

END Sanctions on IRAQ

The War Continues...

In the last ten years, the US has bombed Iraq an average of eight days out of every month. Much of this bombing occurs in the name of protecting “no fly zones.” These zones are designated as such by the US and Great Britain and violate international law. The US bombings of Iraq constitute the longest sustained air campaign since the Vietnam War. While US bombings have caused casualties and have devastated Iraq’s civilian infrastructure, the economic sanctions imposed by the US and the United Nations have caused the deaths of over a million people.

Sanctions Kill Children

The economic sanctions make it hard for Iraqi civilians to find adequate food, water, and medicine. Inaccessibility to basic human necessities attacks the most vulnerable members of society—children, sick people, and the elderly.

- 5,000 Iraqi children die every month due to the sanctions.
- According to UNICEF 1 out of every 4 Iraqi children is malnourished.
- The death rate for children under 5 has *doubled* since the sanctions began, and the infant mortality rate has become one of the highest in the world.

Iraq’s once prosperous economy has been destroyed and Iraqi civilians continue to suffer. Sanctions have caused extreme poverty, and have prevented Iraq from rebuilding its bomb-devastated infrastructure.

In addition, these sanctions are a violation of the Geneva Convention that prohibits the “starvation of civilians as a method of warfare.”

Sanctions & Saddam

The Iraqi people are forced to suffer under the compounded pressures of economic sanctions and a harsh dictatorship.

A decade of sanctions has further cemented Saddam Hussein’s power: the overwhelming opposition to the sanctions among the Iraqi people has made Hussein more popular.

Economic sanctions have wiped out a once-thriving middle class—the very people who may have ousted Hussein. According to former UN Humanitarian Aid Coordinator, Hans von Sponeck, “sanctions have helped to consolidate a tightly controlled state and significantly reduced the chances for the emergence of an internal opposition.”

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Oil-for-Food Doesn't Work

UN Resolution 986, known as the "Oil-for-Food" program, was implemented to combat social welfare problems caused by economic sanctions, but it has failed to meet even the most basic needs of the Iraqi people. The Oil-for-Food program forces Baghdad to purchase goods outside of Iraq through credits, and provides no hard currency for Iraq to rebuild its shattered economy. The Oil-for-Food program provides for only a small fraction of the food, water, and medicinal needs of the Iraqi people. Out of \$38 billion in oil sales under the program, only \$10 billion worth of commodities have reached the Iraqi people.

Several important UN officials associated with this program have resigned in protest. Denis Halliday and Hans von Sponeck (both former UN Humanitarian Aid Coordinators), Scott Ritter (a former UN weapons inspector), and Jutta Burghart (former head of the World Food Program in Iraq) resigned their posts and have since spoken out against the sanctions.

Take Action

On February 27, 2001, Representative John Conyers (D-MI) reintroduced legislation that distinguishes economic sanctions from military ones. The Humanitarian Exports Leading to Peace Act (known as H.E.L.P. or H.R. 742) is designed to keep the military sanctions in place, but would open Iraq's borders to humanitarian and economic aid. This legislation is an important step toward ending the suffering of the Iraqi people.

Please write to your Congressperson and urge him/her to support H.R. 742. Tell your Congressperson that under no circumstances is it warranted for a government to wage war against another by starving innocent civilians.

You can reach your Congressperson at:
The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Local Contact: _____

"Five thousand children are dying each month— this means sixty thousand a year. Over eight years [of sanctions], we have half a million dead children. This is equivalent to two or three Hiroshimas."

-Ashraf Bayoumi, former head of the World Food Program's distribution monitoring unit in Iraq.

Sources:

Voices in the Wilderness

UNICEF

EPIC

The New York Times

Newsweek

Campaign to End the Sanctions—Ireland



Peace Action Education Fund informs the public, media, and policy makers about policy alternatives in order to cut military spending, end global weapons trafficking, and abolish nuclear weapons.

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