

Iraq: Massive Fraud and Corruption in Higher Education

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50.000 Iraqi students to study abroad

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki told a group of educators in Washington on 25 July that his country plans to send over 50.000 students abroad over the next 5 years. The students will be studying in the U.S. and London, supposedly to rebuild the country's once strong education system. Twenty two American universities and 21 British universities will participate [1] Maliki explained that "Instead of armies and war and killing and occupation we're moving to something more meaningful, namely economic development, education, and exchanges of students and professors." [2]

The decision to send 10.000 students every year to foreign universities was originally announced at the first educational fair held in Baghdad during the 3rd week of January.

In a letter to university representatives, Nouri Al-Maliki explained the reasoning behind the Iraq Education Initiative: "For many years, the system of higher education in Iraq was regarded as one of the finest in the Arab world. Students from many countries came to Iraq to attend our colleges and universities, however, wars and sanctions have impaired the system of education. ... Iraq needs a strategic program that will transform its education system in order to make up the time lost in developing its human resources." [3]

It is said that this scholarship program will be run by Iraq's Higher Committee for Education Development [4], and that there will be no discrimination based on sex or religious views of the students.

That's the official story. A noble initiative at first sight, until you look further behind the official smokescreen. There are no references in Maliki's speeches to the threats, discharges, forced migration, mass kidnappings and assassinations of Iraqi academics. Nor is the destruction of educational institutions, archaeological sites, the looting of Iraqi musea, the erasure of Iraqi, Arab and world heritage being mentioned. Further, the Iraqi government has committed to fully fund \$1 billion a year to this program [5] and will pay for tuition and fees, as well as room and board, meaning that Iraq is now sponsoring the US and UK universities.

Sectarianism

Nouri al-Maliki has asked the diaspora elite and academics in exile to return to Iraq to help rebuild the country. But the BRussells Tribunal warned on 26 April that "those academics who return are finding jobs few and the welcome far from warm" [6]. The statement further alarmed the academics who are invited or forced to return, to be aware of criminal acts like

kidnappings or assassinations. Why asking the Iraqi professors to return if you drive them out first, and when they eventually return they're not given their jobs back?

"Many of my academic friends tried to go back from Syria and Jordan to Iraq. The Educational Institutions refused to hire them back and refused to transfer their kids to their universities as decreed in a Higher Education Ministry decision. One of them is my sister. She tried to transfer her daughter to the University and they refused. When she confronted them with the Ministerial decision to accept the forced migrated persons' children in Iraqi State Universities, they told her: " let the minister take his decision and please get the hell back to.... [Syria, Jordan]", writes an Iraqi professor.

The decision to send 50.000 students abroad is very contradictory: on the one hand the educated class has been driven into exile or is still being assassinated and 6 years of occupation has left the education system in ruins; on the other hand 10.000 students will be sent abroad every year? Is this decision meant to further erase the collective memory and culture of Iraq? Is it serving a sectarian and an occupation agenda? An Iraqi professor answers:

"I think this is what's really happening. They are sending people abroad based on their sectarian backgrounds and not their skills, intelligence, grades or performances. To avoid the competition, they are changing the names on exam notebooks to cut off the road for any "unwanted" honour student who might be from a decent anti-sectarian or anti-occupation family to have one of these scholarships".

Nationwide fraud

In an article published on Uruknet 4th of August: "Unfairness is better than Mercy"[7], an Iraqi blogger describes what happened with the results of the final high school exams.

"Few days ago the students in Iraq got the marks of the ministerial exams.

To the great surprise of the students, the marks were so unfair and low (...)

Every year about 60 students from my school join medicine, pharmacy and dentistry colleges, their marks are higher than 90% but this year only 33 passed the exams ! only five from our class took marks in 90's ! it is insane.

I took a look at the web and saw that in some schools only 7 or 8 students passed the exams and in other schools in my city NO ONE passed the exams ..I started to wonder why ?

(...) In Anbar, Mosul, DIALA, al Aa'thamya the marks were so unfair, in Anbar the ministry didn't mark the papers for 27 exam sectors, and decided to re-exam them, in A'athamyia the marks are worse than everywhere else, students with their parents, professors started to demonstrate.

(...) but don't you notice that all of these places are for Sunnis ??

Everyone knows that the students are the victims of politicians disputes.

Each year, Mosul , Baghdad, and Hilla, had the best ratio of success and high marks, unlike this year".

It seems that the students in dominantly "Shia" provinces obtained much better results than those in provinces with a predominantly Sunni population. Very strange.

"I saw an interview in Dijla TV with the person who's responsible for the ministerial exams and the marks. He said "Kerbala and Diwania have the best results ever, the students are busy studying in these places, unlike those in other cities who are busy with other things than school" and he added "I ask the students not to be nervous, if they don't have high marks, so what, they can repeat the 6th class once and twice and three times till they get it well " and then he added that during Saddam's rule the students in the south didn't take as high marks as they deserved, and now justice was settled!"

The Iraqi blogger concludes:

(..) you didn't give the Sunnis the marks they deserve, and gave Shiite students and those who are loyal to certain parties much higher marks, but it will not make us dislike each other, what happened made us even more determined to be important people in the future, so that Iraq will be led by clever, educated and respectful Iraqis, who don't part or treat people differently".

Here is the web page with the final results of the Ministerial exams for this year (only available in Arabic): <http://moedu.gov.iq/result/result2009/>

Protests broke out in three Sunni Muslim cities in which conspicuously low numbers of students passed their national exams, fuelling suspicions that Iraq's Shiite Muslim-led government is discriminating against Sunnis and others, reports McClatchy Newspapers on 10 September. Alaa Makki who heads the parliament's education committee said he was troubled by allegations that the Ministry of Education discriminated against minorities, noting that students failed their exams at disproportionately high rates in Sunni Anbar province, in the Sunni city of Tikrit and in the Sunni neighborhood of Adhamiyah in Baghdad. Education Minister Khudhayir al Khuzai is a Shiite. Just 27 percent of the students passed their 12th-grade national examinations in Fallujah, a city in Anbar. "These people can't suddenly have lost their ability to study and all failed," Makki said. "There is an error, and we hope to correct it." [8]

Sectarianism, corruption and fraud are at the root of Maliki's government, it seems. The education sector that was in shambles already is now drifting further into nationwide fraud to favour one sect and those loyal to the occupation.

An Iraqi analyst resumes: "It is the US which introduced corruption as a system of building the 'New Iraq'. The sectarian and ethnical system of quotas introduced to gain support for the occupation, destroyed the State apparatus and Public Services. The parties which supported the invasion used all means - including false diplomas - to control the state apparatus and use it for their benefit. The result is a generalised untouchable corruption, protected by these parties and the US occupation. And now sectarianism, the quota system and breaking up the universal right of equality and justice touch even the innocent young Iraqi students who studied hard to pass their exams"

More fraud

And there's more damaging news for Nouri Al-Maliki' government.

Iraqi writer Shamel Abdul Kader: (letter translated from Arabic)

"I received the following letter through the internet signed by 10 Iraqi students. It involves immoral acts that have been committed against those students by the High Education sector.

To explain the problem with the High Education Ministry and Scientific Research, here's what happened. The ten following students who all live abroad, after the dire Iraqi living conditions forced them to leave their country:

- Ahmad Shafiek Al-Samaraai. Madison College. University of Baghdad
- Mona Kamel Abdul Latif. Madison College. University of Baghdad.
- Ammar Sabah Salam. Pharmaceutical College. University of Baghdad.
- Mohammad Abdul Rahim Alrawi. Dental Madison College. University of Baghdad.
- Ali Abdul Hadi Al-Hamdani. Linguistic College. University of Baghdad.
- Rasha Abdul Saheb Al-Safar. Engineering College, University of Baghdad.
- Abdul Rahman Abdul Jalil. Art College. University of Baghdad.
- Mahammad Mouayad Jabar. Linguistic College. University of Baghdad.
- Noor Ahmad Abid Allah Al-Obaidy. Linguistic College. University of Baghdad.
- Arwa Abdul Muhaimen Al-Ani. Education College. University of Baghdad.

decided to finish their graduate studies in their European and Arabic hosting countries like Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, and Egypt.

After the submission of their admission papers to the universities in their hosting countries, they were surprised by their rejection and they were being accused of submitting forged copies of their transcripts and certificates.

When those students tried to legally bring charges against the University of Baghdad for tampering with their records and transcripts, they had another surprise when the University of Baghdad sent them what was supposed to be their transcripts and documents, but they were totally different from the student's original ones.

After intensive communications through relatives in Baghdad, they received more catastrophic news: all their study records in their colleges had been changed and their records and exams notebooks had been sold to influential politicians in the government so that these could acquire illegally post graduate scholarships without studying or going through preliminary examinations and exams.

What does the High Education minister have to say about this dangerous

manipulation of student's records? How can the efforts and grades of honourable students be sold to others with poor records and performance. What crimes have those students committed to be deprived of their diploma's, certificates, grades, and rights, which have all been sold to others?"

This has been confirmed by several sources. An Iraqi academic complains:

"I am going through hell to get my son's high school graduation transcripts from the Education Ministry in Iraq. Through the Syrian university and through the Syrian foreign ministry, the Iraqi foreign Ministry sent my son's transcripts to the Engineering college of Baghdad University to approve it. The engineering college dean is Dr Ali Alkeilidar, who is from the Dawaa Party and a pro Iranian. Instead of transferring my son's documents to the Iraqi Education Ministry, he wrote to the Foreign Office that this document has not been issued by the Engineering college (which is normal because it is a high school diploma). This letter is accusing us of submitting forged transcripts to universities outside Iraq. I have been trying for two years to prove that these are genuine transcripts that have been issued by the Education Ministry and that they are all notarized by its official offices. Can you believe those criminals? They kidnapped my son, tortured him, got me and my family out of Baghdad, and trying to deprive my kids their rights to finish their education outside the country. The Foreign Ministry, without checking the truth - intentionally or not - is trying to enlist my son's documents as forged ones!"

He concludes: "This is another crime against people who are not part of the occupation and its corrupt government in Iraq. In my opinion, this is as dangerous as the brain drain that is ongoing through the assassinations and forced migration of Iraqi academics".

In Al Quds al Arabic it was reported 1st of September 2009 that the official report of the Inspector of the Higher Education Ministry has found 2769 cases of forged diplomas in the last two years, the Commission for Transparency and Public Integrity has found 1088 [9]. Others claim that there are nearly 100.000 of these false certificates and that there are offices in Bagdad where you can buy your own degree.

On Tuesday 14 November 2006 paramilitary gunmen in the uniforms of Iraqi National Police commandos raided a building belonging to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Baghdad's Karrada district and kidnapped around 100 members of staff from two departments and around 50 visitors, according to lists compiled by the Minister of Education [10]. Some of these people were tortured and assassinated. It is interesting to note that these staff members were a.o. responsible for the validation of diploma's. An Iraqi analyst writes: "This event was related to diploma falsification. The directorate was cleansed to facilitate diploma fraud by government Shiite parties in order to nominate their followers in state jobs. This was a turning point in the process of falsifying diplomas and the exile of Iraqi academics". There was no investigation nor were the responsible kidnappers punished. Prime Minister Maliki declared that this was not a case of terrorism, but a dispute between 'militias'. In fact, everything about this raid conforms with what we should expect of an operation conducted by Iraq's US-trained, armed and supported specialist counterinsurgency paramilitary National Police commandos, who are specifically trained to conduct cordon and search operations of this kind.

In November 2007 it was reported that the Iraqi Interior Ministry has admitted that more than 9000 civil servants [11], including high ranking staff in the prime minister's office [12],

have provided purchased fake university degrees.[13]

Mnemocide

So which 50.000 students will be the chosen ones to have the opportunity to study abroad? Apparently those who are loyal to the parties of the puppet government or can influence the corrupted, sectarian administrators, despite the official narrative that scholarships will be allocated according to a formula based on the population of each of Iraq's 18 provinces "so no one can say you are sending more Shias than Sunnis,"[14] according to special assistant to the prime minister for educational matters, Zuhair Humadi.

An Iraqi academic: "The universities today are run by Iranian militias with the total approval of the American occupation. At the end of the day, they have the same goals and the same plans. They are trying to erase the history, national memory and culture of the country".

Iraqi education has turned from showcase in the Arab world to "ground zero". Iraq's educational system has been totally destroyed. There's a name for this: mnemocide: the process of erasing and suppressing memory. Contrary to Maliki's claims, his sectarian government is actively involved in erasing what's left of 50 years of education and thousands of years of civilization. What happens in Iraq is cultural genocide and responsibility for it must lie with the US and the puppet government. The failure to protect an occupied country's national heritage, the failure to stop the brain drain, threats and assassinations of Iraqi intellectuals are war crimes under the Geneva Convention.

Corruption in Iraqi education

As is well known and documented, corruption in the Iraqi government is rampant and serves a sectarian agenda. Corruption watchdog Transparency International rated Iraq in 2008 as the third most corrupt country in the world after Somalia and Myanmar.[15]

On 26 July 2004 Iraq's minister of education said the country's education system is so corrupt that there is little he can do about it, although he would like to do a lot.

Corruption throughout Iraq's educational system is so rampant that he said he would like to get rid of just about everyone involved in it.[16]

Has the situation improved since 2004?

On 12 May 2009 the Commission of Education and Higher Education in the House of Representatives in the current Maliki Government criticised the existence of corruption cases in the implementation of projects.[17]

The BBC noted on 18 May 2009 that a recent report by Iraq's anti-corruption committee, which is a result of the committee's investigation into some 12,000 complaints of government corruption, says that among the worst offenders are – in no particular order – the ministries of defence, interior, finance, education and health.[18]

"Haramia," or "thieves," is the new name given to local contractors who receive money to fix up schools, then allegedly do such a poor job that they can put most of the money in their pockets.[19] Where is Maliki's control?

Electronic Iraq underscores the fact that "hundreds of health, education and infrastructure

projects have been delayed because of corruption and the smuggling of oil.” Education and health projects are the most affected, as hundreds of schools require repair and hospitals are hit by shortages of equipment and medicines, said the Electronic Iraq article.[20] Where is Maliki’s control?

Painkillers for cancer (from the Ministry of Health) cost \$80 for a few capsules; electricity meters (from the Ministry of Electricity) go for \$200 each, and even third-grade textbooks (stolen from the Ministry of Education) must be bought at bookstores for three times what schools once charged.[21] Where is Maliki’s control?

Maliki demonstrates open hostility to independent corruption investigations

The Prime Minister of occupied Iraq is making a lot of promises in the press about tackling corruption.

But should we believe the Prime Minister of a sectarian Quisling government in a country ravaged by war, occupation and corruption?

According to a secret report prepared for US Congress in 2007, that reviewed the work (or attempted work) of the Commission on Public Integrity (CPI), an independent Iraqi institution, and other anticorruption agencies within the Iraqi government, Maliki’s government is “not capable of even rudimentary enforcement of anticorruption laws,” and, perhaps worse, the report notes that Maliki’s office has impeded investigations of fraud and crime within the government.

Moreover, it concluded that corruption is “the norm in many ministries.” [22]

The report depicts the Iraqi government as riddled with corruption and criminals—and beyond the reach of anticorruption investigators.

But US State Dept. employees testified in May 2008 that the U.S. “allowed corruption to fester at the highest levels [23] of the Iraqi government,” resulting in the loss of billions in U.S. tax dollars [24] .

Further extracts of this damaging CPI report as mentioned in The Nation’s article proves the untenable state of affairs in this “blossoming democracy” [25]:

(...) Anticorruption cases concerning the Ministry of Education have been particularly ineffective....

” Several ministries, according to the study, are “so controlled by criminal gangs or militias” that it is impossible for corruption investigators “to operate within [them] absent a tactical [security] force protecting the investigator.”

(...) Part of the problem, according to the report, is Maliki’s office: “The Prime Minister’s Office has demonstrated an open hostility” to independent corruption investigations. His government has withheld resources from the CPI, the report says, and “there have been a number of identified cases where government and political pressure has been applied to change the outcome of investigations and prosecutions in favor of members of the Shia Alliance”—which includes Maliki’s Dawa party.

(...) Maliki has also protected corrupt officials by reinstating a law that prevents the prosecution of a government official without the permission of the minister

of the relevant agency.

(...) In another memo obtained by The Nation—marked “Secret and Confidential”—Maliki’s office earlier 2007 ordered the Commission on Public Integrity not to forward any case to the courts involving the president of Iraq, the prime minister of Iraq, or any current or past ministers without first obtaining Maliki’s consent. According to the U.S. embassy report on the anticorruption efforts, the government’s hostility to the CPI has gone so far that for a time the CPI link on the official Iraqi government web site directed visitors to a pornographic site.

(...) CPI staffers have been “accosted by armed gangs within ministry headquarters and denied access to officials and records.” They and their families are routinely threatened. Some sleep in their office in the Green Zone. In December 2006, a sniper positioned on top of an Iraqi government building in the Green Zone fired three shots at CPI headquarters. Twelve CPI personnel have been murdered in the line of duty.

On 1 August 2009 it was reported that Iraqi government officials may have colluded in the kidnapping of five Britons, including two Scots, two years ago in an attempt to prevent high-level corruption being exposed.[26]

U.S. officials say, Iraqi government officers, from Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki on down, have embezzled not only uncounted billions of dollars from their own treasury — but also billions in U.S. aid, in total \$ 18 billion. That’s about equal to the annual budget for Colorado.[27]

Whistleblowers face retaliation, abuse, and even imprisonment for reporting fraud. [28]

We read Maliki’s anti-corruption statements, his speeches about the importance of Iraqi education, but corruption has never been worse. We don’t hear about results of investigations into assassinations of Iraqi academic personnel, nor do we hear about attempts to improve the security situation for Iraqi educators, nor do we hear Maliki criticizing Iraqi militia’s and death squads, including his own. Nor do we hear Maliki criticizing the occupation forces for destroying archaeological sites. What we read is that Maliki is the ringleader of a corrupt, sectarian, anti-secular and despotic government.

A Transparency International Report has stated that the corruption in Iraq will probably become “the biggest corruption scandal in history”. [29]

And the US are knee-deep involved in this corruption[30]

An Iraqi writer states:” In reality, Maliki has neither the capacity nor the desire to fight corruption. The whole political process is based on corruption. Iraqis know that it is Maliki’s government and Maliki himself who impedes all investigations and punishment of crimes and corruption, with the support of the occupation. He protected the Minister of Trade, who was accused of corruption, and didn’t allow an investigation. Through his allies in the Parliament he prevented the Parliament from questioning Ministers about corruption. His power is used to bar the CPI and other investigating institutions from doing their job. For example, news circulates that the chief of the Financial Watch, Mr Torki, who declared that there are 1088 false diplomas, even in the high ranks of the Iraqi Administration, and that the responsible persons should be punished, is now being accused of committing crimes during the previous regime and an arrest warrant is issued against him. It is evident that

this accusation is meant to silence him.”

A despotic occupation

It is widely claimed that Mr Maliki’s government governs only inside the Green Zone. Outside this protected zone his death squads and special police forces roam the streets, the new Iraqi army terrorizes the population, there is no security nor law, only the law of the jungle.

The NYT f.i. reported on 3 September that a gang of robbers tied up eight guards — some of whom they knew — at the Zuwiya branch of the Rafidain bank in Baghdad and executed them point blank with silenced guns. Then they made off with at least two carloads of cash worth \$4.3 million. They did not have to worry about the police because, in that neighbourhood, they were the police, many of them bodyguards for one of the nation’s most powerful men, Vice President Adel Abdul Mahdi.[31]

Should we put our trust into the Prime Minister of a corrupt puppet government that:

- Organizes nationwide corruption, fraud and crime.
- Falsifies national examinations scores, tampers with students diploma’s, selects students to study abroad based on religious background and intimidates returning educators?
- Approves of mass executions of Iraqi citizens. On a single day in June 19 people were hanged in Baghdad. In a recent report Amnesty International says that more than 1,000 Iraqis face execution, often on the basis of confessions, which, it says, are sometimes made under torture.
- Approves of imprisoning and torturing tens of thousands of civilians and political prisoners without any charges or fair trials.
- Approves of journalists being prominent victims of Iraq’s judicial system. In July a reporter was arrested for photographing a Baghdad traffic jam, after his pictures were deemed “negative” for mocking Mr Maliki’s assertion that life in the capital was improving. Last year Iraq dropped to 158th place out of 173 in a press-freedom table drawn up by Reporters Without Borders

An article (in Arabic) claims that the salary of a Member of the Iraqi Parliament is US\$ 360 thousand annually. Because of additional payments for participation in Parliament Sessions, protection and travel etc., the total budget is *US\$ 1.44 Millions* per member plus additional payments to the Head of Parliament. Let’s hope this is not true.

The starting salary of a university graduate (B.Sc.) is US\$400 per month. Annual = US\$ 4,800

The US are helping Mr Maliki to rub up his government’s reputation. The Defence Department pays private U.S. contractors in Iraq up to \$300 million over the three years 2009-2011, to produce news stories, entertainment programs and public service advertisements for the Iraqi media in an effort to “engage and inspire” the local population to support U.S. objectives and the Iraqi government. [32] That’s the news you and I will read in the mainstream media.

At last..... DEMOCRACY !!

What history teaches us

It's the US who brought these thugs to power and thus bear full responsibility for the dramatic state of affairs in contemporary Iraq. They work hand in hand with Mr. Maliki. 130.000 US troops and 645.000 Iraqi security forces [33] are needed to secure Al-Maliki's position. This situation in Iraq is very reminiscent to what happened in Yugoslavia during WWII.[34]

(....) Ante Pavelić (who lived in exile since 1929 and returned to Yugoslavia with the German occupiers in 1941) first met with Adolf Hitler on 6 June 1941. Mile Budak, then a minister in Pavelić's government, publicly proclaimed the violent racial policy of the state on 22 July 1941. They started building concentration camps in the summer of the same year. Ustaše activities in villages across the Dinaric Alps led to the Italians and the Germans expressing disquiet. As early as July 10, 1941, Wehrmacht General Edmund Glaise von Horstenau reported the following to the German High Command, the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OKW):

"Our troops have to be mute witnesses of such events; it does not reflect well on their otherwise high reputation... I am frequently told that German occupation troops would finally have to intervene against Ustaše crimes. This may happen eventually. Right now, with the available forces, I could not ask for such action. Ad hoc intervention in individual cases could make the German Army look responsible for countless crimes which it could not prevent in the past.

A Gestapo report to Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler, dated February 17, 1942, stated that:

"Increased activity of the bands [of rebels] is chiefly due to atrocities carried out by Ustaše units in Croatia against the Orthodox population. The Ustaše committed their deeds in a bestial manner not only against males of conscript age, but especially against helpless old people, women and children. The number of the Orthodox that the Croats have massacred and sadistically tortured to death is about three hundred thousand.

Do these quotes ring a bell? The name Ante Pavelić, who returned to Yugoslavia on the back of German and Italian tanks, can be replaced by f.i. Chalabi, Allawi or Al Maliki. Ustaše can be replaced by the Special Police Commandos, Badr brigades, the Mehdi army, Peshmergas. Germans and Italians can be replaced by Americans and British. Pavelic and his militias murdered between 300.000 and 700.000 Serbs, Jews, gypsies, resistance fighters. The Yugoslavians were killing each other ! But who was responsible? The Germans of course, no? They let these crimes carry out by their Croatian sectarian stooges and gave them the money, arms, training and power. The Germans were "expressing disquiet" over these Croatian barbarians, just like the US are expressing disquiet over Maliki's government's crimes, his death squads and his corruption. The atrocities stopped when the Germans and Italians were defeated and left the country.

It's time for president Barack Hussein Obama to learn some lessons from history: he should unconditionally withdraw his troops from Iraq, and pay reparations for the harm his country

has inflicted upon the Iraqi people. Only then real democracy can be built.

Recommendations

In the meantime, here are some recommendations to save what's left of the sector of Higher Education in Iraq:

- instead of sending 50.000 students abroad, convince the Iraqi academic community in exile to return by giving them back their jobs, by providing enough guarantees for their security so they can do their job without fear and without government interference.
- The same applies to exiled students. Give them scholarships and a chance to finish their studies at home, while providing them a safe environment.
- The Iraqi government that will fund this \$1 billion a year program [35], can spend this money more effectively by organizing decent education in Iraqi universities and finance the creation of schools and universities for the youngsters of the 4.7 million refugees and displaced in refugee areas and hosting countries.
- To the US Colleges and Universities that will host Iraqi students: instead of supporting the inflow of 10.000 Iraqi students a year, first give the exiled students the chance to finish their studies in your institutions until the Iraqi government can provide enough security for them to return. The costs for their studies should be paid by the US and UK governments which illegally invaded Iraq. Universities should not be complicit in this "billion dollar fraud".
- Iraqi laws to facilitate the return of educators and students should be rigorously implemented. The US government, their occupation forces and the Iraqi government bear full responsibility for this.
- A serious independent investigation should look into corruption and fraud with diplomas and certificates, as mentioned in this article.
- Money, assigned to the education sector, that has been diverted to "security" should be relocated to education.
- A serious independent investigation should also look into corruption of the contracts for reconstruction works and refurbishing of Iraqi schools and universities.
- Education should be rigorously delinked from sectarianism. There should be no sectarianism, racism or gender discrimination in nominations in the universities and sectarian and racist activities should by all means be kept out of universities.
- The system of sectarian quotas and criteria in nominating and appointing academics should be cancelled. Human rights standards and individual liberties for the students, especially gender equality, should be guaranteed.
- Stop the interference in the activities of the universities by religious fascist groups and death squads and guarantee the liberty of thinking and research in Iraqi universities.
- UNESCO and other organizations should take a clear stand against these Human Rights violations.

These are just basic recommendations. But only when these conditions are met there will be a chance for the once highly respected Iraqi education sector to start recovering from wars, sanctions and occupation. Sending 50.000 students, loyal to the occupation, abroad to study, who assimilate the Western values and then return to implement a Western style democracy while erasing what's left of Iraqi and Arab culture, is not an option.

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[1]

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