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HEADLINE: TV show that brings Arab views to American audience gears up for war

BYLINE: By MICHELLE R. SMITH, Associated Press Writer

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As news organizations worldwide prepared for war in Iraq, a small satellite television station was readying itself to bring the Arab world's perspective on the conflict into American living rooms.

WorldLink TV and its Arab news show, Mosaic, geared up Thursday to provide English-dubbed news and video footage from television stations in Iraq and its neighbors throughout the Middle East.

"We're getting the news directly from there as the Arabs are viewing it - in their own opinion, minus the American views and pundits," said Jamal Dajani, WorldLink's director of Arabic programming.

Mosaic staffers pick stories from news shows broadcast in Morocco, Dubai, Iran, Israel, and other countries across the Middle East. They translate the stories into English and air them uncut in a daily program.

This week, though, as events unfold in Iraq, Mosaic will begin presenting regular live updates on the war, possibly through the weekend and after, Dajani said.

The station, which is available to about 20 million subscribers of DirecTV and the Dish Network across the country, is considering more extensive coverage, depending on the amount of footage it can get from the Middle East, Dajani said.

The difference between an American network news show and the stories on Mosaic is striking. Stories from the Middle East often

include graphic violence, which Dajani expects would be the case with war footage from Iraq.

Perspectives also differ, notably on President Bush's speech this week in which he addressed the Iraqi people directly and promised to free them from Saddam Hussein's tyranny.

"This rosy picture for liberating the Iraqis, that is nonexistent (on Arab television stations)," Dajani said. "It's mocked, if anything." Mosaic also has provided footage to some networks and local television stations, including a recent speech by Saddam that was broadcast on Iraqi TV.

"We're doing something not only for the American public, but for journalists," he said.