



UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



## Humanitarian situation in Iraq

### Sub-Commission decision 1998/114

At its 35th meeting, on 26 August 1998, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, recalling its decisions 1996/107 of 20 August 1996 and 1997/119 of 28 August 1997 and its resolution 1997/35 of 28 August 1997, believing that measures such as embargoes should be limited in time and should be lifted even if the legitimate objectives of the measures have not yet been attained, affirming once again the need to respect the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, and the relevant provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the two Additional Protocols thereto; noting with grave concern the immense suffering endured by the Iraqi people, and by children in particular; drawing attention to the alarming accounts in numerous reports by the United Nations, the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Iraq (E/CN.4/1998/67), and reports of specialized agencies concerning the situation of innocent people who are suffering an unacceptable decline in levels of health, nutrition, health care and employment and in agriculture; pointing out in that regard that the Secretary-General stated in his report to the Security Council on the "oil for food" programme in February 1998 (S/1998/90) that infant mortality in Iraq was rising, that the water supply situation continued to deteriorate, and that farm output would be able to meet only 10 per cent of required nutritional levels; noting with satisfaction that many non-governmental organizations and personalities from a variety of countries, including the United States of America, have organized humanitarian convoys for Iraq, thus displaying their disapproval of the adverse consequences of an embargo that deprives an entire population of food, care and education; having in mind general comment No. 8 (1977) adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; considering any embargo that condemns an innocent people to hunger, disease, ignorance and even death without attaining the objectives for which it was declared to be a flagrant violation of the economic, social and cultural rights of the people concerned and of international law, the Sub-Commission decided, without a vote, to appeal to the international community and, in particular, to the Security Council for the embargo provisions affecting the humanitarian situation of the population in Iraq to be lifted. It also decided to urge the international community and all Governments, including that of Iraq, to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi population, in particular by facilitating the delivery of food, medical supplies and the wherewithal to meet their basic needs.

[See chap. XIV.]

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[HOME](#) | [SITE MAP](#) | [SEARCH](#) | [INDEX](#) | [DOCUMENTS](#) | [TREATIES](#) | [MEETINGS](#) | [PRESS](#) | [STATEMENTS](#)

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