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### *III. CUSTOMS AND OTHER REGULATORY INFORMATION*

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#### **Documentation**

Correspondence should be in either English or Arabic and submissions on international tenders should be in English. Correspondence should be addressed by title and not to government officials by name, as this is considered improper by the Iraqi government. Business persons planning to visit Iraq should obtain a list of potential buyers and contacts from the Canadian Embassy well in advance of the visit. Full product and company information should be sent in advance to introduce the firm. A visit may then be planned to follow up this initial effort or for specific opportunities, including tender submissions.

There is no provision for foreign companies, including those registered in other Arab countries, to establish themselves as private commercial enterprises in Iraq. The only way foreign companies can do business in Iraq at present is to obtain a contract with one of the state organizations, sometimes by entering into a joint venture with the organization concerned. A foreign company can obtain general information relating to a particular contract from the state organization offering the contract. Otherwise, there is no special government department that provides information to foreign companies wishing to trade with or do business in Iraq.

#### **Import and Exchange Controls**

Iraq has a very strict exchange control system which virtually precludes Iraqi nationals from obtaining foreign exchange. Because of the war and the increasing debt load, the Iraqi dinar became non-convertible and the export or import of dinars could be considered a capital offense. The official import licence allocation under which import licences are assigned within available foreign exchange for necessary food, machinery and raw materials is tied to the exchange control system. There is a no-foreign-exchange import licence available to private-sector importers, but it does not draw on Iraq's foreign exchange. Payment for