CHAPTER - II

Iraqi Invasion and the Gulf War

At about 2 a.m. (Baghdad time) on August 2, 1990; three Iraqi Republican Guard divisions invaded Kuwait. One proceeded down a coastal road to Kuwait city, a second seized the island oil fields, and the third proceeded to the Saudi Arabian border. Kuwaiti A-4 aircraft and Chieftain tanks fought for three days until their fuel and ammunition were exhausted. The small Kuwaiti Navy also made a valiant showing, with the last two fast attack craft escaping while firing at pursuing Iraqi tanks.¹

Iraqi forces quickly captured Kuwait city and the Emir’s palace, while the Kuwaiti ruler, Sheik Jaber al-Ahmed al-Sabah, fled to Saudi Arabia and established government in exile. On August 3rd, the remainder of Kuwait was captured and by the 4th, Iraqi forces were amassed along the Kuwaiti-Saudi border for a possible invasion of Saudi Arabia, it would not only establish itself as the secular leader of the Arab world, but also would control 45% of world’s oil.²

Iraqi Invasion:

The reasons for the invasion dated back to the creation of present-

² Ibid., p. 16
day Kuwait. In 1899, Great Britain and Kuwait signed a treaty in which Britain assumed control of Kuwait’s foreign affairs. This was done in order to thwart German imperialist designs in the region, and after World War I began, London established a protectorate over Kuwait. World War I also led to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the creation by the European power of Iraq and a number of other countries. These events and decisions reflect the European balance of power that did not consider the region’s culture or politics, still reverberate, and the finding of oil and later, in the 1970s, its greatly enhanced value, aggravated trouble at times tribal, situations. Kuwait was an artificial creation imposed by the West, and in both denied Iraq a considerable amount of oil and restricted its access to the seas. This arrangement was never accepted, and when Kuwait received its independence on June 19, 1961, Baghdad almost immediately claimed it, basing this on the facts that Kuwait had been a part of the Ottoman Empire, that it was an artificial British creation, and it threatened Iraq’s access to the sea. Threatened by invasion, Kuwait appealed to the British, whose military reaction in July 1961 was enough to thwart Iraq. Kuwait was admitted to the United Nations and the Arab league, but Iraq did not renounce its claim, would often resurrect it, and would cite it to justify the August invasion.³

Iraq perceived that Kuwait was drawing more than its share from the common north-south Rumaila oil field. In addition, Kuwait had

³  Ibid., p. 16
increased its oil production and reduced its prices, damaging the economies of several Arab countries, including Iraq and Libya. In recent years Kuwait has invested hundreds of billions of dollars in the U.S., Japan and Western Europe, and yet unemployment is extremely high in many Arab countries including Jordan, Yeman, Egypt, Algeria and Moracco. Interestingly enough the ruling family in Kuwait has not invested any substantial amounts of its wealth in its Arab neighbours.

Other grievances articulated during the cease fire with Iran in August 1988 and the Jeddah conference before the invasion on August 2, 1990 include the following:

1. The overproduction of OPEC quotas.
2. The Iraqi debt to Kuwait ($20-30 billions).
3. The oil allegedly taken from the Rumaila field (worth $2.4 billion). Kuwait’s "war" on Iraq, Kuwait alleged alliance with foreign powers, to effect the economic collapse of Iraq.
4. Lack of implementation of an Arab Marshall plan for Iraq. Iraq claimed it was entitled to expect the Gulf countries to launch a Marshall plan to support its recovery from the war, Just as the U.S. has done in Europe after world war II, and,
5. Kuwait's alleged reluctance to negotiate with Iraq.

These complaints were intensified two years prior to the invasion

in August, 1990. There is no doubt that the Muslim nations in general and the Arab countries in particular have either failed to understand the validity of Iraq's grievances or they did not want to get involved in finding an acceptable solution to this problem. In both cases they failed to diffuse the rapidly deteriorating crisis.

In early 1990, the Kuwaiti oil minister, Sheikh Ali Khalifah al Sabah, called for the system of oil-production quotas to be scrapped as soon as possible. "From a practical standpoint, the quotas are already irrelevant so all that is needed is a recognition of that fact", he said. He had been closely associated with the policy of high levels of oil production to keep the world oil price low and stable. In May, he was shifted from the ministry of oil to that of finance mainly to assuage Iraqi suspicions of Kuwait over production. The oil production and pricing policy of Kuwait had, by then, become an additional irritant in the Iraqi-Kuwait relations which had already been soured on account of Iraqi demands of cancellation of its debts to Kuwait, Kuwaiti investments in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq and right of access to Bubian.

On 7th July, the Iraqi president Saddam Hussein claimed that the Arab states of the Gulf had 'robbed' Iraq of $14 billion by depressing oil prices on the international market. The next day, the Iraqi foreign


minister Tariq Aziz charged in a letter to the Arab League that Kuwait had erected military outposts on Iraqi soil and exploited its southern Rumaila oil field stealing oil worth $2.4 billion.\(^7\)

Kuwait at the time had oil production quota of 1.5 mbd and was producing 1.9 mbd instead. Till the end of the Iran-Iraq war, it had also produced an additional amount of 1,25,000 bd and supplied the proceeds of its sale to Iraq under the “war relief” agreement. As the agreement was discontinued with the termination of the war, the Iraqi allegations in this regard were well-tied and the Kuwaiti response time-tested. It was widely believed that Kuwait had offered one billion dollars to settle the dispute.\(^8\)

Prior to a meeting of the OPEC Ministerial Council in Geneva on 25 July, 1990, Iraq had implied that it might take military action against countries which continued to flour their oil production quotas. It had also accused Kuwait of violating the Iraqi border in order to steal Iraqi oil resources worth, $2.400 m., and suggested that Iraq’s debt to Kuwait, accumulated largely during the Iran-Iraq war, should be waived. On the eve of the OPEC meeting in Geneva, Iraq stationed two armoured divisions (about 30,000 troops) on its border with Kuwait.\(^9\)

The Iraqi threat and military mobilization led to a sharp increase

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7. Ibid., p. 258.
8. Ibid.
in regional tension. Before the OPEC meeting in Geneva on 25 July, 1990, President Mubarak of Egypt and Chedli Khibi, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, travelled to Baghdad in an attempt to calm the situation. The USA, meanwhile, placed on alert its naval forces stationed in Bahrain. At the conclusion of the OPEC meeting, however, the threat of Iraqi military action appeared to recede: both Kuwait and the UAE agreed to reduce their petroleum production, while OPEC agreed to raise its ‘benchmark’ price of crude petroleum from US$ 18 to $21 per barrel.10

Direct negotiations between Iraq and Kuwait commenced in Saudi Arabia at the end of July 1990, with the aim of resolving dispute over territory, oil pricing and Iraq’s debt to Kuwait. Kuwait was expected to accede to Iraqi demands for early negotiations to draft a border demarcation treaty and Iraq was expected to emphasize a claim to the strategic Islands of Bubiyan and Warbah, situated at the mouth of the Shattal-Arab (After Kuwait obtained independence in 1961—it had formerly been under the protection of the UK-Iraq claimed sovereignty over the country, Kuwait was placed under the protection of British troops, who were later withdrawn and replaced by Arab League forces. On 4 October 1963, the Iraqi government formally recognized Kuwait’s complete independence and sovereignty within its present borders). On 1 August, however, the talk collapsed, and on 2 August Iraq invaded

Kuwait taking control of the country and establishing a (short-lived) provisional free government.\textsuperscript{11}

There was no evidence at all to support Iraq’s claim that its forces had entered Kuwait at the invitation of insurgents who had overthrown the Kuwaiti Government. The invasion appeared more likely to have been motivated by Iraq’s financial difficulties in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war; by strategic interests. Iraq had long sought the direct access to the Persian Gulf which it gained by occupying Kuwait; and by Iraq’s pursuit of regional hegemony.\textsuperscript{12}

The second of August 1990 was a sad day witnessed by the world. On that day, humanity retracted to the barbaric age, in which the law of the jungle prevailed, as Iraq attacked the state of Kuwait. Ever since its independence, Kuwait has contributed-most enthusiastically to the consolidation of international peace and security, and to the enhancement of international cooperation in economic, cultural and social fields. This aggression was, surprisingly, waged by an Arab Islamic state against a fraternal neighbouring state, equally Arab and Islamic. Peculiarly enough, the attacked state pursues a foreign policy held as exemplary in good neighbourhood vis-a-vis the attacking neighbour. The Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, not only violates the rules of international legitimacy, but also runs contrary to the lofty Islamic and Arab values and the

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
principles of good neighbourhood, which constitute a pillar in international relations in general.\textsuperscript{13}

Paradoxically, this illegitimate aggression took place at a time in which the world was witnessing a most impressive scene of international rapprochement, as though the aggressor meant to wade against the current. Iraq’s expansionist ambition in Kuwait had no legal basis and, indeed, contradicted the fundamental principles of international law, which underscore the principle of stable boundaries and the peoples’ right to self-determination. The Iraqi treacherous aggression against the state of Kuwait was indeed a human catastrophe. Its negative effect on Arab interests and world economy were manifold, apart from the flagrant injustice to the right of the Kuwaiti people.\textsuperscript{14}

On 2 August, 1990, Iraq launched what was in pure military professional terms a brilliant operation. At 0200 hours, three Iraqi Republican Guard armoured divisions with nearly 300 tanks (mostly T-72s) rolled over the Kuwaiti frontier, in a move coordinated with heliborne air assault with nearly three commando battalions of the special forces. The main force of commandos were landed on Kuwait international airport to make it secure for troops flown in by transport aircraft immediately afterwards. The second element of the heliborne commandos quickly captured most of the key points in the city including

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\textsuperscript{13} Abdulla Yusuf-al-Ghunaim, \textit{Kuwait: Statehood and Boundaries} (Kuwait: Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science, 1992) p. 13.
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\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid}.
\end{flushright}
the command and control centres of the Kuwaiti army. There was hardly any resistance except by the guards at the royal palace.\textsuperscript{15}

In the few hours which were all it took for the Iraqis to reach the city, the duty officers at defence headquarters and managed to alert the government; the minister of defence, Sheikh Nawaf, hurried to the command post, was given an account of what was going on, and as he informed us later in Saudi Arabia, sensibly left the soldiers to cope while he hurried off to warn the other ministers and the Emir. By the time the Iraqis reached the Dasman Palace, the Emir was well on his way to the Saudi border, Sheikh Fahd was the one hero of the whole affair. He stood with a few guards at the top of the palace steps as the first Iraqi arrived, barring their way with drawn pistol. One of the Iraqis casually shot him dead.\textsuperscript{16}

In Kuwait city there were many individual acts of bravery, and a few units put up spirited resistance before being mown down by the ruthless firepower of the Iraqis. But in seven hours it was all over, Kuwait was totally invested by the invaders, the government gone, armed resistance at an end, and the airport closed. An unfortunate British Airways plane enroute to India landed in Kuwait just as the invasion began: the crew and passengers were taken prisoner, and the men moved to Baghdad to form part of the human shield which Saddam so quickly

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\footnotetext{15. Akhtar Majeed (ed.), \textit{Encyclopaedia of West Asia} (Aligarh: CSSS, Aligarh Muslim University, 1996) p. 169.}
\end{footnotes}
deployed to protect vital targets. It was the sort of quick and efficient victory he had tried for in vain against Iran.¹⁷

Saddam initially claimed that Iraqi troops had entered Kuwait at the request of a revolutionary movement opposed to the Al-Sabah, but this claim was soon discredited by his inability to find Kuwaiti nationals willing to serve in a puppet government. This did not prevent the Iraqis installing a provisional cabinet on 4 August which three days later declared Kuwait a republic. The head of this short-lived regime was Alla Hussein Ali, said to be a colonel in the Kuwait army. Kuwaiti sources, however, identified Alaa as an Iraqi officer who had fought in the Gulf war and written a military history of the conflict and who, until the invasion, had been in charge of Iraq’s Fao-I-anti-missile programme.¹⁸

The US’s immediate concern was to prevent any Iraqi incursion into Saudi Arabia. President Bush stressed that the integrity of Saudi Arabia, its freedom, are very, very important to us; and he promised US support to repel any Iraqi attack.¹⁹

The invasion was launched at 2300 GMT. Iraqi units entered Kuwait city’s centre within a few hours. Waving Iraqi flags, Jubilant soldiers in vehicles raced along the thoroughfares. Iraqi helicopters flew overhead. Some of the fiercest fighting was on the banks of the Gulf

¹⁷. Ibid., pp. 107-108.
¹⁸. Ibid., p. 108.
¹⁹. Ibid., p. 109.
at Dasman palace, residence of the Emir, which was attacked by Iraqi tanks and Jets. Smoke billowed from the area witnessed reported loud explosions and heavy machine gun fire.²⁰

The Iraqis also ran into resistance at Mutla, 35 km north of Kuwait city. A foreign resident saw a lone Kuwaiti Jet shoot down an Iraqi helicopter. The Jet swung back to attack another helicopter but was chased away by Iraqi guns. On the ground, hundreds of tanks, armoured personnel carriers, fuel and water tankers and trucks carrying troops headed toward Kuwait city in temperatures above 40 degrees centigrade.²¹

The 'Free government' broadcast its first communique on a previously unused frequency; saying it had dismissed Kuwait's National Assembly. Election would be held when stability was secured, it said.²²

Reports on the conduct of the Iraqi troops in Kuwait varied. Some highlighted the brutality of the Iraqis, focusing on allegations of mass rape of expatriate women.²³

The reprisals and tortures carried out by the Iraqis were terrible. Torture on a previously unimaginable scale became the norm, as did summary executions. No Kuwaiti was safe, even in his home. Young men were taken, tortured, returned home and shot in front of their families, who were then forbidden to collect the bodies from the street.

Women, girls, men, boys, and even young children were raped. Children were executed for singing the national anthem, or hanged for no good reason. The entire population was brutalised.24

The Iraqis set up a number of torture and detention centres. Those who survived were left physically, emotionally and mentally scarred. Those who did not, were often brought to the Kuwait morgue for burial.25

Other reports claimed that the Iraqi forces were generally wellbehaved, and that many soldiers had apologized to the civilian population for the invasion. According to some sources the situation had deteriorated when popular Army units entered Iraq soon after the invasion. Looting was certainly widespread, but a major part of it appeared to be organized by the Iraqi government. *The New York Times* of August 14, 1990, reported that Iraq had transferred between US $3,000 million and $ 5,000 million in gold, foreign currency ad goods from Kuwait and that this had significantly increased Iraq's financial reserves which had stood at an estimated US $ 6,500 million before the invasion. However, in a warning to looters Iraqi television broadcast on August 16 pictures of an executed Iraqi officer hanging above his looted booty in Kuwait city.26

**International Response:**

In fact, the international response to Iraq's invasion was remarkably swift. Within hours Iraq's assets were frozen worldwide and the first of 11 critical United Nations Security Council-resolutions—Resolution 660, calling for an immediate Iraqi withdrawal—had been passed. The speed of the response was due, in no small part, to the fact that neither the former USSR nor China—both permanent members of the UN Security Council—attempted to oppose the resolutions. The following day, a majority in the Arab League condemned the Iraqi invasion at a vituperative meeting hastily convened in Cairo. Three days later, the United Nation imposed wide-ranging import and export sanctions against Iraq. The day after, Saudi Arabia accepted an offer by the USA of up to 50,000 troops to help defend its territory. Western air and naval power began to gather in Gulf, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, while Saudi Arabia and Turkey shut down Iraqi oil exports by pipeline across their territories. Iraqi oil exports were thus virtually blocked, while exports by sea through the Gulf were blockaded by western naval power. Only Jordan continued to offer a limited point of access to the outer world for Iraq.  

On August 3, 1990, West Germany, Japan and several other countries joined a US led move toward economic sanctions against Iraq.

saying they would effectively freeze Kuwaiti assets in their countries to keep them away from Baghdad.28

The European Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization prepared to consider calls for broader trade embargoes and freezing of Iraqi assets.29

Italy, Belgium and Luxumbourg also announced plans to freeze Kuwaiti assets. Italy, Poland and Czechoslovakia joined the Soviet Union in suspending arms exports to Iraq. The shift from condemnation to diplomatic and economic moves reflected in part the difficulties that military retaliation against Iraq would pose. Switzerland, stopping short of a freeze, asked its banks to scrutinize carefully any withdrawals of Kuwaiti funds. The Dutch Government froze all Kuwaiti bank accounts and export credits to both Iraq and Kuwait. It said it was considering banning tankers carrying Iraqi crude oil from entering the port of Rotterdam.30

France, the second-largest supplier of weapons to Iraq, issued a 'total and unreserved condemnation of the intervention of Iraqi troops in Kuwait', and demanded an immediate withdrawal. It also froze Kuwaiti and Iraqi assets.31
China described Iraq and Kuwait as ‘friends’, saying that there was ‘no conflict of fundamental interests among Third world countries and that no one should resort to force of arms’. 32

Japan, which gets more than 10 percent of its oil from the two countries, called for withdrawal of Iraq’s forces (Japan imports 99 percent of its oil, and its economy has proved vulnerable to ‘oil shocks’, emanating from conflict in West Asia). 33

On August 5, 1990 the UN Security Council approved an economic embargo of Iraq and Kuwait. 34 On August 6, 1990, the UN Security Council met once again in an emergency session and voted 14 to 0 to condemn the attack. It demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces to the position in which they were located on August 1, 1990. 35

Iraq announced on August 8, 1990 that Kuwait was part of Iraq and called for ‘full unity between Kuwait and Iraq’. The statement stopped short of saying Iraq had annexed Kuwait, but strongly suggested that President Saddam Hussein of Iraq had no intention of giving up the Emirate, which his troops seized in a lightning attack. A statement by the ruling Iraqi Revolution Command Council red over Baghdad television declared ‘a comprehensive and eternal merger’. Later, a

32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
statement by the Armed Forces General Command said Israel was preparing to attack Iraq using aircraft painted with American colours and warned of massive retaliation. The statement was issued as the first US troops were arriving in Saudi Arabia. It said Israeli fliers were issued with false US identity papers. It vowed to defy a rapidly growing western military build-up in the Gulf, sent to bolster Saudi Arabia in case of invasion by Iraqi forces. Baghdad denied that it would attack.36

The statement about a merger of the two countries confirmed that Saddam Hussein was determined to hold on to Kuwait and defy world pressure for an immediate withdrawal, including a UN-ordered blockade. There was about half-an-hour of wild shooting in the air to celebrate the merger announcement, but the shooting stopped on order of the authorities.37

The Armed Forces General Command said Iraq had learned that USA had established 'detailed coordination with the Zionist entity' and had identified Iraqi targets which it planned to strike, 'believing this will divert Iraq from its national and pan-Arabians' The United States had failed to win the support of other countries, it said, and was disguising Israeli aircraft as its own in an attempt to divert Iraqi military retaliation.38

37. Ibid., p. 21371.
38. Ibid.
On the same day (August 8, 1990) the UN Security Council convened and adopted a unanimous resolution (No. 662), which declared the annexation of Kuwait to be null and void, and urged all states and institutions not to recognize it.39

President Hafez al-Assad of Syria desired an Arab solution of the crisis. He emphasized that it should be limited to a regional solution and that foreign powers should keep out of the region. Another attempt to hammer out a solution was made by the Arabs on August 9, 1990 when the Arab leaders met in Cairo—Talks continued on August 11, 1990, when the Leagues voted to sent an Arab-peace-keeping force to Saudi Arabia which felt threatened. Saudi Arabia had solicited immediate military succor from the United States. In fact, once the American troops were invited by Saudi Arabia, and were deployed, all hopes of finding an Arab Solution to the crisis were dashed to the grounds.40

King Hussein of Jordan was under pressure from USA to close Jordan's only port at Aqaba to Iraqi commerce. It was openly hinted by USA that if Jordan did so, USA would provide some financial compensation to Jordan for the loss of its revenue.41

King Hussein faced an agonizing situation. If he refuses to accede to President Bush's wishes, USA might block exports from Aqaba, if


he closes the port, he may have a pro Saddam uprising in Jordan. On
August 16, 1990, Bush ordered a total naval blockade of Iraq shortly
after King Hussein’s mission failed to persuade him to desist from the
move.\textsuperscript{42}

On August 17, 1990, Iran and Iraq began exchanging the prisoners
of their war of eight years and Iraqi troops simultaneously began vacating
disputed Iranian territory. An estimated 70,000 prisoners of war were
held by Iran and 30,000 held by Iraq. Peace with Iran released three
divisions for Iraq to face USA in a conflict that appeared to be imminent
with the imposition of a US naval blockade.\textsuperscript{43}

Iraq, hoping to forestall an American attack, took all foreign
nationals in Iraq and Kuwait into custody and confined them in strategic
places to be used as human shields. This Iraqi action led to an unanimous
demanded that Iraq should release all foreign nationals held in Iraq and
Kuwait and that Iraq should permit and facilitate the departure of foreign
nationals from Kuwait.\textsuperscript{44}

While addressing the people of Iraq on 19 August, 1990 Saddam
Hussein blamed the US and Britain for the plight of the trapped
foreigners. He offered to release foreign detainees if President Bush
offered written guarantees that the US forces will be withdrawn from
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} Gazi Ibdewi Abdul Ghafour, n. 40, pp. 34-35.
Saudi Arabia and the economic boycott against Iraq would end. Thus, Saddam left no doubt that the foreigners would be used as shields, "their presence, along with Iraqi families, as vital target, may prevent military aggression", he said. President Bush called Iraq's restriction on "innocent civilians from countries" unacceptable and an "offense against all norms of international behaviour". Bush referred to the detained foreigners as "hostages". Iraqi troops began rounding up western nationals from their homes at gun point. On 22 August, 1990 foreign ministers of the European Community rejected Iraq's 24 August, 1990, deadline for the closure of all foreign embassies in Kuwait. On 24 August, 1990, Mikhail Gorbachev sent an urgent message to Hussein warning him that the Gulf situation was "extremely dangerous". Gorbachev signal led that he was ready to back additional measures to toughen the UN embargo against Iraq.45

On 25 August, 1990, the UN Security Council, in a sweeping 13 to 0 vote with Cuba and Yemen abstaining, adopted Resolution 665 authorizing "measures as may be necessary" including military action to enforce the economic embargo against Iraq. Several members of the UN expressed their serious concern over the situation and some of them had reservations but on varying degrees and grounds. Yemen perceived the situation as alarming. It noted that it was for the first time in the whole United Nations' history, that unclear powers were being provided

45. Ibid., p. 35.
to undertake such action which were neither specified nor had any clear definition of the Security Council’s role and powers of supervision over those action.**

The Iraqi aggression on Kuwait started by the destruction of the economic, social and political structure of Kuwait. First, it tried to create a lackey government; failing to find collaborators, the Iraqi regime issued a resolution annexing Kuwait to Iraq declaring it on August 28, 1990 as the 19th Governorate under the name of Kazima. The Iraqi media constantly reiterated that the decision of annexation is eternal and irrevocable. The Iraqi Regime issued several nominal resolutions to begin carrying out some projects like the building of a railway from Basra to Kuwait and the conveyance of Shatt al-Arab waters and others project he claimed to have been executed. He also proceeded with his attempts to change the demographic structure in Kuwait by forcing the Kuwaitis to leave their country or to apply for the Iraqi nationality and to replace Kuwaiti families with Iraqi ones. The International Community denounced all these illegal acts.^^

Following the Iraqi invasion, there wee widespread reports that Iraqi forces were plundering Kuwait city, looting goods from shops and warehouses, and searching for Kuwaiti resistance fighters and westerners in hiding. Iraqi troops, in an attempt to subjugate the population of


47. *The Iraqi Aggression on Kuwait, The Truth and the Tragedy,* (Kuwait: Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 1994) p. 77.
Kuwait, reportedly burned houses and torture and suspected of opposing the occupation forces. Many installation were dismantled and removed to Iraq.\textsuperscript{48}

The Secretary-General of United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, acknowledged on September 2 that he had failed in an attempt to bring about a solution to the crisis in West Asia. He said that in two days of talks in Amman with the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, he had met with total inflexibility "Yes, I failed, of course I failed", Perez de Cuellar said in a television interview.\textsuperscript{49}

Although President George Bush had made it clear that he would like to see President Saddam Hussein of Iraq removed from power. The administration's diplomatic plan in the Gulf rested on the more modest goal of forcing him to withdraw his troops from Kuwait. Then, according to the thinking in Bush's inner circle, the United State and its allies could probably contain Saddam Hussein and neutralize him as a regional power without toppling him. Administration officials said this approach, which had come into focus in recent days, is based on the notion that the Gulf crisis had so rearranged West Asia and indeed much of the rest of the world-politically and militarily, that Saddam Hussein would be unable to pursue an expansionist policy.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{48} The Middle East and North Africa, 1994, p. 572.
\textsuperscript{49} Asian Recorder, New Delhi, October 22-28, 1990, p. 21399.
\textsuperscript{50} The Times of India, New Delhi, September 2, 1990.
While the European Community fully intended to stand by the US in the Gulf crisis, what became increasingly apparent at the EC foreign ministers' conference was the anxiety over what one delegate described as 'the US appetite for war'.

The final communique issued after conference emphasized that a watertight, firmly applied embargo 'is the essential condition for reaching a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis'. This European foreign ministers felt that it was the best way of keeping the US penchant for a first strike, firmly reined. 'Whatever the dangers, the embargo must be strictly respected. This is the only means of avoiding armed conflict', said the Italian foreign minister, Gianni de Michelis. Italy was the EEC's then president.

The US President, George Bush was likely to hear the same message from the Soviet President, Gorbachev in Helsinki. It reflected the determination of the European allies not to allow the anti-Saddam consensus to be in anyway vitiated by a unilateral strike by the US. Shielded as they were by UN approbation, the Europeans feared that they would wake up to a US inspired fait accompli which would undoubtedly lead them all into war.31

The Super Power Summit held in Helsinki on September 9, 1990 ended in a rare display of unity between the USA and USSR in regard to the Gulf crisis. The joint declaration demanded that 'nothing short

31. The Times of India, New Delhi, September 9, 1990.
of complete implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions is acceptable'. However, there was a slight difference in approach, namely that the Soviets still preferred a political solution to the problem, with Gorbachev urging President Saddam Hussein to ‘display sobriety’. Whereas President Bush indicated clearly at the press conference following the meeting that the United States did not exclude, the use of force ‘if the current steps fail’. While the Helsinki Summit was under way, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz was visiting Tehran in a desperate attempt to reach an understanding with Iran to break the UN embargo. According to reports emanating from Tehran at that time, Iran had been prepared to consider supplying food and medicine to Iraq and to provide an outlet for its blockaded oil. The difficulty was that in such an event the UN Security Council may be expected to extend the present embargo, which covers Iraq and Kuwait (under Iraqi occupation) to cover Iran as well, adding a new dimension to the situation.

The Joint Declaration issued after the Helsinki Summit had, in fact, covered this aspect by stating that the economic embargo could be relaxed to allow for humanitarian aid only if it was ensured that the supplies of food and medicine were strictly confined to those for whom it was meant, ‘with special priority being given to the needs of the children’, through strict monitoring by appropriate international agencies.\footnote{The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, October 3, 1990.}
The United Nation Security Council had still not arrived at a decision about whether "humanitarian circumstances" in Iraq and Kuwait were such that they merit the supply of food. The issue seemed to be bogged down in a welter of UN bureaucracy, politics and questions about sovereignty of Kuwait.

At the heart of the debate was the unseemly haste demonstrated by an impulsive Security Council which in drafting Resolution 661 did not visualize the consequences of using food as a weapon. Essentially the Big Five were now trying to find a face-saving way to wriggle out of it in the face of an impressive Third World solidarity, excluding Gulf states, which would have seldom been emotionally a part of this grouping.53

The continuing Gulf crisis was characterized during September 1990 by - (i) the progressive strengthening of the military position of the multinational anti-Iraq coalition, as forces arrived to take up positions in the region and further commitments were made, (ii) the tightening of the economic embargo, extended to include interdiction of air traffic from September 25, 1990 and (iii) the growing perception on the diplomatic front that a negotiated solution might only be achievable in the context of a wider consideration of conflict in the region.54

The US Secretary of State James Baker and Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady were highly successful in efforts in the first half of

September 1990 to reinforce the anti-Iraq coalition by securing large-scale financial commitments, notably from Japan and West Germany, while Saudi Arabia and other smaller Gulf Sheikdoms contributed massively towards the cost of the US mobilization of forces. Meanwhile the adverse economic repercussions, especially for Jordan, Egypt and Turkey were offset in part by promises of financial assistance, but the position for Jordan in particular was much aggravated by the refugee crisis caused by the displacement of hundreds of thousands of foreign workers from Kuwait and Iraq.55

Economic consequences were particularly severe for countries which were forced to bear the costs of accommodating large numbers of refugees, such as Jordan and Turkey or suffer the loss of workers’ remittances, such as Egypt, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and the Philippines. The drying up of remittance flows was compounded by the rising cost of oil imports, and the loss of earning stemming from the trade embargo on Iraq and Kuwait. Jordan, Egypt and Turkey had earned substantial revenues from workers’ remittances and trade with, Iraq and Kuwait. Some middle income countries such as India relied heavily on oil imports from Iraq and also benefited from sizeable remittance flows, and for some low income countries, including Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Philippines, the loss of remittances and the rising cost of oil imports were expected to slow growth rates to an average

55. Ibid.
of around 1.5 percent by 1991 and add some $3,000 million to annual Third World debt interest payments.56

A report in Le Monde of September 20, 1990, disclosed that India faced the loss of workers' remittances from Iraq and Kuwait totalling $400 million, and would lose exports to Iraq and Kuwait worth around $185 million, while an oil price increase of $300 per barrel would add $1,700 million to its oil import bill.57

The US President George Bush expressed 'deep and growing concern' for Iraqi treatment of Kuwait and said that President Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism 'would indeed have serious consequences'. He said he would hold the Iraqi leader responsible for connections he might have with any terrorist acts against US interest. At the same time President Bush said he still hope to see a peaceful resolution of the Gulf crisis and he said he was determined to wait for the international economic sanctions to force an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.58

On September 23, 1990, Saddam Hussein said he would strike Israel and oil-fields in West Asia if Iraq felt its people were being stifled. The ruling Revolutionary Command Council and Baath party also said in a statement that the annexation of Kuwait was "irreversible and eternal". He repeated his demand that any discussion of a settlement in

56. Ibid., p. 37697.
57. Ibid.
the Gulf region must be linked with negotiations on the Palestinian issue.\textsuperscript{59}

The Bangladesh President Hussein Mohammad Ershad, said that six Muslim countries of Asia were jointly working to resolve the Gulf crisis by trying to bring the concerned parties to a negotiating table. But this would be done only when Iraq withdrew completely from Kuwait and legitimacy returned in the oil-rich Gulf state, Ershad said after a meeting with the UAE President, Sheikh Záyed Bin Sultan-al-Nahyan, in Abu Dhabi. He said that Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Maldives and Brunei were drafting a plan to find a peaceful solution to the problem.\textsuperscript{60}

The Emir of UAE made an emotional appeal on September 27, 1990, to United Nations to help free his country from Iraqi invaders and make it once again an ‘oasis of peace and safety’. He said, ‘we receive daily reports of massacres and continuing systematic armed looting and destruction of state assets and individual property’ He made no specific call for action. But in a sign of Kuwaits gratitude for world support, he said the country would write off interest on loans to developing nations. The Kuwaiti leader, who fled to Saudi Arabia when Iraqi troops invaded on August 2, 1990 said ‘rape, destruction, terror and torture are now the rule of the day in the once peaceful and tranquil

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 21427.

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Ibid.}
land of Kuwait'. He said an intense campaign of terror, torture and humiliation was continuing unabated.  

The Security Council which can decide punitive measures has already rallied to Kuwait's side by ordering sweeping economic sanctions, including a sea and air blockade.

There were few dramatic new developments during October, 1990 in the Gulf crisis as such, the continuing build-up of the United States dominated military response taking place against a background of diplomatic activity, of which the most notable feature was an apparently unsuccessful Soviet attempt to find some basis for a peace initiative. Attention was shifted for much of the month to consideration of the repercussions of the heightened Israeli-Palestinian conflict following the killing of 17 Arabs in Jerusalem on October 8, 1990. The UN Security Council convened on October 8, 1990 to discuss the shooting and the next day the USA proposed a draft resolution condemning the Israeli action and welcoming a decision taken by Perez de Cuellar to send an investigative mission to Jerusalem. The US resolution was not supported by the PLO which had pressed for the dispatch of a mission reporting directly to the Security Council (i.e. not to the UN Secretary General).

Eventually, on October 12, 1990, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 672, which essentially followed the US

draft, condemned the shootings and welcomed Perez de Cuellar's decision to send a mission to the area to 'recommend ways and means of ensuring the safety and protection of the Palestinian Civilians under Israeli occupation'.

The Iraqi National Assembly on November 20, 1990, passed a bill introducing the death penalty for people convicted of hoarding cereals. With reports from western sources suggesting that UN sanctions against Iraq were working, the Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens claimed on November 18, 1990, that the effects were 'visible in the factories', where there was a 'growing lack of spare parts', although the shops in Baghdad are full of things brought from Kuwait'. Reports from Iraqi army deserters crossing into Turkey indicated that sanction had not yet affected military weapons and equipments, but that food supplies were often inadequate.

On November, 25 1990 and November, 27 a Beirut-based dissident Shia Moslem group, the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq claimed that 4,500 opposition Moslem fundamentalists, mostly students, had been arrested for distributing leaflets and painting slogans criticizing the regime of Saddam Hussien. The reports added that the arrests had followed 'bloody clashes with knives and daggers on November 7 and 15, 1990 in Baghad'.

64. Ibid., p. 37760.
66. Ibid.
The UN Security Council on November 29, 1990 approved resolution 678 authorizing member governments to use "all necessary means" to ensure Iraq's complete withdrawal from Kuwait, if by a deadline of January 15, 1991, the Iraqis had not already done so and thereby complied with the UN's previous resolutions. It was the first resolution since that of June 27, 1950, on Korea to authorize the use of force. 67

On December 19, 1990 the UN General Assembly passed by 144 votes to one (Iraq) a resolution condemning Iraq for serious violations of human rights in Kuwait including torture, detention, summary execution and disappearances. The human rights organization Amnesty International claimed in a report published the same day that thousands of Kuwaitis had been tortured, raped and killed since the Iraqi invasion on August 2, 1990 and the ensuing occupation. Some 6,000-7,000 Kuwaiti troops had been transferred to Iraq, it said, and thousands of people were held in Iraqi and Kuwaiti prisons, including children as young as 13. 68

Amnesty claimed to have "compelling evidence" confirming that Iraqi soldiers had looted incubators from three of the main hospitals in Kuwait city, thereby causing the deaths of premature babies, the number of such deaths being given by the Kuwaiti Red Crescent society as 300. *The Times* of December 11, 1990 however, had quoted an Icelandic doctor

67. Ibid., p. 37870.

who had headed the intensive care unit at the Mubarak al-Kabir hospital, who described as “not true” the reports that Iraqi looting had contributed to the deaths of premature babies, but said that some babies had died “because of lack of staff”.  

Kuwaiti sources cited in the International Herald Tribune of December 17, 1990, suggested that at least 7,000 Kuwaitis had been killed and 25,000 arrested since the invasion.

The Gulf War:

At midnight, on January 13, 1991, the deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait under the famous UN Resolution 678 expired. The biggest and most powerful air attack in history was launched on 17 January 1991, with wave upon wave of strikes on Iraq by the US-led coalition. After about 18 hours of operations, allied military commanders claimed control of the Iraqi and Kuwaiti skies, crediting the encouraging achievement to the possible destruction of the Iraqi command and communication capability.

*Statesman* reported, “Baghadad is burning as war is Raging” 18,000 tonnes explosives dropped in Baghdad chemical, missile and nuclear-sites destroyed. Iraq claimed shooting down of 76 warplanes. *Business and Political Observers* reported with the Headline ‘Iraq is a

69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. *Encyclopaedia of West Asia*, n. 15, p. 171.
Thousand Hiroshimas'. Ironically, when the news of the attack came, Non-Aligned Members of the UN Security Council were discussing the possibility of a raw peace initiative. Thick black headlines and round the clock broadcasts were telling the world of the US attack.

President George Bush said the destruction of the Iraqi nuclear potential and chemical weapons facilities was one of the prime objectives of the attack which came 19 hours after the expiry of the United Nations deadline for Iraq to pull out its forces from Kuwait. Iraqi ambassador to Britain Dr. Azim al-Salihi, had said that his country would fight its enemies “until the last children”.

To drag Israel into the crisis on January 18, 1991, Iraq launched eight Scud missiles over Israel’s Tel Aviv, Haifa and other cities. The probability of Israeli intervention, widening the conflict and having an adverse effect on the Arab members of the coalition was initially high. Israel wanted to launch a 100 plane counter strike against Iraq on January 19, 1991, followed by helicopter and commando raids through Saudi Arabian airspace. However, tremendous international political pressure was brought to bear on the Israel government to dissuade it from this action. In response the coalition sought to destroy Iraq’s Scud capability and provided improved defences for Israel and Saudi Arabia.

73. Encyclopaedia of West Asia, n. 15, pp. 171-172.
The US-led multinational forces launched an attack on Iraqi ground forces entrenched in Kuwait on January 20, 1991. In what was widely seen as a prelude to a full-scale land war, while widespread bombing on Iraq's military targets continued for the fourth day.

However, the US and Britain agreed to hold back ground attacks on Iraq "for some time", and continued with air bombardments. The agreement came after the British Prime Minister John Major, and the US President, George Bush, reviewed the results of the first three day of fighting in the Gulf in a 20-minutes telephone conversation. Meanwhile, the supreme commander of the allied forces in the Gulf, General Norman Schwarzkopt, said that Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons capability had been almost totally destroyed. In Baghdad, the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) strongly condemned the western air attacks on the holy sites of Karbala and Najaf and cautioned Turkey against involvement in war. Libyan leader Col. Gaddafi urged Arab countries to press Security Council to pass resolution to end Gulf war.

On January 23, 1991 Israel agreed not to retaliate against Iraq's third Scud strike, while US-led multinational force Jets pounded the Iraqi port city of Basra. Iraq announced it would continue to attack Israel to liberate the Palestine and raided both Israel and Saudi Arabia.74

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani on February 4, 1991 offered to hold talks with Baghdad and Washington for a solution to the Gulf War even as US led coalition warships began the naval shelling of key Iraqi positions in Kuwait. Iranian president had also talks with Pak President. Gulf War entered its 19th day and both Iraq and US led forces preferred for a ground offensive. Yet the first time since the 1979 Islamic revolution US and Iran talks started. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Belonoyo also felt for Teheran for talks with Iran's officials.  

Ground operations began about midday on February 23, 1991, when leading reconnaissance elements advanced into Iraq. The French Division attacked the following morning supported by a brigade of the US 82nd Airborne Division and an American artillery brigade. The attack was initially unopposed, but encountered an Iraqi brigade occupying fortifications on their initial objective.  

Meanwhile experts from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) visited Baghdad at the invitation of the Iraqi government. They reported that all parts of the country were threatened with epidemic as a result of severe shortages of medicines and drinking water and lack of sanitation. The team found that the supply of fresh water for all purposes in Baghdad had fallen to between 5 and 20 liters per person per day compared with 500 liters before the war.  

75. Ibid., p. 208.  
76. Encyclopaedia of West Asia, n. 15, p. 172.
and that diarrhoeal diseases among children had quadrupled. Conditions were much worse in rural areas and especially in the town of Basra. The report also confirmed that the lack of electricity had drastically impaired the quality of medical services. A report in the Guardian of February 19, 1991, had claimed that in Baghdad alone the lack of electricity was causing the death of 50 babies a day.77

Keeping in view deteriorating situation in Iraq, offers of assistance, especially of food and medical supplies, came from a number of countries and international institutions. On February 16, 1991, UNICEF confirmed that 50 tonnes of medical aid for the treatment of mothers and children had arrived in Baghdad. On February 19, 1990 the UN Security Council authorized the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to make emergency deliveries of water purification equipment to reduce the risk of epidemics. The first convoy of medical supplies from Iran arrived on January 31, 1991, followed by a second on February 9, 1991. On February 10, 1991, Iran sent a further 16 tonnes of medical supplies under the supervision of the ICRC. On February 21, 1991, India also announced that it was sending medicine worth Rs. 10,000,000 while Algeria donated some 8 tonnes of food and medicines. On February 25, 1991, medical teams left Jordan and Tunisia carrying consignments of medicines, medical supplies and baby food.78

78. Ibid., p. 37987.
Kuwait was finally liberated on February 26, 1991, after 208 days of Iraqi occupation, had reportedly suffered severe shortages of essential supplies including food and medicines, and epidemics of cholera and dysentery. On 28 February, 1991, Iraq conveyed to the Security Council that it accepted and will comply fully with its resolutions. Iraq also announced the acceptance of 11 other Security Council Resolutions.

The UN Security Council on March 2, 1991 passed resolution 686 on a cease-fire in the Gulf War. A defacto cessation of hostilities had been observed by the US-led coalition force and Iraq from February 28, 1991. The terms laid out in resolution 686 were accepted by Iraq on March 3, 1991, as announced on Baghdad radio and conveyed in a letter to the UN from Tariq Aziz, then Iraqi foreign minister.

After the liberation of Kuwait eight Arab members of the anti Iraq coalition, meeting in Damascus on March 5-6, 1991, agreed to establish in Arab Peace Force as part of an ambitious regional security plan. The meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Syria and the six Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). The only Arab member of the anti-Iraq coalition not in attendance was Morocco. The participants signed the ‘Damascus declaration’ on March 6, 1991, which called, among other things, for the formation of an Arab peacekeeping force to maintain Security in the Gulf. The declaration

indicated that the force would consist mainly of Syrian and Egyptian forces and would ‘guarantee the security and peace of Arab countries in the Gulf region’.  

And in Kuwait later in March the Government announced that elections would take place within 6 to 12 months, following the return of Kuwaiti exiles and the compilation of a new electoral roll. The Government also declared its intention to reduce the number of foreign workers in Kuwait. On 20 March, 1991 the Council of Ministers resigned, apparently in response to public discontent at the Government failure to restore supplies of electricity, water and food.  

On April 3, 1991, the UN Security Council adopted its comprehensive resolution 687 on the terms of a full cease-fires in the Gulf. The passing of the resolution based on a United States draft, followed a week of intensive lobbying by the Bush administration. A separate resolution 689 on April 9 created a demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait, monitored by an observer mission for which all five permanent security council members were prepared to provide military personnel. Resolution 687 was accepted on April 5, 1991, by Iraq’s ruling revolutionary command council and on April 6, 1991, by the Iraqi National Assembly, after “extensive discussion”, with 160 votes in favour and 31 against. Iraq’s permanent representatives at the UN, Abdul Amir al-Anbari, conveyed on April 6, 1991, his government's formal

81.  Ibid., pp. 38116 - 38117.

acceptance. On April 11, 1991, the UN Security Council, having meanwhile approved resolution 689 on a demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait, notified the government that a cease-fires in the Gulf was formally in effect.  

In mid April 1991 the Amir of Kuwait announced that elections to restore the National Assembly, which had been dissolved in 1986, would be held in 1992 after the gradual return of the 400,000 Kuwaiti citizens who remained abroad. Illegal opposition groups, such as the Popular Islamic Congress, the Islamic Constitutional Movement, the National Islamic Coalition and Salafeen, responded to the Amir’s announcement by demanding the cessation of the nepotism towards members of the Al-Sabah family; the legalization of political parties; the separation of the government and the Al-Sabah family; the restoration of the freedom of the press; and an independent judiciary.

On April 20, 1991 the formation of a new Council of Ministers by the crown Prince was announced. Although several technocrats were appointed to important positions with the council, the major portfolios—foreign affairs, defence and the interior—were all retained by members of the Al-Sabah family. Members of opposition groups immediately denounced the new Council of Ministers as ‘unrepresentative.

85. Ibid.
Eight months of the Gulf crisis, in a way, acted as a catalyst for the emergence of a new regional and world order. Even before the Gulf crisis had erupted, the international environment was slowly changing. From being an essentially ideology based bipolar system with the USA and USSR acting as the leaders of the two blocks, we were now seem to be on the verge of a new detente. Unlike in the past, the basic of the new detente is not peaceful coexistence of opposing ideologies but the willingness of the socialist bloc to pursue a capitalist path of development and to seek the help of the erstwhile enemy in that process.86

The Gulf crisis also had ramifications outside the Gulf. Though the coalition's strategy vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis was not formulated as a conscious part of its global strategy, the main thrust of its response did project the USA as the new leader of the North. That message was not only directed at the USSR, whose so-called peace initiatives were summarily dismissed by the US, but also at the dissent movements in Europe. While governments followed the US, the French Defence Minister and an Italian Admiral had to resign on the question of the extent of their country's support to the coalition's policy under US leadership. The Gulf crisis offered to the American administration an opportunity for projecting a high moral tone in justifying the use of the force in the Gulf. President Bush, in a press conference on 5 February 1991, said that the Gulf war would be America's last war. He said that

there would be no need to fight another war because of the new world order.  

Earlier, in his State of the Union Message on January 29, 1991, President Bush had said that the US would bear a major share of leadership in the world’s effort to bring about a new world order ‘where brutality will go unrewarded and aggression will meet collective resistance.’ He went on to add that among the nations of the world, only the USA had the moral standing and the means to back it. ‘We’re the only nation on this earth that could assemble the force of peace. This is the burden of leadership and the strength that has made America the beacon of freedom in a searching world’. The US economy could not have faced the heavy burden of the war on its own. It was promised a heavy subsidy amounting to $54.545 billion, the bulk of which came from Saudi Arabia ($54.545 billion, the bulk of which came from Saudi Arabia ($54.545 billion, Kuwait ($16.0 bn), Japan ($10.74 bn), Germany ($6.57 bn) and UAE ($3.0 bn). Of that amount, $25.642 bn had already been contributed by the middle of March. Thus the Gulf war might even prove to be a massive RDF/CENTCOM exercise, with live ammunition and targets, founded by the friends of the USA in and outside the region, for the control of Gulf oil. Thus, whatever the global response, the Gulf will, for some time to come, remain under the overall umbrella of the USA.