

The Swedes' problem leads straight to Iraq

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Byline: David Carrigg

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Series: Stolen Lives: An in-depth look at the dangerous world of auto crime

In Sweden, the country's auto theft task force is working with Iraqi border guards to help stem the flow of stolen autos from Sweden into Northern Iraq.

In 2004, there were 40,000 Swedish registered vehicles driven into Iraq by ex-pats returning home. Many were stolen or rented and not returned.

A Swedish insurance official attending the IAATI's annual conference in New Orleans in August said many cars stolen in Europe end up in war zones.

He recalled in the mid-1990s watching footage from Beirut when he saw a Toyota Landcruiser with several armed men hanging out the windows.

As the vehicle drove past the camera, the man noted the vehicle had Swedish licence plates and had obviously been stolen.