

UNMOVIC IAEA Press Statement on Inspection Activities in Iraq

23 December

UNMOVIC and the IAEA have carried out roughly 150 inspections up to now. Some sites were visited several times due to the size of the sites. 13 IAEA inspectors left Baghdad yesterday; two other IAEA inspectors left earlier. One UNMOVIC inspector also left yesterday. In turn, two new IAEA inspectors arrived yesterday, along with 7 new UNMOVIC inspectors. Therefore, we currently have 102 UNMOVIC inspectors and 6 IAEA inspectors, a total of 108.

The IAEA personnel movement had been planned some time ago and is part of a normal rotation. Additional IAEA inspectors are scheduled to come to Baghdad on 29 December. Even though the number of current IAEA inspectors is small, they have specialized expertise and are now conducting detailed quantitative assessments of Iraqi declarations. They are studying procurement records, factory inventories, and consumption records in an attempt to verify declarations about critical dual-use materials.

The IAEA conducts monitoring of air and water in Iraq to sample for radioactive isotopes. A team left Baghdad yesterday after completing the first water sampling campaign since the resumption of inspections. They sampled 27 sites along rivers and lakes, and at the sewage outfalls of industrial facilities. These campaigns are conducted on a regular basis and provide quantitative measurements of man-made activities involving radioactive nuclides.

Today's inspection activities: An UNMOVIC biological team inspected Abu Gharib Baby Milk Plant, State Establishment for Daily Products. This site is located 46 km northwest of Baghdad. The factory used to produce dried baby milk, but has been out of operation for the last three years. The factory is owned by the Ministry of Industry and Minerals. The site is a previously declared and monitored site. It has dual-use equipment, such as dryers, filter press and autoclave, which has been tagged and accounted for.

An UNMOVIC chemical team inspected the Ibn Al Baytar Research Centre, located approximately 30 km southwest of Baghdad. The Centre's activity is focused on research and production of small quantities of chemicals for pharmaceutical purposes.

An UNMOVIC team of missile inspectors returned to the Taji Technical Battalion to continue the work that had begun yesterday. This site is a missile storage area.

The IAEA team inspected two sites: the Al Razi Company and the Beytar Factory. The Al Razi Company is located in north Baghdad. It was created in 1997 and has many staff and equipment from the former nuclear weapons programme. This new company today is declared to be a site involved in laser development and projects for the military. The adjacent Beytar Factory is a storage site for equipment salvaged from the former nuclear facilities.

Hiro Ueki

Spokesman for UNMOVIC and the IAEA in Baghdad