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Abstract of paper to be presented at the conference.

For details of the conference programme go to www.iraqistudies.org

Speaker: Laura Watkins, Regional Human Security Centre, Amman

**Title: The Challenges of Delivering Humanitarian Assistance in an Urban Refugee
Setting: An Examination of the Human Security Needs of Displaced Iraqis in Jordan**

Abstract:

The ongoing war in Iraq has resulted in the largest refugee exodus since 1967. Focusing on the estimated 450,000 – 500,000 Iraqis displaced to Jordan¹, this paper examines the Iraqi urban refugee phenomenon and the resultant protection and livelihood challenges. Although the Government of Jordan has long played the generous host to waves of refugees that have been generated by the region's conflicts, the resources and absorption capacity of the state are severely strained and the 'irregular' status of its Iraqi 'guests' have complicated humanitarian assessment and delivery². Furthermore, the hidden and marginalised nature of the Iraqi exile population in Jordan has provoked complex human security concerns, while the international community's reliance upon a Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP), coupled with the Government of Jordan's concerns regarding security have hampered humanitarian assistance. In examining the potentials and limitations of humanitarian assessment and delivery within this urban refugee setting through a human security lens, this paper seeks to provide insight by drawing lessons from relevant theory and policy combined with analysis drawn from field research conducted between November 2007 to February 2008.

¹ Figures contained in the study conducted by the Norwegian research institute FAFO, based upon data collected in May/June 2007.

² Jordan is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention.