

DEVELOPMENTS Iraq

U.S. and Turkish military officials were working to streamline procedures for any future attacks against rebels in northern Iraq after top American officials in Baghdad were angered about how Sunday's Turkish bombing unfolded. State and Defense Department officials in Washington and Baghdad said top U.S. commanders in Iraq didn't learn of the incursion until the first Turkish planes were on their way — crossing the border or already over it. The Turkish military did not inform the U.S. as quickly as agreed, so the U.S. had to rush to clear airspace, U.S. officials said, speaking anonymously.

A former Army private charged with raping an Iraqi girl, 14, and killing her and her family, will go on trial in April 2009, a federal judge in Kentucky has ruled.

Blackwater Worldwide contractors are accused of killing an Iraqi in a September shooting in a second lawsuit filed by a human rights group. Referring to Blackwater guards as "mercenaries," the Center for Constitutional Rights accused the company of war crimes, assault, wrongful death, negligent hiring and intentional infliction of emotional distress. The suit involves a Sept. 9 shooting near al-Watahba Square in Baghdad, where it's alleged Blackwater guards fired without cause into a crowd. The rights group filed the suit on behalf of Ali Hussamaldeen Ibrahim Albazzaz, who it says died in the shooting.

The man in charge of all U.S. government buildings abroad, retired Army Gen. Charles Williams, announced his retirement yesterday amid questions over construction of the mammoth new \$600-million embassy in Iraq. The high-profile Baghdad com-

pound, due to be completed in September, has been beset by construction, logistical and security hitches. Its opening has now been delayed until well into next year.

