The following is a summary of reported incidents of rape and gender-based abuse in Iraq during the Saddam regime.

Under Sub-Heading I, specific incidents of sexual violence and abuse of women in Iraq are listed. These incidents have been reported by human rights organizations, journalists, foreign governments’ intelligence, United Nations officials, other intergovernmental organization officials, and Iraqi exiles. They are broken down into rough chronological categories wherever possible, mainly during two time periods: (1) the late 1980s and early 1990s, during the Gulf War, the Anfal campaign against the Kurds and the Shi’a uprising, and (2) between 2000 and 2003, in the lead-up to the U.S. invasion. Taken together, these incidents show that during the Saddam regime, rape and other forms of violence were used systematically to control the population through fear.

Under Sub-Heading II, general accounts of abuse and statistics are provided. They do not cite to any specific incidents of abuse, but rather, attempt to describe the general patterns of abuse observed by human rights organizations and other observers.

General accounts of killing of women and the use of chemical warfare – for instance during the Anfal campaign against the Kurds – are not been included because these crimes are less relevant to the training of the judiciary on gender-based crimes. Instead, the list of incidents below focuses on sexual violence and gender-based crimes.

I. SPECIFIC INCIDENTS OF ABUSE IN IRAQ

A. 1980s-1994 (including Anfal Campaign, Gulf War, and Shi’a Uprising)

1. Trafficking in women and girls, 1989:

   Reports suggest that senior Iraqi security officials were involved in trafficking of women for the purposes of sexual exploitation as part of the government’s repression of the Kurds.

   KurdishMedia.com reports that a document was captured in the Kurdish city of Kirkuk, which allegedly reveals a practice of trafficking in Kurdish women and girls by the Iraqi regime during the Anfal campaign. (An Arabic copy of the document can be found online at: [http://www.kurdmedia.com/news.asp?id=4057](http://www.kurdmedia.com/news.asp?id=4057))

* These dates are taken from Article 1 of the October 2005 “Iraqi High Criminal Court Law”, it should be noted that there is a discrepancy with the dates in the “Justifying Reasons” section at the end of the Statute.
According to KurdishMedia.com, “The document is dated 10 December 1989, classified as "top secret express" and issued by the Directory of Intelligence – city of Taamim [Kirkuk] and sent to the General Directory of Intelligence in Baghdad. It reveals that the Iraqi regime detained a number of Kurds, among them "a group of girls aged between 14 to 29," the document notes.” "We have sent a group of these girls to the harems and nightclubs of the Arab Republic of Egypt. In reply to your response, we have enclosed the names and ages of every one in this group. With regards." The document is singed by the directory of Intelligence – city of Taamim [Kirkuk].”


2. Rape and impregnation of Kuwaiti women in Dar al-Tufula:

A British journalist visited an orphanage for babies born to Kuwaiti women raped by Saddam Hussein’s soldiers. He explained, “The nursery, decorated with cartoon figures and colorful mobiles, hardly looks like a home for the children whom Kuwait would rather forget. But it is an uncomfortable fact that most of the babies here are living reminders of the Iraqi invasion, born to Kuwaiti women raped by Saddam Hussein’s soldiers. Estimates vary, but during the seven-month occupation more than 500 Kuwaiti women are believed to have been raped, so repeatedly.”


3. Rape of women at Nugra Salman prison by Amn agents during Anfal Campaign:

Human Rights Watch recounted one account of rape, however it was unable to confirm the accuracy of this account by interviewing witnesses or victims. According to Human Rights Watch,

“One even more lurid account spoke of a large group of single women being kept apart from the other prisoners and regularly raped by Amn agents. One of these women reportedly killed herself with a knife as a result... Middle East Watch did not succeed, however, in speaking to any witnesses or victims of rape at Nugra Salman. The Kurds, it should be noted, are reluctant to talk to outsiders about matters involving sexual abuse.”


4. Prison rape and killing of 3 women in Dihok, circa 1991:
In 1991, British journalist, Robert Fisk, travelled to Iraq and visited the cells of Iraq’s secret police prison in Dihok. While in Dihok, Fisk spoke to the Peshmerga, who reported that they had found the bodies of female prisoners who had been raped in prison in Dihok:

“The last young women to be imprisoned here died in these fetid cells two months ago. The Peshmerga say they found three of their bodies, naked and with their hands bound, on the floor. One of the girls was 12 years old. Another, older woman had been gang-raped and died later. Anyone who wants to know what propelled the one and a half million Kurds to flee their homes has only to visit Dihok”

Source: Robert Fisk, “A testimony to brutality written in blood; Robert Fisk visit the cells of Iraq’s secret police in Dihok and is pessimistic over the prospects for preventing new horrors,” The Independent, May 27, 1991.

5. Torture causing miscarriage, southern Iraq, 1991:

In their 2003 survey of human rights abuses in 3 southern Iraq cities (An-Najaf, An-Nasyiriah, Al-Amarah), Physicians for Human Rights interviewed a woman who was arrested and tortured in 1991, resulting in a miscarried pregnancy. The woman explained that security forces, local police, Ba’ath party members and the community leader came to her house at 4 a.m. and arrested her and her husband, leaving their children at home. She was 4 months pregnant at the time. As a result of the beating she received, she miscarried. After the incident, she was so traumatized that she attempted to commit suicide. Twelve years later, at the time when she spoke to PHR, the victim explained that the continued to suffer the consequences of this brutal incident:

“I am physically tired. I do not mix with others and do not visit neighbours I stay in the house now. Since my arrest, my family and sisters do not talk to me. They blame me for the arrest because I would not leave my house and come to the village. I could not do that, I had children at home. I sit the whole day, thinking about what has happened. I no longer cook. I leave it to my daughters. I have not told anyone this story but you. Although I do feel a little better when I hear other people talk about similar experiences. I now only speak to the Iman and to God. Just after the arrest, I tried to kill myself by drinking gasoline. I became unconscious and my family took me to the hospital. I had poisoned myself. I also tried to kill myself by touching electricity. I no longer want to kill myself, for the sake of my children, but I feel desperate, especially when I remember my family no longer has any contact with me. I cry every day.”


6. Rape of women captured during Anfal Campaign:
“The Special Rapporteur, human rights organizations, and opposition groups continued to receive reports of women who suffered from severe psychological trauma after being raped while in custody. The security forces allegedly raped women who were captured during the Anfal Campaign and during the occupation of Kuwait. The Government has never acknowledged these reports, conducted any investigation, or taken action against those who committed the rapes.”  


7. Torture of political activists and female relatives of political activists:

Amnesty International reports that several women were tortured, imprisoned and/or killed for their political activities or association with men who opposed the regime. None of the reports include accounts of rape or any gender-based crimes, thus they are not included here. The Amnesty International report, with the names of the victims, is available at Amnesty International, Iraq: Decades of Suffering – Now Women Deserve Better, February 2005, http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE140012005?open&of=ENG-IRQ

8. Rape and torture of a male prisoner, late 1980s:

Amnesty International also described the rape of a male prisoner in the late 1980s.

“During the first two days he was taken to different rooms and beaten with fists, rods and a whip... In one room he was caressed and sexually fondled, before being taken out and beaten and kicked. The torture then became more systematic, taking place every one or two hours. His head was whipped and beaten so hard that he lost consciousness...After regaining consciousness on one occasion he was aware that his trousers had been removed and realized that he had been raped. He was then made to sit on a cold bottle-like object which was forced up his rectum. He was also burned with a hard object about the size of a pencil.”


B. 2000-May 2003

1. Rape of female relatives of General Najib Al-Salahi, June 2000 (on videotape)

Former general Najib Al-Salahi, who fled to Jordan in 1995, received videotape in June 2000 of security forces raping a female relative. He subsequently received a phone call from an intelligence agent who stated that another female relative was being held and warned him to stop speaking out against the government.  

** Apparently Al-Salahi had his testimony tape-recorded by the U.S. State Department so that it could be used in future legal proceedings. Can we get a copy of this tape?? **

2. Be-headings, June 2000 to April 2001:

In its report of human rights abuses in Iraq, based on field research and interviews of Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan in July 2001, the International Federal for Human Rights (FIDH) described the Iraqi government’s practice of beheading women on charges of prostitution. FIDH reports that between 60 and 2000 women were beheaded in Iraq between June 2000 and April 2001. The report also notes that in several cases, witnesses deny that the women beheaded were actually prostitutes. Instead, witnesses contend that these women were targeted and killed because they were the wives of political opponents of the regime. One witness is quoted in the report as saying:

“The city of Ezzouhour (city of roses) Erachidia is divided into districts. It was in the city that I saw beheadings on 15, 19 and 21 August. For example, the wives of Ali and Kerim, accused of belonging to the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (Ali is my friend, he was sentenced to 15 years, he is 25 years old and has been in prison for 2 years) were accused of prostitution. On 15 August 2000, a Tuesday, the party men, Saddam’s Fidayi, the security people who never belong to the district and the head of the district surrounded it. It was in the morning before 11 o’clock, the house is on a square. Amina had 4 children, 2 boys, 2 girls. The oldest was 8, Zyad then Ahmed, Leila, and Zeyneb (1 year). They saw the execution together with the mother-in-law. Amina was known to be an honourable woman, she was 25 years old. They said she was a prostitute. Her feet and hands were tied, her long black hair was pulled back and tied on top of her head… 150 to 200 people were present, men, women, children, and especially security people in civilian clothes, such a show of force had never been seen. They were dressed in brown short-sleeved shirts, brown trousers, their faces were uncovered, because for them it is a matter of pride to do what they do… The executioner who was perhaps forty years old had an assistant who held out a sword. Their was a big silence, we heard a big “ha”… Her body was taken away so that there could be no mourning, the family was taken away as well and released after 25 days…”

Appendix I to the report lists the name of 130 beheaded women (pp. 32-33). FIDH believes this is a conservative estimate because many witnesses would not reveal names or information for fear of revealing their identities and putting themselves at risk. See attached document for the list of 130 beheaded women. **Source:** FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights), *Iraq: an intolerable, forgotten, and unpunished represssion*, http://www.fidh.org/magmoyen/rapport/2002/iq315a.pdf

The U.S. State Department also reported on the beheadings in Iraq and estimated in 2003 that Uday Hussein’s paramilitary organization, “Fedayeen Saddam” had beheaded over 200 women under the pre-text of fighting prostitution. **Source:** U.S. Department of State: *Iraqi...*

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the U.K. Government also reported on the beheading of a doctor in Baghdad. According to their report, “Najat Mohammed Haydar, an obstetrician in Baghdad, was beheaded on October 2000 apparently on suspicion of prostitution, according to Amnesty International. Even by Iraq standards her execution was an outrage. There was no evidence to support the charge of prostitution and she was reportedly arrested before the introduction of the policy to behead prostitutes. The real reason for her death was her criticism of the corruption in the Iraqi health service.” Source: Saddam Hussein: crimes and human rights abuses, Report by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the UK Government, 2 December 2002, p. 8. http://news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/middle_east/02/uk_human_rights_dossier_on_iraq/pdf/iraq_human_rights.pdf

3. Torture to death of mother of 3 defectors because of her children’s opposition to the regime.


E. Other specific incidents of abuse with unknown dates

1. Torture and possible rape in Baladiyat prison complex

A woman imprisoned in cell 52 later described her torture and the threats of rape she suffered in Baladiyat prison complex, also the headquarters of Saddams’ secret police:

“The most difficult think I’ve ever done in my life was to muffle my screams while I was being tortured. They beat me, but I bit my tongue until it bled. I wanted to spare my child the terror of hearing her mother scream. One of the more vicious guards once tied my baby to a table, taunting me mit the threat of torturing Suzan. I was tied to a chair so I could do nothing but watch as they lashed little Suzan. My baby shrieked until her belly button flipped inside out, and when they saw what had happened, they howled with laughter. During one of the torture sessions, two of the men threatened to rape me and Suzan. Thank God, they didn’t rape my baby.” Source: Jean Sasson, Mayada, Daughter of Iraq, p. 70-71 (Dutton, 2003).

Another woman had wounds suggesting she may have been raped: “[Her] arms and legs were covered in deep, raw wounds. The worst scars, however, cris-crossed her abdomen and thighs and buttocks, she had told them. [Her] torturers had stripped her in order to humiliate

Rape and threats of rape were not limited solely to female prisoners. Witnesses also described the rape of a male prisoner in Baladiyat: “The guards dragged the man into the hallway and took turns raping the man. The rape continued for more than an hour until one of the guards stated, “Relax. You are now the wife of three men and you must please us all.”


2. Rape by Mukhabarat for political purposes, reported by former Mukhabarat member Khalid Al-Janabi:

The U.S. State Department’s report on the Human Rights situation in Iraq explains:

“Former Mukhabarat member Khalid Al-Janabi reported that a Mukhabarat unit, the Technical Operations Directorate, uses rape and sexual assault in a systematic and institutionalized manner for political purposes. The unit reportedly also videotaped the rape of female relatives of suspected oppositionists and used the videotapes for blackmail purposes and to ensure their future cooperation.”


3. Rape of one of Saddam’s mistress’ 15 year old daughter by Uday Hussein:

A former mistress of Saddam for more than 30 years, who he referred to as Shaqraa, testified on videotape before the Iraqi National Congress in 2002 that her 15 year-old daughter had been raped by Saddam Hussein’s son, Uday. The woman’s full identity was not released for her protection.


4. Numerous accounts of rape by Uday Hussein, all unpunished:

In one account, Uday Hussein raped a 14-year old girl whose father was a former provincial governor and held her for three days. When she returned home, her parents had her tested for rape and the result was positive. Uday Hussein heard of the testing and was furious. According to one of his bodyguards, Shabaan, Uday sent aides to the clinic and warned the doctors not to report to rape. The parents complained publicly about the rape for several months and as a result, became subject to threats by Uday. At one point, Uday demanded that the ex-governor turn over his 14 and 12-year old daughters to Uday as girlfriends or risk being killed, so the ex-governor complied.
Another account is equally disturbing. As reported by Brian Bennett and Michael Weisskopf of *Time Magazine*,

“Last October another bride, 18, was dragged, resisting, into a guardhouse on one of Uday's properties, according to a maid who worked there. The maid says she saw a guard rip off the woman's white wedding dress and lock her, crying, in a bathroom. After Uday arrived, the maid heard screaming. Later she was called to clean up. The body of the woman was carried out in a military blanket, she said. There were acid burns on her left shoulder and the left side of her face. The maid found bloodstains on Uday's mattress and clumps of black hair and peeled flesh in the bedroom. A guard told her, "Don't say anything about what you see, or you and your family will be finished."

**Source:** Brian Bennett and Michael Weisskopf, “The Sum of Two Evils,” *Time Magazine*, 25 May 2003.  [http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1101030602-454453,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1101030602-454453,00.html)

5. **Prison rape with metal objects:**

One former female prisoner reported to the Coalition Provisional Authority that she suffered repeated rape, including with metal objects, and burning of her breasts while in the custody of the former regime. She showed significant scarring.  US Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2003: Iraq*, 25 February 2004, [http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27928.htm](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27928.htm)

6. **Rape at Mahjar prison:**

According to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the U.K. government, rape of women at Mahjar prison was a regular occurrence.


7. **Prison rapes at Abu Ghreb:**

One man who was imprisoned at Abu Ghreb reported to researchers from the International Federation of Human Rights, “I knew three women imprisoned with me in Abu Ghreb who were raped. They raped me too. I also know someone who personally witnessed rapes: the woman was stripped and raped by three torturers in front of her brother, who died on the spot. Another was raped in front of her husband.”

A woman testified, “They exposed me again to a tall black man who was always naked and came at night and tried to rape me in the cell. This man said nothing, he yelled and beat me till I fainted. He came to see me three times.”
8. Public threats to rape female relatives of dissident, Faiq Sheikh Al:

In January [2002], the International Alliance for Justice/Coalition for Justice in Iraq (AIJ/CJI) reported that the regime publicly threatened on Iraqi satellite TV to systematically rape the female relatives of Faiq Sheikh Ali, a prominent dissident and journalist residing abroad, in retaliation for his criticism of the regime on a political talk show. This continued an alleged pattern of the regime's systematic interference with privacy for political reasons. 


II. General Reports of Abuse

Testimony of Iraqi Exiles:

Several women exiled from Iraq have spoken about the systematic rape and torture during the Saddam Hussein regime:

Safia al Souhail a Shia woman, now the advocacy director for the Middle East and Islamic World of International Alliance for Justice, described the human rights abuses in Iraq in an address to the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Al Souhail is the wife of former Iraqi Minister of Human Rights Bakhtyar Amin, a Sunni Kurd. She explained, "We, the women of Iraq, for the last three decades have suffered under an extraordinarily brutal regime, everybody in this panel has lost loved ones in various wars launched by Saddam...in the most aggressive and inhuman ways possible”.... "We are here because of our common wounds and common aspirations, which is to see our country free from the repression of Saddam Hussein and his regime. Iraq under Saddam's regime has become a land of hopelessness, sadness, and fear. A country where people are ethnically cleansed ... rape is systematic ... congenital malformation, birth defects, infertility, cancer and various disorders are the results of Saddam's gassing of his own people ... the killing and torturing of husbands in front of their wives and children occurs ... Iraq under Saddam has become a hell and a museum of crimes." Source: Lindsay Brooks, “Iraqi Women Speak Out About Life Under Saddam Hussein’s Dictatorship,” U.S. Department of State, International Information Programs, 9 October 2002. 

http://abuja.usembassy.gov/wwwhp101002c.html

Another Iraqi exile, Nidal Shaikh Shallal, also described the systematic rape of women during the Saddam regime. "The heads of many women have been publicly cut off in the streets under the pretext of being liars, while in fact they mostly belonged to families opposing the Iraqi regime. Women, especially dissident women, have been raped by members of Saddam Hussein's gang ... The wives of dissidents have been either killed or tortured in front of their husbands in
order to obtain confessions from their husbands... Women have been kidnapped as they walk in the streets by members of the gangs of Uday and Qusay [Saddam's sons] and then raped.”

Other Evidence:

According to Kanan Makiya, author of *Cruelty and Silence*, evidence of regime-sponsored rape exists in a 3 X 6 note card (available at the Harvard Research and Document Project), which Makiya alleges is an employment card for a civil servant whose job was to rape women. Source: Kanan Makiya, *Cruelty and Silence: War, Tyranny, and Uprising in the Arab World* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1993).

Statistics:

Accurate statistics of sexual violence in Iraq are difficult to obtain because rapes often go unreported.

According to a study conducted by the ministry of women’s affairs, more than 400 women have been raped since the fall of the Saddam regime – and more than half were later murdered in honour killings. Source: Peacewomen.org, Killing for Honour, Ziyad Khalaf al-Ajely, May 17, 2005. www.peacewomen.org/news/Iraq/May05/honour.html.

Lynn L. Amowitz documented human rights abuses in southern Iraq for an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 2004. Her statistics reveal patterns of human rights abuses in general, as well as rape and sexual violence.

With respect to general (non-sexual) human rights abuses, Amowitz found that:

- 47% of all household respondents in the sample (930/1991) reported 1 or more abuses among household members since the year 1991 and a total of 1018 individual incidents of specific forms of human rights abuses among the 16 520 household members.
- 70% of the abuses (408/586) were reported to have occurred in the homes of respondents.
- For all abuses reported, 61% of respondents (608/1012) witnessed the abuse
- Among respondents who reported that they could identify the perpetrator, groups affiliated with the Baath party regime (449/475 [95%]) were identified most often. The coalition forces were also identified as perpetrators by 3% of respondents (20/475)
- More than half (53%) of the abuses among household members occurred between 1991 and 1993 during the Shi'a uprising and 30% between 2000 and the first 6 months of 2003

With respect to rape and abuses of a sexual nature:

- 0.04% of household members (7/16 520) had experienced “regime-related sexual assault” [defined in the study as experiences of sexual assault committed by members or affiliated groups of the Baath Party regime since 1991].
- 5% percent of respondents (87/1870) reported knowing in their lifetime of someone who had experienced sexual violence committed by groups affiliated with the regime.”
- The abuses reported in this study occurred primarily during the years 1991–1993, following the Shi'a uprising, and between 2000 and 2003, a time when the regime was or may have believed it was threatened.
- The rate of rape and sexual violence is probably underreported for various reasons, including willful nondisclosure of sexual violence, cultural issues surrounding the shame of rape and sexual violence, or the lack of privacy in some of the interviews.


**Attachments:**

1. List of 130 beheaded women (see Appendix I, page 32 of report)

2. List of Kurdish women and children allegedly trafficked to Egypt: