

## IRAQ SANCTIONS MEDICAL ALERT GROUP

The Iraq Sanctions Medical Alert Group has been set up by a group of doctors and other concerned New Zealanders in an attempt to help alleviate the suffering of ordinary Iraqis caused by the continuation of sanctions.

ISMAG has three objectives:

1. To raise funds for medical and humanitarian relief for Iraq;
2. To raise public awareness of the devastating health effects of the sanctions on the people of Iraq;
3. To lobby the NZ government to change its support for the sanctions.

In line with these objectives ISMAG, in co-operation with the New Zealand branch of UNICEF, has launched a campaign to raise funds for medical and humanitarian supplies to be sent to Iraq.

### TO DONATE FUNDS FOR MEDICAL & HUMANITARIAN SUPPLIES

send a cheque, payable to:

UNICEF IRAQ APPEAL, FREEPOST 553, UNICEF NZ,  
LEVEL 4, 57 WILLIS ST, WELLINGTON.

or for credit-card donations freephone:  
0800 2HELP KIDS (0800 243 575437)

## IRAQ SANCTIONS FACTS

- Since the beginning of the sanctions in 1990, the incidence rate of Malaria and Typhoid cases in Iraq have increased twelve fold, and Cholera cases have increased by seven hundred percent.  
– WHO REPORT, 1996
- Alarming food shortages are causing irreparable damage to an entire generation of Iraqi children.  
– UNFAO, SEPTEMBER 1995
- In general there has been an astonishing lack of public debate over the UN's participation in this massive violation of human rights, particularly child rights.  
– CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS (FORMERLY HARVARD STUDY TEAM), REPORT AFTER RESEARCH TOUR OF IRAQ, 1996
- A sixfold increase in child leukaemia since 1992 has been attributed to the presence of depleted uranium in the missiles used by the Allied forces in the 1990 Gulf War.  
– LANCET MEDICAL JOURNAL, FEBRUARY 1998



"An Iraqi child under the age of five dies every 10 minutes due to sanctions imposed on the country after the 1990 Gulf War."

– UNICEF, OCTOBER 1996

"Although Iraq is an oil rich country, the majority of Iraq's population are on a semi-starvation diet as a consequence of the current sanctions."

– WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, MARCH 1996

**More than 1.2 million Iraqi people have died as a result of the sanctions; 750,000 of them children.**

VERIFIED BY THE UN, JUNE 1997

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

ISMAG, P.O. BOX 7343, WELLINGTON SOUTH, WELLINGTON.

WEBSITE:

[HTTP://MEMBERS.TRIPOD.COM/~ISMAG/](http://members.tripod.com/~ISMAG/)

E-MAIL:

[ISMAG@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:ISMAG@HOTMAIL.COM)

### PATRONS

Irihapeti Ramsden; Prof. George Salmond; Dr Ian Hassall;  
Prof. Robert Beaglehole; Prof. Alistair Woodward.

### STEERING COMMITTEE

Dr Wael Al-Delaimy; Dr Marten Hutt;  
Dr Saleh Abbas; Dr Ashley Bloomfield;  
Dr Tony Blakely; Dr Waleed Rashid;  
Dr Peter Crampton; Dr Murray Malcolm;  
Nina Russell; Jeremy Rose; Manu Caddie.





STUNTED CHILD, IRAQ, 1997



DYING GIRL, BAGHDAD, JULY 1997



CHILD WITH LEUKAEMIA, JUNE 1997



Photographs from Iraq courtesy of International Relief Association

MALNOURISHED BABY, IRAQ, JULY 1997

### FEW NEW ZEALANDERS ARE AWARE OF THE EXTENT OF THE SUFFERING CAUSED BY THE SANCTIONS IMPOSED ON IRAQ IN 1990.

The sanctions are an embargo on all Iraq exports and imports. Though the sanctions exclude food and medicine, in the absence of oil sales, Iraq's main export commodity, no money is available to buy either.

Sanctions have been continually driven by a few permanent members of the Security Council, under the blanket of the UN. This concept has been expressed either directly by several top UN officials or indirectly by reports from various UN organisations.

UN Assistant Secretary General Denis Halliday recently told Britain's *Independent* that the sanctions were "undermining the moral credibility of the UN" and in "contradiction of the human rights provision of the UN's own charter".

The original purpose of the sanctions was to force Saddam Hussein's army out of Kuwait, however, after the 1991 Gulf War achieved that aim the Security Council extended the sanction in an attempt to rid Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction.

Tragically, the sanctions themselves have now killed more people than the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki or than were killed in the four year war in Bosnia.

Former United States Attorney General Ramsey Clark has described the sanctions regime as, "a weapon of mass destruction wrecking havoc collectively on the entire nation".

Clark's observation has been borne out by numerous international studies carried out by groups ranging from the World Health Organisation, UNICEF and UN FAO to independent missions from Harvard University and the Mennonite Church.

The studies all report the same thing: a country which could once boast of one of the finest health systems in the Middle East is now among the world's worst medical catastrophes.

### THE FACTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES:

- 4500 children under the age of five die each month as a direct result of the sanctions. – UNICEF, 1996
- One out of every four Iraqi infants is malnourished. – WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, MAY 1997
- Since the onset of sanctions, there has been a sixfold increase in the mortality rate for children under five. – WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, MARCH 1996
- The quality of health care in Iraq, due to the six week war and subsequent sanctions imposed on the country, has been put back by at least 50 years. – WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, MARCH 1996

### HASN'T THE OIL FOR FOOD DEAL PUT AN END TO THE SUFFERING?

"Even if all supplies arrived on time, what is being provided under the oil-for-food deal would be insufficient to address, even temporarily, all the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people." – KOFI ANNAN, UN SECRETARY GENERAL, 1997

The UN itself has estimated it would require at least \$30 Billion to rebuild Iraq's basic infrastructure destroyed during the Gulf War. The oil-for-food programme is a UN mandate for Iraq to sell certain amounts of oil to pay for war reparations and buy food and medicines, no allowance for needs of a humanitarian nature exist beyond food and medicine. Thus the Iraqi electrical, water, sewerage systems are falling into ruin, UN officials say, and there are no funds to repair and maintain them.

UN Assistant Secretary General Halliday told the *Chicago Tribune*, earlier this year, that whatever amount the oil-for-food was increased to it would add up to little more than a "Band-Aid".

### COULDN'T SADDAM HUSSEIN END THE SANCTIONS BY SIMPLY AGREEING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL'S DEMANDS?

Saddam's government claims it has, and these claims are supported by some permanent members of the Security Council. However, the US thinks not and has publicly stated that the sanctions should stay in place until Saddam goes.

The point is that imposing sanctions on Iraq is like shooting down an aeroplane full of people, the Iraqi population, to punish the hijacker, Saddam Hussein.

### WHAT IS THE NZ GOVERNMENT'S POSITION, AND WHAT COULD IT DO TO END THE SUFFERING OF ORDINARY IRAQIS?

New Zealand was a member of the Security Council when the sanctions were put in place and has twice sent a frigate to help enforce the US-led blockade of Iraq.

Having seen that the oil-for-food deal has failed to avert a medical catastrophe the New Zealand Government could join other Governments and NGOs around the world in calling for an end to the sanctions on humanitarian grounds.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

- Make a donation to the ISMAG/UNICEF Iraqi medical relief fund, this will provide essential medical and humanitarian supplies for the people of Iraq.
- Write to your MP; the Minister of Foreign Affairs & Trade; the Primeminister; and the US and UK Embassies.
- Inform your family and friends about the suffering in Iraq; contact community groups; organise public meetings; call talkback and write letters to local newspapers.
- Get actively involved with ISMAG (contact details overleaf).