



**Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution In Iraq  
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## **Reconciling Iraq**

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In the name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate

## Reconciling Iraq

Initially, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the U.S. Institute of Peace and thank you also for your presence and participation.

The hot issues in Iraq currently are too numerous to talk about in this gathering and I do not want to take much of your valuable time. This is why I chose for my main speech tonight to respond to a very broad question which could address all topics about Iraq.

This question is: *Iraq, Where To?*

Is Iraq heading towards division and civil war? Is Iraq going to be an extension of Iran? Is it going to be used as a base to launch attacks on neighboring countries? And is going to represent an area for settling down some international issues?

### Federalism:

Many concerns have been raised with regard to the formation of Federal Regions in Iraq as a first step for divided Iraq. In my point of view, these concerns are being exaggerated. This kind of experience, on the international level, helped in unifying more that dividing and separating.

Ever since its establishment following World War II, the political regime in Iraq was based on the concept of "Authority" dominated by a small group belonging to a certain faction which distanced out all the remaining elements of the Iraqi society. This group never ruled by the constitution nor through respecting human rights. It was never elected by the Iraqi people.

This authority lasted in the position of power throughout a whole century. During all that time, it never let people have the feeling that the government represents him/her or show any care for the citizens of that country. Throughout 82 years, the majority of Iraqis never felt that the government in Baghdad, represents them. The Kurds, during these years, lived in isolation and feeling of continuous hostility from the regime in Baghdad. The citizens in the Central and Southern regions suffered oppression, negligence and depriving them of their rights. Iraqi citizens never felt a sense of responsibility towards their country or to voice their opinion freely in their country.

The past has witnessed the clearest evidence of division despite the fact that Iraq seemed from the outside that it was united. It was united only because of a centralized dictatorship oppressive government. A government that was in total control of the country's petroleum resources in the South, strengthening the sectarian differences on one hand and enjoying its desires on the other.

Now after the fall of the dictatorship in Iraq, and the relief of the Iraqis from the past memories, now they enjoy the freedom to choose the kind of government and the kind of

constitution to live under its rule. They want to enjoy a government that they themselves choose.

The constitution has confirmed that Iraq is a federal country, and in light of that, the Iraqis voted on that decisive issue with their own free will for the first time in the history of their country.

There are two kinds of understanding today in Iraq concerning the idea of "State & Authority": the first of which is the natural outcome of eight decades of the absence of the understanding of what "state & authority" mean. Those still believe that who ever is in control of the government in Baghdad can rule according to what he desires. These people see that the Federal System takes away from them part of their authority which they were dreaming of getting some day. This type belongs to both Sunnis as well as Shiites.

The other type sees that there is no way to achieve a fair political and administrative system except by the federalism.

Federalism definitely will not divide Iraq, but it might cause some fear in some countries in the region where they were used to the singular rule which deprives the other minorities from exercising their religious & national freedom, and legitimate rights.

We have no right to force one type of government on the Iraqis. When they decided on the constitution, the Iraqis opted for Federalism, which has been implemented in Kurdistan. The transfer in the other regions in Iraq shall take place by the regional governments' referendum a little over a year from now. At that time, it means that the Iraqis will voice their opinion whether they accept it or reject it as a system for their country. When we pose the question of federalism it does not mean that we are deciding for the people. Rather, we pose the question and let the people decide.

## **The Civil War**

Talking about the civil war does not only scare the others but it scares us too. This issue did not surface after the collapse of Saddam but it was in existence before that too. Because we were trying to achieve peace we rejected the idea of chaotic revenge against the Bathists. We said we have to take those who committed crimes against the Iraqi citizens should face fair trials. However, the Bathists interpreted that as step of sectarian revenge against the Sunnis.

From the first days after the fall of Saddam, they launched a sectarian war against the Shiites. When they failed in achieving their goal they exploded the two shrines of the Shiite's Imams in Samarra. The Shiite Religious authorities were able to calm down the Shiite anger. On Nov. 14, 2006 a number of cars were exploded in the City of Al-Sadr. The anger of the Shiites almost went out of control if it were not for the Shiite Religious Authorities who asked the people to hold their anger and keep quiet.

We are aware of the danger of this war which is not in the interest of Iraq. This serves only the interest of the enemies of the change and those Bathists who brought destruction and deaths to Iraq. This is why it was taken as a fertile ground by Al-Qaeda to achieve their objectives from 2004 until now.

We believe that the deterring factors are not up to the level of their criminal activities. The strikes they are getting from the multinational forces are not hard enough to put an end to their acts, but leave them stand up again to resume their criminal acts. This means that there is something wrong in the policies taken to deal with that danger threatening the lives of the Iraqis.

Eliminating the danger of the Civil War in Iraq could only be achieved through directing decisive strikes against terrorist Bathists terrorists in Iraq. Otherwise we'll continue to witness massacres being committed every now and then against the innocent Iraqis.

I do not mean that the civil war in Iraq is impossible because as they say, "patience has its limits". I am afraid that some day the Shiite Religious Authorities might lose their ability to calm down the reaction to the continuous sectarian cleansing attacks and violating the sovereignty of the holy places of the Shiites aiming to displace them by the Arab media. They are trying the Shiite majority from getting their legitimate rights.

The Religious Authorities in Iraq are the last fortress that the Iraqis resort to from the danger of divisions and civil war. We should not resort to dealing with issues that may weaken the religious authorities otherwise Iraq may be subjected to catastrophic storms that no power in the world could calm or control to return Iraq to its senses.

### **Iraq & Iran:**

We confirmed on more than one occasion that we are seeking building an independent Iraq away from any affiliation to any power regional or international. Building that kind of Iraq could not be achieved unless through this independence in the decision making process. This does not mean that we should cut off relations with all nations but rather we should build these relations on equal exchange of interests

During the past decades, Saddam has experienced creating crisis against the international community he launched wars against neighboring countries. The Iraqis gained nothing out of this except destruction and backwardness, not only making us fall behind the advanced nations but even behind neighbors that are already developing countries.

We do not want to repeat the unsuccessful experiences, but we want to create good relations with all neighboring countries starting from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia south, to Turkey in the north, from Iran east to Syria and Jordan in the west. This idea was not created recently but it was brought up by martyr Mohamed Baqer Al-Hakim 15 years ago and we still believe in it.

We do not want to distribute shares of powers to neighboring countries. But rather we want balanced relations. The countries that stand for peace for the people of Iraq and for the development and rebuilding of Iraq will be very close to the Iraqis. This does not mean that this party shall share part of the powers in Iraq. Iraq is for the Iraqis only and Iraq is for all the Iraqis.

This means that Iraq shall not be a region where others may exercise powers regionally or internationally. Iraq shall be an extension of its own sovereignty and an extension of

its Islamic and Arab identity as well as to the international efforts for peace and security. When Iraq is anything other than that, it would be isolated and it means that we are going back to the isolation era of Saddam and his disposed regime.

### **Iraq is not a base for aggression:**

When we talk about the independence of the Iraqi will, we talk about our sovereignty on our territories. We mean that we refuse to transfer Iraq to a base for aggression against our neighbors. We do not mean here the armed military aggression, but any type of aggression, military, political, security, or economic. We refuse to transfer Iraq to a source of security concerns for all nations even the opposing powers that are currently on the Iraqi territories.

What we are seeking is to transfer Iraq to a base for peace and security in the regions and in the world. We reject any act or effort that might stop us short of achieving that goal. The Iraqis have experienced lots of losses when the previous regime tried to make Iraq a base for launching wars against the peoples of the region. This is the kind of Iraq that we'd like to see come true. Have we succeeded in getting closer to that goal which we have put forth some long time ago?

Yes, we have achieved a lot. The political freedom in Iraq today is unprecedented in all the countries of the region. Iraq has witnessed three rounds of elections that the world and the UN have attested to their impartiality. This is despite some objections. We have drawn a constitution that the majority of the Iraqis have voted for. Today we have social and civil institutions even though they have not developed completely but they are on the way there. We have free media that can hold the government accountable and disclosed corruption.

Despite all the political trends, we have today a united national government where all classes of the Iraqi people participate. This is a good ground to build a political system for institutional state where each citizen realizes his rights and duties. This is unprecedented in the modern history of Iraq.

Iraq has just gotten rid of the hell of dictatorship and the oppression of a regime. This definitely requires some time to anchor the foundation of free democracy. We are not pessimistic about what is going on in Iraq despite all the tragedies that definitely hurt us. We are confident that the Iraqis are capable of establishing a state based on law and democracy in time. The Iraqis have done miracles in the past three years.

In order for the Iraqi experience to come forward and overcome the obstacles that hamper Iraq's progress and stability we need to work on the following:

- 1- Conclude joint security agreements with neighboring countries and the region to fight terrorism and hand over criminals.
- 2- Enforce our borders and stop infiltration into Iraq.

- 3- Enforce the Iraqi security apparatus by equipping them with the needed capabilities and movements within the law.
- 4- Implement the anti-terrorism law enacted by the Iraqi House of Representatives.
- 5- Arms should be limited to the hands of the government forces. The government should be the only entity responsible for securing the safety of the people and to ensure the establishment of the state of law and the modern state which guarantees the rights of all on the basis of the constitutions.
- 6- Provide international support to the current government to assist it in fighting terrorism which gathered from all over the world to fight in Iraq. Iraq has become a spot in the world paying the price of terrorism gathering in it.
- 7- Diplomatic exchange with neighboring countries and the world and to adopt the policy of peaceful solutions to all conflicts in accordance with article 33 of the UN Charter.
- 8- Trade exchange to rebuild Iraq and improve services.
- 9- Achieve national reconciliation in Iraq and stop stirring sectarian fighting at the hands of Arab media and others.