

Justice on hold: accountability and social reconstruction in Iraq

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Abstrak

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Having invaded Iraq without UN Security Council authorization, the United States was unable to convince many countries to take a meaningful role in helping Iraq deal with its violent past. Always insisting that it would go it alone, the United States implemented accountability measures without properly consulting the Iraqi people.

Nor did the United States access assistance from the United Nations and international human rights organizations, all of which possess considerable knowledge and experience of a wide range of transitional justice mechanisms. In the end, the accountability measures introduced by the Americans either backfired or were hopelessly flawed. What are needed in Iraq are a secure environment and a legitimate authority to implement a comprehensive transitional justice strategy that reflects the needs and priorities of a wide range of Iraqis. Such a strategy should contain several measures, including prosecutions, reparations, a balanced approach to vetting, truthseeking mechanisms and institutional reform.