

Saddam lawyer found slain

BAGHDAD, Iraq (CNN) -- Iraqi police Wednesday discovered the bullet-riddled body of Khamees al-Ubaidi, a lead defense attorney for former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

His body was found in a Shia neighborhood near the Sadr City section of Baghdad, police said.

An hour earlier, a group of men dressed as Iraqi police stormed al-Ubaidi's home and asked him to come to the Ministry of Interior of questioning, according to Najib al-Nouemi, a fellow defense counsel for Hussein.

Al-Ubaidi's wife asked to see the men's identification, which they showed, and they left with al-Ubaidi about 7 a.m. (11 p.m. Tuesday ET), according to al-Nouemi.

Al-Ubaidi also represented Hussein's half-brother, Barzan Hassan.

He is the third member of the defense team to have been killed since the start of the trial late last year.

Sadoon Janabi, an attorney for Awad Hamad Bandar, the former chief judge of Hussein's Revolutionary Court, was kidnapped and shot in the head October 20, the day after the trial began.

Adil Muhammed al-Zubaidi, who was representing former Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, was shot to death November 8.

The killings have prompted complaints about security from the defense team, including former U.S. **Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who has called for the abolition of the tribunal and suggested trying the former Iraqi leader in the United States.**

Hussein and seven co-defendants face charges for killing more than 140 Shiite males during a crackdown after an attempt on the former Iraqi leader's life in Dujail in 1982.

Al-Nouemi said he believes the killing of al-Ubaidi was an attempt to send a message to the rest of the defense team to stay away from Baghdad for the closing arguments in the trial, scheduled for July 10.

He said he had recently asked al-Ubaidi to take a vacation outside Iraq, but he refused.

On Monday, the prosecutor in the trial demanded the death penalty for Hussein and two of his top co-defendants.