



IRAQ STUDY GROUP

Iraq Study Group Fact Sheet

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1. How was the Iraq Study Group created?

The Iraq Study Group (ISG) was launched on March 15, 2006 at a meeting on Capitol Hill. It was created at the direction of a bipartisan group of members of the U.S. Congress. Representative Frank Wolf (R-VA) was the leading supporter of the group's creation. Wolf had been calling for a "fresh eyes" assessment of the situation in Iraq since the summer of 2005. From its inception, the ISG was designed to be bipartisan, and the initiative has attracted broad, bipartisan support among members of the House and Senate.

USIP press materials about the ISG can be found here:

<http://www.usip.org/isg/index.html>

Congressional press materials about the ISG can be found here:

http://www.usip.org/isg/letter_congress.html

2. Was the Bush administration involved in creating the ISG?

The Bush administration was not involved in creating the ISG, but the White House welcomed it and has provided access to people, documents and travel to Iraq. President Bush met with the ISG members on June 14, 2006 and has met further with the two co-chairs. The White House respects the independence of the group.

A transcript and video of the ISG White House meeting with President Bush can be found here:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/06/20060614-3.html>

3. What role does United States Institute of Peace play with the ISG?

Congressman Frank Wolf, who chairs the House Appropriations Subcommittee that funds the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), asked USIP to act as the facilitating agency for the ISG, along with the support of the Center for the Study of the Presidency, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University.

As facilitator, USIP maintains an in-house Iraq expert committee that supports the ISG principals in their work. USIP has assisted the group and its members by convening expert working groups, writing briefing papers, providing analysis and coordinating meetings of the ISG.

4. Does the ISG have a specific mandate?

The ISG was not given a statutory mandate when it was created. However, at the direction of the ISG co-chairs, its orientation has been to offer a forward-looking assessment of the current and prospective situation in Iraq, including policy suggestions and advice. Specifically, ISG members have focused their review of the situation in Iraq on four broad topics:

- The strategic environment in Iraq and the region;
- The security of Iraq and key challenges to enhancing security within the country;
- Political developments within Iraq following the elections and formation of the new government;
- The economy and reconstruction.

5. Who sits on the ISG?

The ISG principals are a bipartisan group of senior individuals who have had distinguished careers in public service. Its co-chairs are former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III (R) and former chairman of the House International Relations Committee Lee Hamilton (D).

The other ISG members are:

- Lawrence S. Eagleburger, former U.S. Secretary of State ;
- Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., Senior Managing Director, Lazard, Freres & Co. LLC;
- Edwin Meese, III, former U.S. Attorney General;
- Sandra Day O'Connor, former U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice;
- Leon E. Panetta, former White House Chief of Staff;
- William J. Perry, former U.S. Secretary of Defense;
- Charles S. Robb, former U.S. Senator;
- Alan K. Simpson, former U.S. Senator.

6. How was the membership chosen?

Co-chairs Baker and Hamilton were chosen by mutual agreement among the Congressional organizers, USIP, and the other supporting organizations. After being named co-chairs, Baker and Hamilton selected the remaining group members in consultation with USIP and the other supporting organizations.

7. What other experts are involved?

USIP has convened expert working groups in the areas of Economy and Reconstruction; Military and Security; Political Development; and Strategic Environment. The working groups are chaired by senior USIP staff, and their membership is comprised of experts from academia, government, and the private sector. In all, 44 such experts have participated pro bono to provide advice to the ISG.

A complete list of the working group membership can be found here:

http://www.usip.org/isg/working_groups.html

8. What outside groups and individuals has the ISG consulted during this process?

ISG principals have met with many current and former high-level U.S. and Iraqi government officials in Washington, Iraq and elsewhere, including President Bush, Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki, as well as military officers, foreign government officials, academics, business executives and heads of civil society organizations in the U.S and in Iraq. In addition, the expert working group members have met with or consulted hundreds of others.

A comprehensive list of ISG meetings can be found here:

http://www.usip.org/isg/isg_meetings.pdf

9. When will the ISG issue its report?

Co-chairs Baker and Hamilton have stated that the group's recommendations will be presented to the President, the Congress, and the American people sometime after the November 7 U.S. elections. The ISG is working expeditiously to complete its report.

10. What recommendations will the ISG make?

The ISG report is not yet complete. Any advance discussion of the report's recommendations by those other than the ISG principals is purely speculative. Papers prepared by the expert working groups represent advice to the ISG, not conclusions of the ISG. The ISG will write its own report.

11. To whom will the report be issued?

The ISG members will deliver the report to Congress and to the President of the United States and will make the report available to media and the general public on the day it is released.

12. How many reports will the ISG issue?

The ISG plans to issue one final report.

13. What actions will be taken after the report is issued?

The ISG will provide recommendations that the Bush administration and Congress can use to consider the future direction of U.S. policy regarding Iraq. Actual policy decisions, of course, can only be made by the administration and Congress.