

Iraq's education system on the verge of collapse.

Only an end to US/UK occupation can stop the liquidation of Iraq's academics.

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In-depth Report: [IRAQ REPORT](#)

The assassination of Iraqi academics continues unabated.

- Dr. Khalid al-Naid

When we were celebrating Easter, the following sad message arrived in the *BRussels Tribunal* mailbox, sent by Dr. Saad Jawad, professor of political science at Baghdad University, head of Iraq's University Professors Association, and member of our Advisory Committee.

This is in memory of the brutal assassination of Dr. Khalid al-Naid, Dean Assistant, Medical College, al-Nahrain University

With great sadness and sorrow and on behalf of Khalid's family, I'm writing to inform you of his murder by militias on Thursday 29th March 2007, twelve hours after he arrived from Australia.

He arrived in Baghdad on the evening of Wednesday 28th and could not go to see his wife and newly born son Tariq who was born when he was with you in Australia.

The next day he went to the Nahrain Medical school to report his return and do some paper work. His wife and newborn son were supposed to come from their grandfather's house across sectarian city divides to see him.

He only stayed in the Medical School for 3 hrs and left with a colleague. He was picked at the gate and taken by the Militia which controls the area of the Medical School. His body was dumped few kilometres away with five bullets in his head and neck.

I am his cousin and Godfather. His wife's son and the rest of the family would like the world to know how cruel and lawless Iraq has become. Scientist are a prime target and Khalid was threatened with death a year or so ago but he always said: "I have harmed no one, and never believed the cruelty of a civil war."

His marriage was a mixed one and his priorities in life revolved around his scientific work.

Khalid's father, the late Prof Hamdi was the Dean of Baghdad Medical School and my

Mentor. We would like to have any additional information from you relating to his latest work as we plan to write to scientific and other news organisations on the realities in today's Iraq. It is entirely up to yourselves if you feel you would like to report this murder to the Scientific press in Australia.

May god bless Khalid and give his wife Manal and his son Tariq the strength to carry on .

Another horrendous murder, another Iraqi intellectual's life wasted.

Prof Dr Majid Naser Husien al-Ma'amoori

We keep on receiving messages from Iraqi professors who report the killings of colleagues:

Dear Dirk,

I am sorry to bother you again. I know it is sad news but I have no other choice because you are the only organization to document the assassinations of Iraqi academics.

Prof Dr Majid Naser Husien al-Ma'amoori was killed just outside Veterinary College, Baghdad University on 17 Feb 2007.

Kind regards

Dr. Ali

- Professor Dr Tala Al-Jalili and Professor Jaffer Hasan Sadiq

On April 16 we received the following message from [Dr. Ismail Kaidar Jalili](#), Chair and Secretary General of [National Association of British Arabs \(NABA\)](#) :

We'd like to report the assassination of 2 academics in Mosul today Monday 16th April 2007

2:37

The assassination of Professor Dr Tala Al-Jalili, Dean of Faculty of Political Sciences in Mosul University this morning Monday 16th April 2007 in front of his faculty at AL-Majmou'a Al-Thaqafiya, east (left) bank of Mosul.

12:14

The assassination of Jaffer Hasan Sadiq, Professor at the Department of History, Faculty of Humanities, Mosul University in front of his house in Al-Kafaa'at district, north east of Mosul City.

The massacre of Iraqi intellectuals hasn't stopped since the invasion of 2003. The number of assassinations has not decreased since the BRussells Tribunal started a campaign to save Iraq's academics, in cooperation with the Spanish based [CEOSI](#) (Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq) [\[1\]](#). To the contrary. Since the beginning of 2006 more than 100 academics have been assassinated, according to our sources. And as the cases above show: an end of the killings is not in sight.

Brain drain and murder threaten Iraq's academia.

Since the war began in 2003, hundreds of Iraqi academics have been kidnapped and/or murdered – and thousands more have fled for their lives (...). So far more than 470 academics have been killed. Buildings have been burnt and looted in what appears to be a random spree of violence aimed at Iraqi academia[2].

The Iraqi minister of education has said that 296 members of education staff were killed in 2005 alone. According to the UN office for humanitarian affairs 180 teachers have been killed since 2006, up to 100 have been kidnapped and over 3,250 have fled the country [3] [4]. The BRussels Tribunal's list of murdered Iraqi academics contains 302 names [5]. Anyone who can help us in documenting the killings, the threats and forced emigration of Iraqi academics is welcome to write us: we're not planning to give up monitoring, certainly not now, at a time when our solidarity is needed most.

Also yesterday we received a message from an Iraqi professor, who has been able to escape the Iraqi Armageddon:

Dear Mr. Dirk Adriaensens,

I am a female Iraqi academic forced to leave Iraq on 2 August 2006. On 17 July 2006 I was kidnapped, tortured and threatened to be killed with my daughter if didn't leave Iraq within few days. I have a PhD in (omitted) and was a member of staff at (omitted), University of Technology in Baghdad, Iraq.

I had no time to contact the Iraqi Academic Association to report the incident because I hid when received the threat until I fled Iraq.

Thank you for your effort to document the assassinations and threats to Iraqi academics. The real situation in Iraq is much worse than anything mentioned in the news or any report. Not all the incidents were documented in your website. Personally, I knew many academics at University of Technology were threatened and forced to flee Iraq after the occupation and for one reason or another they might not have the time to report the threats to the Iraqi Academic Association. Among them Head of Control and Systems Eng. Dept., Prof Dr Ali Althamir, Spectrum specialist at Applied Sciences Dept., Dr Mohammad Radhi, a member of staff at Building and Construction Dept., Dr Ghanim Abdul Rahman and many others.

The Ministry of Displacement and Migration said that at least 30 per cent of the total numbers of professors, doctors, pharmacists and engineers in Iraq have fled to neighbouring countries like Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and United Arab States (UAE) but some have travelled to as far as the US, Canada, Australia and Britain. He noted that the numbers of academics fleeing the country or killed could be higher and the ministry has no latest figures [6].

The universities, which are directly linked to Iraq's future, are on the verge of collapse [7].

The intimidation campaign against educational institutes persists. On 11 December 2006, a car bomb exploded in a car park of Al-Ma'agoon College in Al-Iskan district in Baghdad, killing one person and injuring four. One student was killed and another 6 injured in a roadside bomb explosion on the same morning in front of the Al-Mustansiriya University [8].

The situation of total absence of law and security has also led to a worsening situation because of threats from inside the classrooms. Hassan Khalid Hayderi, 54, is a professor of mathematics at Basra University, 550km south of the capital, Baghdad. He and his family

are leaving Iraq because he has received death threats from students demanding easy exams and better marks. *"The situation is even worse for women teachers. You barely find them giving lessons because most of them either have fled the country or have been forced to leave the colleges. Today, they are suffering without a job to support their kids. The government isn't doing anything to protect us. In the southern areas especially you depend on [local] tribes to give you the minimum of protection but with violence increasing, even tribal leaders are becoming useless."* [82]

Iraq's education system in shambles.

Universities are not the only sector of Iraqi education that is collapsing. On 29 January 2007 an attack against a girls' school in Baghdad left five students dead and more than 20 injured [9].

Mohammed Abdul-Aziz, a statistician at the Ministry of Education, told IRIN that at least 110 children had been killed and 95 injured since 2005 in [attacks on schools](#). These numbers do not include children killed or injured on their way to or from school.[10]

The violence against education institutions and teachers has also prompted a sharp decline in school attendance. According to recent statistics from the Ministry of Education, only about 30 percent of Iraq's 3.5 million school-aged children are currently attending classes, compared to 75 percent in the previous school year [11].

The International Medical Corps reports that populations of teachers in Baghdad have fallen by 80% and medical personnel seem to have left in disproportionate numbers [12].

The Iraq Index, compiled by the Brookings Institution in Washington, released on 16 April 2007, estimated that up to 40 percent of Iraq's professionals have fled the country since 2003 [13].

According to a report released last year by NGO Save the Children, 818,000 primary school-aged children, representing 22 percent of Iraq's student population, were not attending school. [14]

A joint study by the Iraqi Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) found that of those who do not attend school, 74 percent are female. Aid agencies estimate that thousands of Iraqi parents do not send their daughters to school for cultural reasons and because of the general insecurity in the country. [15]

They add that schools and universities are likely to continue emptying throughout 2007 if there is no let up to current levels of violence and the displacement it causes.

The Occupation is responsible

Iraqi professors direct most of their ire towards the failed U.S. occupation. Dr. Bakaa, who was also president of Iraq's second largest university, Al Mustansiriyah University, from 2003 to 2004, says he had received almost no additional funding for academic life since the occupation. Buildings destroyed during the first Gulf War were rebuilt in two months under Saddam's regime, yet the Americans have repaired nothing, he said. When professors are threatened or killed, there is never any investigation. [16]

"Iraqi professors are being killed by everyone, and nobody has told us if any killers have

been caught. Nothing has been done,” Dr. Saad Jawad says. “One U.S. soldier was kidnapped and Baghdad is on full alert, but the killing of an Iraqi professor? Nothing happens.” [\[17\]](#)

The incident on Tuesday 14 November, when paramilitary gunmen in the uniforms of Iraqi National Police commandos raided a building belonging to the Ministry of Education in Baghdad’s Karrada district and arrested around 100 members of staff from two departments and around 50 visitors, in broad daylight, 1km from the Green Zone, exposed the extent of the danger facing educators, and particularly those in higher education. An unknown number of those arrested was later found killed, and again, there was no investigation.[\[18\]](#) Again, there was ample evidence of involvement of Iraqi official bodies, creating chaos and mayhem instead of establishing security. It is equally clear that US authorities in Iraq have no interest in carrying out an investigation or restraining the killers.

Who is eliminating Iraq’s middle class?

Nor the Iraqi puppet government, nor the Iraqi police, nor the US occupation forces can guarantee security, education, healthcare, electricity or any other basic needs. To the contrary: there are plenty of indications that the US and UK can be held responsible for many of the “terrorist” activities, and involvement in death squads activities.

A. MILITIAS. Long before the invasion, the US and its allies were involved in the training and arming of tens of thousands of militias and anti-Iraq collaborators. The most conspicuous of these militia groups are:

1. The Iraqi National Congress (INC) led by Ahmed Chalabi.
2. The Iraqi National Accord (INA) led by Iyad Allawi, the U.S./Britain most preferred ‘strongman’.

Both groups constitute of Iraqi expatriates (including ex-Ba’athists), trained and armed by the U.S. and Britain.

3. The Badr Brigade, the armed wing of the Da’awa/SCIRI religious ‘parties’ led by Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, Ibrahim al-Jaafari and Nuri al-Maliki. This group constitutes of thousands of Iraqi expatriates and illegal Iranian immigrants expelled from Iraq in the 1980’s. The group is trained and heavily armed by Iran and the U.S.

4. The Kurdish militia (the Peshmerga) led by warlords were trained and armed by the U.S. and Israel.[\[19\]](#)

There is also the Sadr movement (known as the Mehdi Army), led by Muqtada al-Sadr. The movement has been accused of many crimes and sectarian killings since the Sadr movement entered the political process.

Since the invasion, each militia group has mutated into several groups of death squads and criminal gangs such as the Wolf Brigade, the Karar Brigade, the Falcon Brigade, the Amarah Brigade, the Muthana Brigade, the Defenders of Kadhimiyah, and the special police commandos. They are armed and financed by the U.S. and its allies, and fully integrated into the Occupation. Each group is carefully used by the occupying forces for terrorising the Iraqi civilian population in a campaign designed to erode the civilian population’s support for the Iraqi Resistance against the Occupation. U.S. military sources have openly admitted that

the population, where support for the Resistance is high, “is paying no price for the support it is giving to the [Resistance] ... We have to change that equation”, (Newsweek, 14 January 2004). In other words, Iraqis civilians are deliberately targeted for rejecting the Occupation, writes Ghali Hassan. [20]

B. BRITISH TERRORISTS IN IRAQ. An article in the [Sunday Telegraph](#) points towards evidence that a secretive and elite unit of the British army is actively engaged in recruiting and training Iraqi insurgents and terrorists as double agents. It is led by Lt. Col. Gordon Kerr, heading the Special Reconnaissance Regiment (SRR), a large counter-terrorism force made up of unnamed “existing assets” [from the glory days in Northern Ireland and elsewhere](#). And America’s covert soldiers are right there with them, working side-by-side with their British comrades in the aptly named “Task Force Black,” the [UK’s Sunday Telegraph reports](#). [21]

This confirms what many have speculated for a long time, that Britain and the US are deeply involved in bombings and attacks inside Iraq which are subsequently attributed either to Sunni insurgents or shadowy terrorist cells such as “Al Qaeda in Iraq”. Conclusion: there is clear evidence British special forces are recruiting, training terrorists to heighten ethnic tensions. An elite SAS wing with bloody past in Northern Ireland operates with immunity and provides advanced explosives [22]. Some attacks are being blamed on Iranians [23].

C. FACILITIES PROTECTION SERVICES. There is also the claim of [Iraq’s](#) interior minister Jawad al-Bolani, speaking to a small group of reporters in Baghdad on October 12 2006, who blamed the Facilities Protection Service, or FPS, a massive but unregulated government guard force whose numbers he put at about 150,000. [24] *“Whenever we capture someone, we rarely find anyone is an employee of the government ministries,”* Bolani said. *“When they are, they’ve turned out to be mostly from the FPS, with very few individual, actual incidents involving anyone from the Ministry of Interior or Ministry of Defense.”* [25] Private US and UK security firms are closely allied to Mr. Bremer’s ‘Facilities Protection Service’ programme in Iraq. [Newsweek](#) (24.04.06) suggested 146,000 belong to this ‘security’ force. The former Interior Minister, Bayan Jabr, associated the FPS with the endemic ‘death squads’ operating inside the police forces, which are hastening the disintegration of Iraq [26] So definitely these mercenaries are involved in covert operations.

D. SPECIAL POLICE COMMANDOS. According to Greg Jaffe of the Wall Street Journal, the “special police commandos” are being used throughout Iraq and have been conducting criminal assassinations known as the “Salvador option” with the full knowledge of U.S. forces. There is ample evidence of that in the articles on the [BRussells Tribunal](#) website [27] and in the articles of Max Fuller [28]. According to an article recently published in New York Times Magazine, in September 2004 Counsellor to the US Ambassador for Iraqi Security Forces James Steele was assigned to work with a new elite Iraqi counter-insurgency unit known as the Special Police Commandos, formed under the operational control of Iraq’s Interior Ministry. From 1984 to 1986 then Col. Steele had led the US Military Advisory Group in El Salvador, where he was responsible for developing special operating forces at brigade level during the height of the conflict (...) The Police Commandos are in large part the brainchild of another US counter-insurgency veteran, Steven Casteel, a former top DEA man who has been acting as the senior advisor in the Ministry of the Interior. Casteel was involved in the hunt for Colombia’s notorious cocaine baron Pablo Escobar, during which the DEA collaborated with a paramilitary organization known as *Los Pepes*, which later transformed itself into the AUC, an umbrella organization covering all of Colombia’s

paramilitary death squads. [\[29\]](#)

Conclusion

All these actors help to destroy the Republic of Iraq, kill and expel its people, annihilate its middle class, all this with the active support of the US occupation.

So instead of bringing stability to Iraq, the US occupation is doing everything it possibly can to create chaos and terror, to incite civil war and sectarian strife, in order to defeat the National Popular Resistance and to break the aspirations of the Iraqi people to live in a sovereign state and decide its own future.

Consequently the only possible road to a solution is the total and immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Iraqi soil. [US forces must negotiate an immediate withdrawal with the Iraqi resistance](#). The peace movement has to understand that [these demands are crucial to achieve a peaceful solution](#). Then, and only then can the elimination and exodus of Iraq's academics and Iraq's middle class be stopped.

In the meantime people can still support the BRussells Tribunal campaign by signing the Petition to save Iraq's academics: <http://www.petitiononline.com/Iraqacad/petition.html>. 10.000 persons already endorsed the petition.

We urge Iraqi academics to distribute the [questionnaires to be completed by affected families](#) and send them to info@brusselstribunal.org.

Academics of Western universities can show their solidarity by developing initiatives to help their exiled Iraqi colleagues.

More resources and information about the Iraqi Academics' killing fields can be found at <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/AcademicsResources.htm>

Dirk Adriaenssens is member of the BRussells Tribunal executive committee (18 April 2007)

[1] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/Academics.htm>

[2] <http://education.independent.co.uk/higher/article2049192.ece>

[3] <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1929>

[4] <http://www.azzaman.com/english/index.asp?fname=news\2007-03-15\kurd1.htm>

[5] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/academicsList.htm>

[6] <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=62983>

[7] <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7070116>

[8] <http://www.uniraq.org/FileLib/misc/HR%20Report%20Nov%20Dec%202006%20EN.pdf>

[8²] <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=71201>

[9] <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=66296>

- [10] <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70697>
- [11] <http://www.ei-ie.org/en/article/show.php?id=56&theme=statusofteachers>
- [12] <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/AMMF-727BUF?OpenDocument&rc=3&emid=ACOS-635P5D>
- [13] <http://www3.brookings.edu/fp/saban/iraq/index.pdf>
- [14] <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70697>
- [15] <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70697>
- [16] http://www.diverseeducation.com/artman/publish/article_6690.shtml
- [17] http://www.diverseeducation.com/artman/publish/article_6690.shtml
- [18] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/PressRelease221106.htm>
- [19] <http://www.countercurrents.org/iraq-hassan041206.htm>
- [20] <http://www.countercurrents.org/iraq-hassan041206.htm>
- [21] <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article17048.htm>
- [22] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/BritishBombers.htm#britishbombers>
- [23] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/BritishBombers.htm#terrorists>
- [24] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/SecurityCompanies.htm>
- [25] http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/13/AR2006101301447_pf.html
- [26] The jumping off point for this research was E. Knickmeyer's *Washington Post* story [Iraq Nears Consolidation of Paramilitary Unit](#) (11.05.06) and [Iraq Begins to Rein In Paramilitary Force](#) (14.05.06)
- [27] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/BritishBombers.htm>
- [28] <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/FullerKillings.htm>
- [29] <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/FUL506A.html>

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