

# IRAQ TRANSITION - 33 Days and Counting...

With only 33 days until the June 30 deadline for transferring authority back to the Iraqi people, the Bush Administration has its work cut out for it. Despite the White House's obsession with Iraq after 9/11, there is still no credible plan for reconstruction and stability. The Center for American Progress continues to update the following "To Do List" to help keep tabs on the wide range of transition challenges facing the Coalition Provisional Authority and Administrator Paul Bremer.

## Paul Bremer's To Do List

<u>Task</u>	<u>Status</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Come up with plan for governance of Iraq</b>	U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi is working on plans to dismantle the US-appointed Governing Council and replace it with a new body of respected Iraqis, selected through a UN-guided consultative process. The new caretaker government will run the country until elections slated for early next year. The Administration has accepted Brahimi's proposal, but it remains to be seen which individuals will be asked to serve in the government and appointed to key political positions.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Secure new U.N. Security Council resolution</b>	Negotiations are underway on a draft proposed by the United Kingdom and the United States. The resolution is instrumental for outlining the international role surrounding the June 30 transition. Some Security Council members, including France and Germany, have expressed serious reservations. The current draft is unclear what 'sovereignty' the new Iraqi government will exercise. Specifically in the area of security, it provides no timeline for the international military presence and no details on who the ultimate authority will be regarding the use of force.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Develop agreement for U.S. military presence</b>	Defense Department officials are hard at work at finding a legal basis for American troops in Iraq after the transfer of power. Developing an agreement spelling out the rights and responsibilities of the 110,000 U.S. soldiers has been delayed due to the lack of an Iraqi body with the authority to negotiate a Status of Forces Agreement. Significant questions also remain outstanding regarding the legal status of the 20,000 private military contractors after June 30.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Disarm militias</b>	American officials have failed to disarm the tens of thousands members of private militias organized along ethnic and religious lines. Since the beginning of the occupation, U.S. officials have repeatedly stated that they would disband the militias,

recognizing the threat they pose to elections and the stability of the country. Many of the militias have been subsumed into new security forces without disbanding their former ties and lines of command. This could lead to dangerous rivalries in the future.



**Arrest Moqtada al-Sadr and dismantle his organization**

Last month, the CPA announced that it would "arrest or kill" 30 year-old Shiite cleric and militia leader Moqtada al-Sadr for the murder of a rival Shiite cleric. His followers, including the 1,000 member al-Mahdi militia, have pledged to fight to the death. Al-Sadr and his supporters are currently in Najaf, the holiest Shiite site in Iraq. Grand Ayatollah Sistani has warned the U.S. military not to enter Najaf in an attempt to capture or kill Al-Sadr. According to nationwide polls of the Iraqi population, over the past month, al-Sadr's popularity has risen dramatically as the stand-off continues.



**Train Iraqi Defense forces**

According to the Washington Post, "perhaps 20 to 25 percent of the Iraqi army, civil defense, police and other security forces have quit, changed sides or otherwise failed to perform their duties." Creating a new 40,000-soldier Iraqi army has been a priority since the CPA's controversial decision to dismantle the former force without an adequate demobilization plan. According to current DOD figures, only 2,808 are soldiers are on-duty and 1,726 are in training. The CPA is working on creating a civilian-run Iraqi Defense Ministry to work with the U.S. military after June 30.



**Train Iraqi police forces**

Recruiting and training more than 75,000 Iraq police is a key element in the Administration's plan. Poor equipment, inadequate training and morale problems, however, mean it will be almost impossible for the police to maintain law and order on their own. According to CPA figures, the Iraqi police personnel have declined by 2,900 in the past three weeks (retraining, killed in action, or removed for supporting insurgents). As a result, the U.S. military is expected to provide extensive support long after June 30.



**Find stocks of weapons of mass destruction**

The Administration's top weapons inspector, Charles Duelfer, reported to Congress that his teams have not found any stocks of weapons of mass destruction. Duelfer took over the job after his predecessor, David Kay, resigned in January and announced that "we were almost all wrong" about Saddam's weapons programs.



**Find stocks of conventional**

U.S. military forces continue to rush to secure weapons depots before insurgents reach them. The CPA admits that there are

**weapons**

not enough coalition troops to guard all the stashes, containing an estimated one million tons of ammunition. Many of these materials are finding their way into the hands of insurgents and other enemies of the coalition that have carried out attacks over the past year.



**Hand Saddam Hussein and other regime officials over to Iraqi authorities**

Currently designated a prisoner of war, Hussein is being held for interrogation by U.S. authorities at an undisclosed location. He and 50 of his top officials are set to stand trial before an Iraqi special tribunal to answer for a 25-year record of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Administrator of the tribunal is Salem Chalabi, nephew of former Iraqi-exile and IGC member Ahmed Chalabi. The U.S. is expected to provide significant support to the tribunal, including assembling and organizing documentary and forensic evidence.



**Finalize plans for January 2005 elections**

To hold free elections, Iraq will likely need more than 120,000 poll workers, 30,000 polling places, and guarantees of security for millions of voters. According to Carina Pirelli, head of the U.N. Electoral Assistance Division, Iraqi leaders must agree on a basic electoral framework by the end of May if the polls are to be held on time. Several issues remain unresolved, including who is eligible to vote, how districts will be drawn, and what authority will enforce the election rules, count the votes and ensure fairness. At a press conference earlier this month, Pirelli warned that the current security situation could jeopardize plans for January 2005 elections.



**Send U.S. Ambassador to Iraq**

After weeks of delay, the Administration finally named U.N. Ambassador John Negroponte as its nominee to take the job of Ambassador to Iraq. He was confirmed through the Senate last week. He will be responsible for heading the new embassy in Baghdad, expected to be the largest diplomatic mission in the world.



**Establish U.S. embassy**

The new embassy in Baghdad will be staffed by at least 700 Americans and backed by up to 2,000 Iraqis. It will be located within the capital's so-called Green Zone, where the Coalition operates out of. Parts of Hussein's Republican palace will be used when the embassy is put into operation. Frank Ricciardone, the U.S. ambassador to the Philippines, is making preparations for the embassy.



**Get international donors to deliver on Madrid pledges**

Despite touting over \$13 billion in pledges from international donors at the October Madrid conference, the U.S. continues to bear the brunt of the costs of reconstruction. The latest White House report to Congress confirms that "very few new

pledges" have come in since Madrid. According to the World Bank, less than \$1 billion in grants for 2004 have been disbursed.

- Transfer power to 25 Iraqi government ministries**      The CPA has handed over only twelve out of 25 government ministries to Iraqi authorities.
- Reestablish oil production to pre-war levels**      Iraq's oil industry is still plagued by theft and outdated equipment. A critical vulnerability was exposed two weeks ago when insurgents used boats to bomb two of Iraq's largest oil terminals, knocking production off-line temporarily. CPA officials are pushing to restore oil production to pre-war levels of 2.8 million barrels per day this month. Current levels are less than 2.5 million barrels per day.
- Reconstitute electric power infrastructure**      Ordinary Iraqis continue to complain about the lack of electricity throughout the country. According to the CPA, last week, the average hours of electricity available to Iraqis has dropped throughout most of the country. While the CPA is producing at levels higher than before the war, demand has increased significantly and expectations are high. Coalition officials have promised that by the end of June, Iraqis will have power for 18 hours a day. The CPA is currently producing around 4058 MW out of a goal of 6000 MW a day.
- Restore transportation infrastructure**      The Coalition is working to prepare the Iraqi civil aviation sector for international commercial aviation and cargo service. Plans are also underway to enable the Iraqi Port Authority to administer a port of call with intermodal capabilities and inland container distribution. The Iraqi Republic Railways is currently not able to provide domestic and international passenger and freight capability.
- Reconstruct the telecommunications system**      Approximately 1.1 million Iraqis out of a population of more than 26 million (about 2.5 percent) have access to telephones, including cell phones. The CPA is working to establish an independent regulatory agency, as well as the Iraqi Telephone and Postal Company.
- Restructure Iraqi debt**      The estimated \$130 billion in Iraqi foreign debt is more than 600 percent of the country's gross domestic product. Even under the most optimistic of scenarios, the debts will never be repaid in full. Special Envoy James Baker has been tasked with persuading nations to forgive or restructure Iraq's debts, which mounted under Hussein's regime.

- Create jobs**      The unemployment rate is estimated at around 23 percent, with some areas suffering rates as high as 60 percent. Iraqi officials estimate the unemployment rate to be over 40%. In a population of over 25 million, less than 400,000 jobs have been created.
  
- Establish Baghdad Stock Exchange**      Prior to the war, Iraq's stock exchange listed fourteen companies worth between \$20 million and \$30 million total and was dominated by Baath Party officials. The new exchange will ensure that companies are independently audited. The CPA's goal is to reestablish an equities market by the end of this month. The market will be important if and when the privatization of state enterprises occurs.
  
- Hold international trade fair in Baghdad**      An international trade fair in Baghdad scheduled for last month was canceled due to security concerns. The U.S. organizers of Destination Baghdad Expo expected as many as 200 companies to attend. The show was sponsored by the Iraqi-American Chamber of Commerce, and was billed as the largest in a series of conferences about business opportunities in post-war Iraq. No new date has been set.