



Yalda Hakim makes BBC World News debut presenting three part Our World series – ‘Iraq: Ten Years On’

Tuesday 19 March: The BBC has announced that new presenter, Yalda Hakim, will make her on-screen debut on BBC World News on 23 March presenting a special three part series of *Our World* entitled, *Iraq: Ten Years On*.

One of Australia’s brightest young journalists, Yalda joined BBC World News from Australia’s SBS Dateline in December 2012. In addition to presenting *Our World*, Yalda will also present news programmes on BBC World News. From a headline-making investigation in Afghanistan’s Kandahar province to her reporting from Libya during the Arab Spring, Yalda has already built up a wealth of journalistic experience around the world. She speaks English, Urdu, Hindi, Mandarin and Persian.

In three new programmes on Iraq, Yalda travels across the country to explore the real lives of ordinary Iraqis 10 years after the US-led invasion. She discovers how conflict, regime change, sectarian violence and US withdrawal have changed the lives of people across the country at a time of rising tensions.

The new series is driven by compelling human stories, as Yalda investigates the contemporary conflicts and issues individuals, families and communities face. She meets people whose lives are dictated by small local events as well as large shifts in global politics.

Programme 1: *Born Under a Bad Sign*

Saturday 23 March at 0730 and 2230 and Monday 25 March at 0930 (all times AEDT)

Yalda travels to Iraq to investigate the staggering rise in the numbers of babies born with birth defects and cancer since the start of the war 10 years ago. The Health Ministry tells her that they have found a rise in birth defects and cancers in places which saw the fiercest fighting. Although a link to coalition munitions has not yet been proven. Yalda meets the families who are watching their children struggle and die, and the doctors who are struggling to save them.

Programme 2: *Paragliding over Mosul*

Saturday 13 April at 0830, 2030 and Monday 15 April at 0730 (all times AEST)

Mosul – some call it the most dangerous city in the world, headquarters for Al Qaeda in Iraq, torn apart by sectarian conflict. But for millions of Iraqis, it’s home, including the men and women of the Falcon Aviation club, who dream of their city being known for their feats in the air, not the dangers on the ground. Yalda travels into Mosul to meet them, along the way, she learns first-hand what life is like for the people of this city, meets the governor, and spends some time with them as they soar over the problems below.

Programme 3: *In Your Eyes: The Women of Iraq*

Saturday 20 April at 0830 and 2030 and Monday 22 April at 0730 (all times AEST)

It’s often said that women are the main casualties of modern warfare. 10 years after the invasion of Iraq, Yalda Hakim reports from Baghdad, to see how life has changed for women. Under Saddam Iraqi women were well educated and mainly free to dress and marry as they wished. But since the so

called 'liberation' of Iraq, Yalda discovers that for many, life has become less liberated. There are two million widows struggling to get by; and sex trafficking and prostitution are on the rise.

Focusing on the invisible women of Iraq, Yalda investigates why things are so bad for women now.

Ends

For more information and images, please contact Nicole Hurren, Senior Communications Executive
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Notes to editors

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