Iraq and Afghanistan has become subsidiary to a much larger and essentially political agenda which has to do with how the international community chooses to manage its overall response to crises. The evidence of the last few years points to the emergence of the integration of political, humanitarian, and other responses as a standard template --but only in high profile crises where the overall policy approach is driven by the Security Council or superpower interests. In lower profile crises, principled humanitarian action has a better chance to survive. The post-Bonn UN mission in Afghanistan has been the most "coherent" and "integrated" to date, but elements of integration are present in all recent UN missions from Kosovo to Iraq, and the doctrine of integration has been codified in the Brahimi report. Nevertheless, however axiomatic in the thinking of UN and government policy-makers, the push for integration carries crucial policy and institutional implications for the humanitarian enterprise.

The choice confronting UN humanitarian entities is two-fold. One option involves full membership in the UN conflict management and resolution machinery, with a potential loss of their independent and neutral humanitarian voice and the risk that they will be seen as taking sides. The other option embraces some degree of separation, insulation, or independence of the humanitarian, and possibly human rights, entities from that machinery so as to nurture policy and partnerships in the humanitarian community. The latter option entails the risk of being less able to ensure that humanitarian concerns are given equal billing in the overall response. Indeed, the experience with "equal billing" so far has been mixed at best. In Afghanistan but also in many African crises, experience has shown that the political UN does not see itself bound by humanitarian principles and has often only very limited appreciation of the value of the humanitarian endeavor in and of itself. Humanitarian action, and the perceived eventual need for tradeoffs, is always

seen through political eyes. Culturally and institutionally, there seems to be a reluctance to acknowledge that humanitarian action and human rights are valuable in their own right and also central to the quest for peace.

In some ways, increased insulation or independence would constitute a return to the clearer institutional architecture of the Cold War era when humanitarian issues and human rights were approached as existing in watertight compartments. A revived effort to insulate humanitarian action from political agendas might also portend that a new Cold War is in the offing, built around the global war on terror. One could envision, for example, a return to ideology and polarization in international relations with a superpower-driven anti-terror camp pursuing an elusive enemy, while a "third force" emerged composed of groups and nations concerned that the anti-terror agenda undermines the goal of attacking poverty and promoting justice. The risks for humanitarianism in such a scenario are significant, as are the implications for the UN coordination function.

Again, on the issue of integration vs. independence there is likely to be a range of positions in the humanitarian community, as well as among donors and UN member states. Given past experience, the institutional constraints to any significant reform of the system – for example, a single UN humanitarian agency outside the secretariat or an independent international humanitarian agency – are likely to be formidable. However, based on the consultations held and the issues mapped, a reopening of the "single agency issue" may soon be on the cards again.

(d) Janus at the UN

Like the Roman god Janus, the UN has two faces. The first is the face of *realpolitik* and lies embodied in the compromises struck at the Security Council, the world's highest political body. The second is enshrined in the ideals of *"We the peoples…"* and in the promises of the Charter and of the Universal Declaration. Humanitarian and human rights action looks to this second face for guidance and protection, institutionally weaker though it be. In a sense, both faces are essential to the functioning of the organization, at least as it is presently constituted. And toying with the physiognomy of the gods is always a dangerous proposition.

Regardless of whether the integration issue is reopened, many feel that efforts should be redoubled to influence decision-makers in the Security Council and elsewhere on humanitarian and protection issues. The objective, as one participant in the mapping process put it, should be to "humanitarianize politics without politicizing humanitarian action." Some feel that the success of such a strategy is dependent on the results of the 2004 US presidential election, the hope being that regime change would usher in a return to more multilateral problem-solving. Others, seeing longer-term trends at play, doubt that much is likely to change in superpower-directed world ordering efforts in the years to come. Nevertheless, a recurrent theme of the various workshops was that a more "human" agenda in the SC, leveraging "friendly" donors and other member states, should be pursued as a matter of urgency.

Views differ as well on the issue of **UN reform**. Some feel that the undermining of humanitarian action and human rights in the political UN arena is more a function of leadership (or lack thereof) than of structures. From an architectural standpoint, they say, the Emergency Relief Coordinator is well-placed to advocate for a strong humanitarian perspective in conflict resolution and crisis management. Leadership, they conclude, has been the problem. Others maintain that major surgery cannot be postponed any longer: a deep reform of the humanitarian system is necessary. The proponents of both views agree that, should a reform process get underway, the humanitarian perspective should be in the forefront. Hence the idea advanced in one session that "humanitarian sleepers" be placed in positions where they could influence SC members and the political wing of the UN Secretariat.

As yet there is no willingness apparent to tackle such reform, whether in UN or in donor circles. Several participants expressed the view that he "eminent persons group" established by the UN Secretary- General does not seem to have much potential in terms of the reform of the humanitarian apparatus. This was thought to be the case despite the SG's own feeling that the UN is "at a fundamental fork in the road" and his open mind as to possible reform of the UN's humanitarian wing.

(e) Testing the universality of humanitarianism

Perhaps, several participants suggested, one of the starting points of reform should center around the universality of humanitarian action. As things stand now, while the principles may well be universal – or so professional humanitarians would like them to be – the reality is that humanitarian action is based on the "restricted consensus" of the handful of donor states that finance the bulk of it. To be more precise, such action is also built upon the obfuscation of other realities, namely the contributions of non-traditional donors (such as Islamic countries and charities, remittances of diasporas and migrants, and of course the contributions of affected countries, communities, and families themselves). There are no hard and fast figures to pin on this parallel universe of humanitarian action – one might view it as the "informal economy" of the humanitarian marketplace -- but the scale of such untallied contributions may well be underestimated. And herein lies part of the rub.

The fact that humanitarian activities are seen to be funded by a small club of western donors reinforces the perception, which corresponds to the reality, that humanitarianism is "of the north." This is problematic because unlike peacekeeping operations, the countries of the Third World have little visible stake in the policies and management of the humanitarian enterprise. Can this restricted and narrow consensus be widened and, if so, how?

Self-regulation of the donor community can only go so far. The Stockholm "good donorship" initiative was mentioned by discussants as having some potential, although some felt that the Stockholm process had not engaged donor bureaucracies at a high enough political level. Political decision makers would not necessarily heed the message of their more principled and more alarmed humanitarian colleagues. The obvious answer is assessed contributions. If such contributions can be made obligatory for peace operations, why not for humanitarian assistance? In all likelihood this would go a long

way towards solidifying a more universal humanitarian consensus, in which all UN member countries would have a voice.

(f) Copyrighted humanitarianism?

While the issue of institutional reform can only be flagged at this stage, a final, related, point deserves to be made. [7] The key question is: what is the **future of humanitarianism** post-Kabul and post-Baghdad? Indeed, does it still make sense to use the term "humanitarianism" at all when the priests who are supposed to be the custodians of principle have, happily or reluctantly, joined the service of the superpower that rightly or wrongly is widely despised throughout the region and beyond? The question should be posed for the UN, but also in slightly differently form for the ICRC and for the NGO community. (One must recall how insistent NGOs were to become operational in Iraq but wanted the UN there as a "buffer".)

Given the blurring of the lines which everyone from the UN Secretary-General down acknowledged at the September meeting of the IASC principals, perhaps a first area to be addressed should be that of **defining the term "humanitarian."** Is humanitarian action that takes its cue from the UN Security Council still humanitarian? It is noteworthy that in the discussion of Iraq-related issues at the IASC meeting at least one agency head lamented the reality of the intrusion of the SC into humanitarian matters and advocated that the Secretary-General be the spokesman of "We the peoples…" rather than of the Security Council.

A focus on core humanitarian activities would run counter to the trend of the '90s, when the humanitarian agenda expanded into non-traditional territory – peace-building, capacity-building, aid-induced conflict resolution, developmental relief, etc. Moreover, because of the demise of "development" as a mobilizing force in the conduct of North-South relations and the byzantine vagaries of donor bureaucracies, the "humanitarian" label has been applied as a flag of convenience to all manner of small-scale and community-based recovery activities that would fit more neatly under a developmental label. This pattern has been particularly egregious in Afghanistan but was also evident in Iraq, the DRC, and Sierra Leone. In Iraq, the double blurring between politics and humanitarian action and between humanitarian and development work has been the source of much confusion. In reaction, some humanitarian agencies are considering retrenching from broadly defined assistance to core humanitarian protection and relief functions for specific vulnerable groups. They view a sharper focus as improving their effectiveness as well as increasing their security.

In fact, many of those who expressed their views during the consultations feel that effective and principled humanitarian action requires some form of "back to basics." The more one departs from the "copyrighted" humanitarianism enshrined in the Geneva

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[7] A number of proposals are already on the table. For example, Randolph Kent and his team at Kings College have, in their review of the implications of three recent studies of humanitarian financing on the UN system, argue for the delinking of operational and normative functions with the UN shedding its assistance responsibilities to the NGO community while concentrating on norms and standards. In a forthcoming book, Larry Minear and Ian Smillie argue for a considerable strengthening of multilateral core of humanitarian action.

Conventions, the more the risks of treading on murky ground increase. This "Dunantist" view is countered by those who believe that too restrictive an approach does not do justice to the complex nature of contemporary conflicts and, in particular, protracted emergencies.

Should humanitarian actors stop advocating action on the issue of child soldiers, for example, because this is not strictly speaking a life-saving issue? Obviously not. At the same time, there is a realization that humanitarians have perhaps gone too far in occupying space left free by others – development actors and shrinking state involvement in ODA. Moreover, some policing, or at least increased accountability for botched humanitarian action, is urgently required. Perhaps "copyrighted" humanitarian action should be allowed to be undertaken only by "certified" humanitarians and agencies. In the long run, some form of certification might also help in terms of the acceptability of humanitarian action in settings where such action is seen by some as tainted.

While no unanimity was articulated on this point in the various consultations, some form of "re-centering" on basic humanitarian values seemed to many desirable, with two caveats. The first is that there is no one-size-fits all solution. Maximalist humanitarian approaches may be justified in some situations – particularly when there is a peace agreement and an agreed collective strategy which lends itself to some degree of an integrated response – while minimalist solutions may be the only way forward in extremely contested, politicized, and volatile environments. The second is that re-centering should not come at the expense of protection and human rights concerns. If anything, the contrary should happen through the re-positioning of the principle-based normative functions of humanitarian and human rights organizations at the center of the stage rather than being seen, as often happens, as ancillary to assistance functions. Too often, assistance is seen as the *sine qua non* of humanitarian action and protection as a fuzzy or feel-good add-on.

5. The Way Ahead

This review and analysis has identified broad policy and political issues as well as more specific operational concerns. Discussions to date underscore the view that <u>an agenda for reinvigorating humanitarian action is needed</u>, covering a gamut of macro and micro matters that will be processed in the coming months in a variety of venues and agencies. Ideally, this agenda should lead to a strategy into which a number of disparate or coordinated initiatives could converge. It is anticipated that over the next few months a number of initiatives would be undertaken to explore these and other avenues. An agenda for reinvigoration would involve a number of constituencies: the UN, Red Cross Movement, NGOs, donors, other UN Member States (e.g. G77), think tanks, officials and communities in affected countries, academics, and others.

Some preliminary ideas for an agenda for the redress of humanitarianism, arising broadly from the series of consultations held, are listed below and in more detail in Annex I. Each of the sessions had a variety of strategies to suggest; none of the sessions had the luxury of fleshing out these propositions or vetting them extensively. The ideas listed below represent an attempt by the International Famine Center to identify the conditions and

circumstances necessary for the preservation of humanitarian space both as a global objective and particularly in contexts where humanitarian action is manipulated for political purposes or is seen as antagonistic to the aims of militant spoiler groups.

a. The humanitarian enterprise is ailing. For those who believe that humanitarianism as a universal ideal is worth fighting for – not only because it is just but because it has, and continues to, save and protect countless lives – the time has come to sound the clarion and do something about it. No outside body – donor governments, the general public, the UN General Assembly, can take the lead here. It has to come from within the humanitarian community. Those individuals and agencies who are sufficiently concerned need to mobilize for change. This mobilization is not the kind of grand design for new and better institutions which might well come later. Nor is it the blind beating of some ideological drum. The first priority is to stand up and be counted. Humanitarian agencies around the world can form a very powerful constituency. They can influence public opinion, parliaments, the media, communities, even affected populations, and, last but most certainly not least, the powers that be. The issue here is not to create a consortium of all agencies that use the humanitarian label, but rather to build a humanitarian "coalition of the willing".

Various groups, agencies, community-based institutions, research bodies, professional organizations, and the like are in a position to join forces around the proactive defense of core values. The resulting movement would represent a range of views, including those not part of the mainstream Judeo-Christian tradition but who have their own valuable traditions of humanity. The primary function of such a transnational and transcultural mobilization would be to put issues on the table and challenge the humanitarian community to test itself. Are humanitarians clear on their value set and are they walking their talk? Are humanitarians putting this value set and consequent actions unashamedly before governments and international civil society? The active involvement of groups and constituencies in the south would be crucial to the success of any reform process.

One can envisage many different structures for driving such a reform process: a small coalition of like-minded agencies, as happened with the Landmines campaign in the 90s, an internally commissioned but externally conducted holistic evaluation, akin to the multi-donor evaluation on Rwanda in the late 90s, an independent broad commission, akin to the Bruntland Commission on development and the Independent Commission on Humanitarian Issues in the 80s, or the recent International Commission on Intervention and Sate Sovereignty

Complementary to such a broad thrust, one could envisage a number of more discrete and immediately doable actions.

b. An initiative on the reform of humanitarian funding including a feasibility study on how a more equitable system based at least in part on assessed contributions and on greater pooling of resources could be instituted and a system for recording the "parallel" non-western universe of humanitarian assistance.

c. A comparative analysis of recent experience with integrated peace missions (Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, etc) with an eye to their varying effects on principled humanitarian action.

d. A study on what could be done to counter both the perception and the reality of the northern nature of the humanitarian enterprise.

e. A review on whether and how humanitarian action needs to be redefined including focus on issues of accountability for humanitarian agencies and the feasibility of a system of certification for humanitarian workers and agencies.

f. An examination of humanitarianism and Islam with the aim of identifying common ground and areas where commonalities need to be found (this could also be done through a series of conferences with Islamic charities, intellectuals, etc). The issue of "acceptability" and how it can be improved could also be explored, along with a look at the nature of the threat from Islamic militants whose ideologies are antagonistic to Western values and how it could be better understood/addressed.

g. A study on how the social contract between belligerents and humanitarian actors could be re-constituted in those crises where "acceptability" no longer functions. This could draw on the experience of humanitarian agencies in Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Sierra Leone, etc.

Since WWII humanitarianism has moved forward through opportunistic growth, piece-meal and largely reactive reform. There is a sense that we can no longer patch-up the life-raft. One-off studies and fix-its, however well intentioned, cannot redress the fundamental dysfunctionalities of humanitarianism today. Now may be the time for those who are serious about preserving humanitarianism, and who are able to see a future different from yesterday, to set aside their institutional differences and to start to re-build this enterprise with humility, coherence, principle, and a sense of universal mission.

Prepared by consultant Antonio Donini, in consultation with Peter Walker and Larry Minear

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Annex I: Policy, Institutional and
Operational Issues Requiring Further Study.

Among the broad **policy issues** are the following:

1. Strategize on the measures needed to safeguard humanitarian action from manipulation by political agendas, including the roles of multilateral and bilateral donors and their commitment to humanitarian principles.
2. Revisit the coherence vs. independence debate with an eye to insulating humanitarian activities more effectively from association with political, military, and peacekeeping work
3. Review whether the UN system is the best focal point for the orchestration and coordination of humanitarian work in high-profile political settings.
4. Define advocacy strategies vis-à-vis the Security Council and member states to contribute to humanitarianizing politics without politicizing humanitarianism.
5. Identify measures to ensure that advances made on human rights and protection issues are not jettisoned in the context of the war on terror and as new actors emerge in the humanitarian arena.
6. Revisit the current welter of definitions of humanitarianism and identify the core "humanitarian activities" which should be sustained in even the most insecure settings.
7. Define the conditions (e.g. after a peace agreement) where more maximalist and integrated approaches may be justified.
8. Review the comparative advantages of the UN, Red Cross Movement, and NGOs in the advocacy for, and delivery of, principled humanitarian action.
9. Revisit the concept of what constitutes a "non-governmental organization" and in particular the extent to which political and financial pressure from, and proximity to, governments may compromise adherence to core humanitarian principles.
10. Assess the appropriate roles of the military in providing security for humanitarian operations in the context of the growing misuse and/or militarization of humanitarian action itself.

The following are more specific **institutional and operational** issues that deserve further study.

1. Analyze the consequences on programs, affected populations, and staff security of the withdrawal of expatriate humanitarian staff from Iraq and other crises (Afghanistan, Liberia) as well as the costs (financial and in terms of credibility) of returning.

2. Explore the possibility of formulating a template of considerations to be taken into account in reaching such engagement/disengagement decisions, acknowledging that individual agencies would retain the ultimate decision-making authority.

3. Review risks for local staff in recent crises and measures that have been, or could be, taken to enhance their security.

4. Study protective measures for aid workers: does the issue of private security firms/militarized assistance need to be revisited?
   Track over time the issue of the protective nature of the emblems through a quantitative and qualitative analysis of security incidents in hostile environments.

5. Study the groups that target humanitarian agencies in order to understand better their motivations and the communities with which they interact. Define options for reaching out to such groups to negotiate humanitarian space and increase the "acceptability" of humanitarian actors. (Why is it, for example, that the UN does not face security threats from Islamist groups in the Occupied Palestinian Territories)?

6. Analyze whether the separation of protection activities from the provision of assistance provides for better profile/security. Conversely, does the presence of relief personnel enhance protection?

7. Study UN leadership and coordination on the ground in Iraq. Were UN agencies giving consistent or divergent messages on humanitarian issues and on interaction with the OP?

8. Review measures taken by humanitarian agencies to explain to the wider Middle Eastern public their role and activities in Iraq; identify appropriate advocacy and public information strategies for the various publics in the region.

9. Examine the extent to which during the run-up to the Iraq crisis, and in the crisis itself, humanitarian concerns were energetically asserted at the highest levels of the United Nations, including the UN headquarters task force headed by the Deputy Secretary-General.

Annex II: Meetings and Acknowledgements

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The Center's Humanitarianism and War Project

Oxfam America provided the venue for the <u>October 9</u> workshop in Boston, which was convened by the Feinstein International Famine Center of Tufts.

On <u>Nov. 11</u>, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva hosted a meeting, co-sponsored by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, with personnel resources provided by the Feinstein International Famine Center.

On <u>Nov. 17</u>, ODI hosted a meeting in London which was co-sponsored by ODI, Oxfam UK, and the Famine Center.

On <u>Dec. 10</u>, a briefing of US government officials by the Famine Center on the mapping exercise was held in Washington, D.C. On the same day, the Brookings Institution hosted a discussion of the issues.