



COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY
BAGHDAD

2

INFO MEMO

October 29, 2003

FOR: Ambassador Bremer
From: [redacted] (b)(6) Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Subject: Welcome Home Update

1. **Hajj Preparations Update Memo:** We have a separate memo summarizing where things stand in terms of preparations for the Hajj. Outstanding issues are (1) establishing an appropriate mechanism for approving the licensing of private travel agencies that reconciles the mutual suspicions of Awqaf and the Ministry of Culture's Board of Tourism; (2) determining whether to allow special Hajj charter flights to operate out of BIAP, Mosul and Basra on an exceptional basis, CJTF-7 security concerns notwithstanding; (3) agreeing that Iraq (Awqaf lead, with MFA follow-up) will inform its neighbors and other countries that this year it will not be able to allow other nationals to transit through Iraq for the Hajj.

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2. **Iraqi "ambassador" in Washington:** Zebari has just returned from London. We are meeting October 30 to go over a number of issues, but first among them is to go over the names he has in mind. We have asked the Department to move apace to put in place a new and more flexible protecting power agreement with Bahrain that would allow an Iraqi mission to take a higher profile and operate independently. Diplomatic contacts have been made, our Embassy in Manama is supporting, the Iraqi mission in Manama is in touch with the Bahrainis about this. We hope to have a new agreement in place shortly (I have recommended that the Iraqis tell the UK that for the moment they want to just go ahead with the Jordanian protecting power relationship, get a team in place and then think about any changes. Zebari has a recommendation for London.)

3. **Syrian initiative to organize a Regional Meeting of Foreign Ministers to discuss the**

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COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

BAGHDAD

ACTION MEMO

October 30, 2003

FOR: THE ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: [REDACTED] (b)(6) Senior Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

SUBJECT: The Iraq Hajj: Follow up and Recommendations

REF: My Info Memo of September 28, 2003

For the most part the mechanisms for effecting the Iraqi Hajj are in place. The CPA role should primarily be to ensure the preparatory conditions for organizing the travel, facilitate setting the routes and devising the security plan for the travel within Iraq and at the border.

The Hajj Task Force (MFA, Religious Affairs, Governance, Finance, CJTF-7, Interior, Culture/Tourism) agreed in principle on the need to facilitate the travel of the projected 50,000 to 60,000 persons. Awqaf will oversee the selection of those wishing to go to the Hajj and organize in coordination with the Ministry of Health the vaccination of the Iraqi pilgrims.

The Hajj Task force recommends that a Steering Board including representatives from Culture/Tourism, Awqaf, Interior, Transportation, Finance, Foreign Affairs should develop a plan for and oversee the selection of licensed travel agencies to provide the package tour.

The Iraqi MFA, Awqaf and Interior should devise a plan to document the travelers in an efficient manner so that they may enter Saudi Arabia. CPA Interior and CJTF-7 will approve the designation of the three land border crossings (Ar Ar, Traybil and Safwan) for overland travelers to the Hajj recommended by Awqaf. Particularly, the Ar Ar border post must be manned by MOI Customs, Immigration and Border police in time for the Hajj.

Has this been agreed by MOI + CJTF?

The Task Force requests your guidance on whether to explore using the three airports of BIAP, Mosul and Basra to transport travelers by chartered commercial airlines. CJTF-7 has provided separate argumentation recommending that you not approve this option. If you do approve use of the airports, a set of special measures should be enforced.

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By November 12, Awqaf intends to issue instructions and applications for those who wish to enter the lottery used to select the pilgrims. In mid-November a precursor delegation will negotiate with the Saudis regarding the number of travelers and financial matters (including the possible exemption of the fees). The delegation will be headed by Dr. Hakki, designated for this mission by Governing Council and will include a representative from the Iraqi MFA. Once the Saudi representatives set the quota for Iraqis, local governments, under the supervision of Awqaf, will conduct lotteries based on proportion of population. Awqaf intends to ensure transparency by televising the lottery procedure and auditing the performance. *good*

After concluding the selection, Awqaf in coordination with Health will supervise the vaccinations required for travel to Saudi Arabia and determine the allotment of any subsidies.

Passport/ Visas

In the past, the Iraqi government issued special "Hajj" passports allowing travel to Saudi Arabia. All stocks have been looted, as was the printer that produced the passports. Issuing ITDs to each traveler would be time consuming and would divert resources from issuing ITDs to others in need of them. The most efficient alternative would be for the MOI to issue "group passports" which are basically manifest of the bus or airplane. The MFA will be instructed to negotiate with the Saudis this procedure; the precursor delegation will ask the same. We should also consider sending a consular official and/or a Ministry of Interior official with the precursor group since there is no consular representation in Saudi Arabia at this time. *yes, this should be done*

Security

CJTF-7 and MOI are preparing to oversee security of overland travelers and of movement of air travelers within the airports if a decision is made to allow travel by air. The Steering Board need to provide CJTF-7 and Interior with proposed routes, schedules and bus manifests as early as possible so that they can properly plan. The planning process must be started now, involving coordinated resources from CJTF-7 C-5 and MOI, Customs, Immigration and Border Police.

The necessary security protection could be organized by including Iraqi sources such as Iraqi Police, ICDC or New Iraqi Army. A special attention will be given to security at the bus load up stations and bus routes including coordination with local police and highway patrols.

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Re-entry of the pilgrims will present another security challenge; the Ministry of the Interior and CJTF-7 should establish procedures to ensure the smooth return of the Hajjis.

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The Tourism Board is in the process of licensing private Iraqi tour companies and has begun to license international companies. Dr. Hakki said that the Awqaf will not accept private tour companies licensed exclusively by Tourism without the participation of the Awqaf and other entities. Religious Affairs has proposed they select and coordinate the use of companies for the Hajj. For better coordination of these separate initiatives we recommend that the Steering Board set and publish the criteria for licensing travel companies no later than mid November and approve the licenses. Both Tourism and Awqaf have agreed to this.

Air Travel

It is likely that one or more countries will offer to provide (paid or sponsored) chartered aircraft for the Hajj. In such a case, it would be best to offer service from three regional airports. Ministry of Transportation has recommended the airports in Basra, Mosul and BIAP. CJTF-7 strongly opposes. Security and liability issues remain unresolved. A feasibility study is needed, and would require a decision on whether to pursue this option.

Flights into Iraq must be security screened and must be approved and coordinated through prior agreement for the use of Air Fields under the control of CF forces. If limited flights for the Hajj are approved by Commander CJTF-7, feasibility study by CJTF-7, MOI, and Ministry of Transportation including, but not limited to, should address the requirements set forth below:

- Determination of Airport capability for accepting commercial traffic.
- Risk Assessment for safety of Aircraft landing at the proposed Airfields.
- Conduct of Airport operations and manning.
- Basic requirements such as ticketing, baggage handling, fueling, maintenance and other logistics as well as Air Traffic Control (ATC).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1): That the CPA explore the feasibility of using BIAP, Mosul and Basra airports for Hajj travel; a decision on using airports to be taken after proper investigation by CJTF-7, MOI and Ministry of Transportation, no later than Nov. 15.

Approve: *W 10/30*

Disapprove:

Approve with modification:

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(3): The Steering Board (Culture/Tourism, Awqaf, Interior, Transportation, Finance, Foreign Affairs) will set standards for travel conditions and publish them no later than November 15, and will approve the licensing of private tour operators.

Approve: *W* *10/30* Disapprove: Approve with modification:

(4): Iraq will not allow foreign nationals to transit Iraq for this year's Hajj. Awqaf and MFA will inform their counterparts in Iran, Turkey and other source countries about this decision by Nov. 15.

Approve: Disapprove: Approve with modification: *Let the Iraqis decide. (GC)*

(5): Strategic Communications should present a Public Relations Plan to support a transparent selection of Hajj pilgrims and to project the different approach taken by the new Iraqi Government and work with the Awqaf on its implementation.

Approve: *W* *10/24* Disapprove: Approve with modification:

- ATTACHMENTS: NONE
- COORDINATION:
- Governance: (b)(6)
- RA: (b)(6)
- MOI: LTC (b)(6)
- CJTF-7: LTC (b)(6)
- Tourism/Culture: (b)(6)
- Transport: (b)(6)
- Strategic Communication: (b)(6)

On the Iraqi Hajj: Draft assessment and possible recommendations

Brief presentation

For the most part the mechanisms for effecting the Iraqi Hajj are in place.

There is need to facilitate the travel of a projected 50,000 to 60,000 persons for this year's Hajj from Iraq. Awqaf will oversee the selection of those wishing to go to the Hajj and in coordination with the Ministry of Health, will organize the necessary vaccinations of the Iraqi pilgrims.

Anew "Steering Board" including representatives from Culture/Tourism, Awqaf, Interior, Transportation, Finance, Foreign Affairs should develop a plan for, and oversee the selection of licensed travel agencies to provide the package tours .

The Iraqi MFA, Awqaf and Interior should devise a plan to document the travelers in an efficient manner so that they may enter Saudi Arabia.

CPA Interior and CJTF-7 will approve the designation of the three land border crossings (Ar Ar, Traybil and Safwan) for overland travelers to the Hajj recommended by Awqaf.

CPA will assess the feasibility of using the three airports of BIAP, Mosul and Basra for air transport of travelers by chartered commercial airlines. A final decision will depend on security assessments.

Steps Taken

By November 12, Awqaf intends to issue instructions and applications for those who wish to enter the lottery used to select the pilgrims.

In mid-November a precursor delegation will negotiate with the Saudis regarding the number of travelers and financial matters (including the possible exemption of the fees). The delegation will be headed by Dr. Hakki, designated for this mission by Governing Council and will include a representative from the Iraqi MFA.

Once the Saudi representatives set the quota for Iraqis, local governments, under the supervision of Awqaf, will conduct lotteries based on proportion of population. Awqaf intends to ensure transparency by televising the lottery procedure and auditing the performance.

After concluding the selection, Awqaf in coordination with Health will supervise the vaccinations required for travel to Saudi Arabia and determine the allotment of any subsidies.

Passport/ Visas

In the past, the Iraqi government issued special "Hajj" passports allowing travel to Saudi Arabia. All stocks have been looted, as was the printer that produced the passports. Issuing ITDs to each

traveler would be time consuming and would divert resources from issuing ITDs to others in need of them.

The most efficient alternative would be for the MOI to issue "group passports" which are basically manifest of the bus or airplane. The MFA will be instructed to negotiate with the Saudis this procedure; the precursor delegation will ask the same.

We should also consider sending a consular official and/or a Ministry of Interior official with the precursor group since there is no consular representation in Saudi Arabia at this time.

Security

CJTF-7 and Ministry of Interior is preparing to oversee security of the overland travelers and of movement of air travelers within the airports, if a decision is made to allow travel by air.

The Steering Board should develop a plan to provide CJTF-7 and Interior with proposed routes, schedules and bus manifests as early as possible so that they can properly plan.

The necessary security protection could be organized by including Iraqi sources such as Iraqi Police, Iraqi Civil Defense Corps or New Iraqi Army.

Re-entry of the pilgrims will present another security challenge; the Ministry of the Interior and CJTF-7 should establish procedures to ensure the smooth return of the Hajjis.

A specific provision should be imposed with respect to the criteria for re-entry in Iraq such that all travelers with the group whose names are included on the group passport or manifest must be able to prove their identity on exit and entry.

The present security environment in Iraq will not permit a large number of travelers to the Hajj to transit through Iraq from neighboring countries this year. Awqaf should inform their counterparts in the neighboring countries of this decision well in advance (by Nov.15) and this should be supported through official MFA channels.

Travel

The Tourism Board is in the process of licensing private Iraqi tour companies and has begun to license international companies. Awqaf representatives will not accept private tour companies licensed exclusively by Tourism without the participation of the Awqaf and other entities. Religious Affairs instead has proposed they select and coordinate the use of companies for the Hajj.

For better coordination we recommend that the Steering Board will set and publish the criteria for licensing travel companies no later than mid November and approve the selection of travel companies licensed for the Hajj.

Air Travel

It is likely that one or more countries will offer to provide (paid or sponsored) chartered aircraft for the Hajj. In such a case, it would be best to offer service from three regional airports. Ministry of Transportation has recommended use of the airports in Basra, Mosul and BIAP for

special charter flights for the Hajj. However, security and liability issues remain unresolved, and would require a decision on whether to pursue this option.

Possible actions:

(1): That the CPA explores the feasibility of using BIAP, Mosul and Bosra airports for Hajj travel; a decision on using airports to be taken after proper investigation, no later than Nov.15.

(2): CJTF-7 and Ministry of Interior should work with representatives in the Steering Board on a plan for security for Hajj pilgrims, based on the overland travel routes and schedules and on possible use of one or more of the three regional airports. The routes and schedules should be presented by the Steering Board no later than Nov. 15.

(3): The Steering Board (Culture/Tourism, Awqaf, Interior, Transportation, Finance, Foreign Affairs) will set standards for travel conditions and publish them no later than November 15, and will approve the licensing of private tour operators.

(4): This year, due to the security situation and the lack of full border control procedures, Iraq will not allow foreign nationals to transit Iraq for the Hajj. Awqaf will inform their counterparts in Iran, Turkey and other source countries about this decision by November 15 and the MFA will follow up through official channels



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COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY
BAGHDAD

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see notes
For Welcome Home Package

INFO MEMO

September 28, 2003

TO: THE ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: (b)(6) Senior Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

SUBJECT: The Iraqi Hajj: Needs and Support Assessment

The Hajj Task Force (MFA, Religious Affairs, Governance, Finance, CJTF-7, Interior, Tourism) offers the following assessment for your review. When final pilgrim quotas are agreed, we will follow up with a specific action plan.

A delegation of 15 representatives, including members of the Awqaf and Governing Council staff, plan to travel on October 10 to Jeddah and Riyadh to negotiate the Iraqi quota and the renting of facilities needed to perform the Hajj. Ibrahim Ja'afari has asked Dr. Said Hakki to lead the delegation (see attachment), which is scheduled to meet Prince Nayef Bin Abdul Aziz, Minister of the Interior. The GC has expressed an interest in increasing Iraq's quota from 25,000 to 100,000; we expect the Saudis may agree to a total of 50-60,000 persons.

Under Saddam, only a select few were chosen to participate in the Hajj; therefore, the pilgrimage that will take place in mid-January 2004 will be the first opportunity in years for many everyday Iraqis to perform this tenet of the Islamic faith. The pilgrimage lasts 10-11 days, and will include Mecca and Medina. Saudi Arabia closes its borders ten days prior to the Hajj, so all preparations and travel must be completed in advance.

Selection

~~Most Islamic countries conduct a lottery to decide~~ who can participate; we expect the number of applicants to outweigh heavily the quota this year. The Awqaf or the proposed Council on Religious Affairs should control this process taking into consideration the structure of the population, the distribution of the religious and ethnic groups throughout different governorates, and the ratio between the population in each governorate and the total Iraqi population. The procedure should be transparent and well-publicized in order to offer the maximum opportunity for registration. The procedure should be initiated well in advance and conducted in close cooperation with the leadership of the GC and the governorates.

Costs

Typically, as much as 50% of Hajj costs are paid by the host Islamic government for those unable to afford the trip. Fees, travel and accommodation costs total \$1,500 for each pilgrim.

The Saudi authorities have already agreed to invite, free of charge, 250 persons chosen by the Ministry of Health and 500 Iraqi dignitaries chosen by the GC. Dr. Hakki plans to try and convince the Saudi authorities to waive the border crossing fee this year. The Awqaf should be able to contribute monies and the Iraqi MFA should approach other Islamic countries at the Donors' Conference or other venues to seek financial contributions to offset costs.

If we assume a \$500 subsidy for a maximum of 60,000 pilgrims, we must raise \$30 million to cover costs. However, the eventual subsidy will depend on available funds, and not all pilgrims will qualify for this subsidy. Another option suggested by Awqaf representatives would be to use a "preferential exchange rate" for the needed \$1,500. The suggested rate would be ID 500 for 1 USD (or, in other terms, a subsidy of \$1000 per person). In both cases these funds can not be subsidized from the CPA budget.

Travel

Our goal is to encourage private sector involvement by using private Iraqi tour operators to organize travel either by bus or air charter. The Awqaf /Council on Religious Affairs will need to coordinate with the Tourism Board to select tour operators and ensure their compliance with adequate health and sanitary conditions, and with the Ministry of the Interior to ensure that Ba'athist companies do not receive contracts.

We anticipate we will need 1,000 buses to move an estimated 70% of 60,000 pilgrims. Bus travel would require security escorts and border control assistance at the following crossings:

- Ar Ar to Saudi Arabia
- Traybil to Jordan
- Safwan to Kuwait

Air travel would require special permission to use BIAP, Mosul, and/or Kirkuk airports

Passports/Visas

We estimate that 80 % of the pilgrims will need passports and assistance in obtaining visas for access through neighboring countries. The Ministry of Interior should establish procedures for procuring and distributing passports based on the lists provided by the Awqaf/Council on Religious Affairs. The MFA should demarche Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia to negotiate flexible solutions for "religious" visas. The visas should be obtained through travel agencies, which should be responsible for ensuring pilgrims have all required travel documents.

Security

It is critical to secure designated routes and border crossings to prevent any terrorist attacks on Hajj buses. The travel agencies should organize convoys; the travel schedule of each convoy

should be coordinated with the Awqaf/Council of Religious Affairs. Based on this centralized schedule, the necessary security protection could be organized by including Iraqi sources such

✓ as Iraqi Police, ICDC or New Iraqi Army. CJTF-7 should work with the Hajj Task Force on a plan for security. Re-entry of the pilgrims will present another security challenge; the Ministry of the Interior and CPA should establish procedures to ensure the smooth return of the Hajjis.

Public Affairs

As the most high profile and popular activity after the liberation of Iraq, the Hajj will mark the differences and new liberties brought about by the change of regime. Strategic

✓ Communications should draft a public outreach program targeted at the Iraqi, regional and international audiences. Through IMN TV and radio channels and newspaper advertisements, CPA should help the Awqaf advertise the Hajj lottery and travel procedures.

ATTACHMENT: Delegation List

COORDINATION: Awqaf, Governance, Interior, CJTF-7, Tourism, Finance, Transportation, Strategic Communications

IRAQI DELEGATION FOR PREPARING THE HAJJ PILGRIMAGE OF IRAQIS

1. Dr. Said Hakki - Head of Delegation
2. Dr. Jamal Nasser - President, Iraqi Red Crescent
3. Sheikh Jalal Al Din Al-Sagheer
4. Sayyed Hussain Ibrahim Baraka
5. Dr. Mohamed Obeid Al-Kubaisi
6. Dr. Saa'd Allah Ahmed Arif
7. Dr. Abdul Atheem Al-Bakka'
8. Khair Allah Al-Hadithi
9. Dr. Thair Ibrahim Khair Al-Shamary
10. Ghataa' Abdul Nabi Abdul Redha
11. DR. Jamil Abdul Majied Abdulla
12. Mohammed Shalan Hasson
13. Dr. Walid Abdul Ghfaar Shuhaib
14. DR. Mohye Al Din Al Khatib- GC Secretary General
15. Adnan Jawad Filfil – Secretary to Dr. Ibrahim Al-Ja'afari

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ACTION MEMO

October 30, 2003

FOR: THE ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: (b)(6) Senior Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

SUBJECT: The Iraq Hajj: Follow up and Recommendations

REF: My Info Memo of September 28, 2003

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*Has this been agreed by
MOI + CJTF?*

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

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Approve: *W 10/30* Disapprove: Approve with modification:

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Approve: *W 10/24* Disapprove: Approve with modification:

ATTACHMENTS: NONE

COORDINATION:

- Governance: (b)(6)
- RA: (b)(6)
- MOI: LTC (b)(6)
- CJTF-7: LTC (b)(6)
- Tourism/Culture (b)(6)
- Transport: (b)(6)
- Strategic Communication: (b)(6)