



NEW PLAYERS AND PRIORITIES IN THE NEXT CHAPTER OF U.S.-IRAQ RELATIONS

Over the next 20 months, a series of events will alter the dynamics of bilateral relations between the United States and the Government of Iraq (GOI): a new government will take the reins of power in Baghdad and conduct Iraq's first nationwide census in a generation; the United States Forces-Iraq (USF-I) will see a change in leadership, and a new commander will oversee the conclusion of the U.S. military's advise-and-assist mission; a new Chief of Mission at U.S. Embassy-Baghdad will be responsible for the evolving U.S. diplomatic presence in Iraq; and—in December 2011—the last U.S. troops will withdraw from Iraq, 8 years after deposing the totalitarian regime of Saddam Hussein.

Parliamentary Elections

On March 7, 2010, about 11.5 million Iraqi citizens went to the polls to elect the 325 members of Iraq's newly expanded Council of Representatives (CoR). Unlike the previous parliamentary elections in December 2005, Iraqi voters could vote for a group of allied politicians (generally referred to as a list, or bloc) and, if they so chose, support a specific candidate. On April 19, 2010, Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission ordered a manual recount of the more than 2.5 million ballots cast in Baghdad province, potentially affecting the winners of many of Baghdad's 70 seats.

The fundamental question of who will form and lead Iraq's next government remains unanswered. Iraq's Higher Judicial

Council ruled that the top vote-getting bloc does not necessarily choose the Prime Minister; rather, this privilege goes to whichever party can form a governing coalition. Months of intense negotiations may yet transpire as Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's State of Law Coalition (89 seats, pending recount) vies with former Prime Minister Ayad Allawi's al-Iraqiya bloc (91 seats, pending recount) to construct an alliance capable of controlling the 163 seats needed to form a government. But certain facts now appear settled:

- The incumbent Prime Minister dominated Iraq's Shia heartland, winning the most seats in nine provinces.
- Notwithstanding the fact that al-Iraqiya is led by the Shia (but secular-leaning) Ayad Allawi, Sunni voters strongly supported Allawi's bloc, with two Sunni-led parties providing 51 (56%) of al-Iraqiya's 91 seats.
- Women will occupy 82 seats in the new CoR, 25% of the total, as required by Iraq's constitution.
- New members will feature prominently in the new parliament. Only 62 legislators (19%) in the new CoR will have served previously.

While it is not yet clear which combination of parties will form the next government—or who will lead it—many of Iraq's key ministries will almost certainly be under new management, and U.S. officials will have to develop new relationships with Iraqi interlocutors.

A Fragile Calm

Election Day in Iraq was relatively free of violence. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), with support from USF-I, took the lead in protecting more than 10,000 polling centers, but a series of scattered attacks killed approximately 38 civilians. Several mass-casualty attacks rocked Baghdad in April as insurgents sought to take advantage of political uncertainty. Unlike their practice in recent quarters, however, violent extremists tended to avoid targeting GOI ministry buildings, instead bombing apartment buildings, foreign embassies, and mosques. Notwithstanding these persistent challenges, a joint U.S.-Iraqi military operation in mid-April killed the two top leaders of al-Qaeda in Iraq: Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayub al-Masri. One U.S. soldier died in the assault.

USF-I Repositioning Proceeds Apace

On August 31, 2010, in recognition of the formal end of the U.S. combat mission in Iraq, the Department of Defense (DoD) will replace Operation Iraqi Freedom with Operation New Dawn. Beginning in September, the remaining U.S. forces—numbering about 50,000 troops—will concentrate



Iraqi Police officers in Tikrit show their ink-stained index fingers after an early-voting session for election-support personnel on March 4, 2010. (USF-I photo)

Influential in Iraq



Ayad Allawi

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Shia Islam

Political Positions:

Prime Minister of Iraq (2004–2005)

Party/Coalition:

Iraqi National List/Iraqi National Movement (al-Iraqiya)

Note: Secular-leaning politician; former Ba'athist.



Massoud Barzani

Ethnicity/Religion:

Kurd/Sunni Islam

Political Positions:

President of the Kurdistan Region (2005–present)

Party/Coalition:

Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP)/Kurdistani Coalition

Note: Leader of the KDP; member of a prominent political family.



Ahmed Chalabi

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Shia Islam

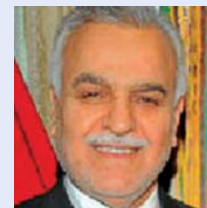
Political Positions:

Interim Oil Minister (2005), Deputy Prime Minister (2005–2006)

Party/Coalition:

Iraqi National Congress/Iraqi National Alliance

Note: Early advocate for U.S. military action in Iraq; early favorite of the U.S. Administration.



Tariq al-Hashimi

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Sunni Islam

Political Positions:

Vice President of Iraq (2006–present)

Party/Coalition:

Renewal List/al-Iraqiya

Note: Moderate politician and leader of the Iraqi Islamic Party, which backed the Iraqi National Movement (al-Iraqiya, headed by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi) in the March 2010 elections.



Ibrahim al-Ja'afari

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Shia Islam

Political Positions:

Vice President of Iraq (2004–2005), Prime Minister of Iraq (2005–2006)

Party/Coalition:

Islamic Dawa/Iraqi National Alliance

Note: Sayyid (descendent of prophet Mohammad); succeeded by al-Maliki as leader of the Dawa Party.



Baqir Jabr al-Zubeidi

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Shia Islam

Political Positions:

Ministry of Interior (2005–2006), Minister of Finance (2006–present)

Party/Coalition:

Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI)/Iraqi National Alliance

Note: In March 2010, sought re-election to parliament as a member of the Iraqi National Alliance, which includes ISCI and the Sadrist movement.



Adel Abdul al-Mahdi

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Shia Islam

Political Positions:

Vice President of Iraq (2005–present)

Party/Coalition:

Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI)/Iraqi National Alliance

Note: French-trained economist who was affiliated with Iraqi communists before aligning with Shia cleric Ayatollah Mohammad Bakir al-Hakim; lived in exile for more than 30 years before returning to Iraq in April 2003.



Nouri al-Maliki

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Shia Islam

Political Positions:

Prime Minister of Iraq (2006–present)

Party/Coalition:

Islamic Dawa/State of Law

Note: Leader of Dawa Party since 2007; signed Saddam Hussein's death warrant in 2006.



Muqtada al-Sadr

Ethnicity/Religion:

Arab/Shia Islam

Political Positions:

None

Party/Coalition:

Sadrist Movement/Iraqi National Alliance

Note: Influential religious figure; son of famous Iraqi cleric Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq al-Sadr; early critic of U.S. intervention in Iraq. His followers had several violent clashes with Coalition Forces.



Barham Salih

Ethnicity/Religion:

Kurd/Sunni Islam

Political Positions:

Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq (2004–2005), GOI Minister of Planning (2005), Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq (2006–2009), Prime Minister of Kurdistan Region (2009–Present)

Party/Coalition:

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan/Kurdistan List

Note: Leader of the joint KDP/PUK Kurdistan List during July 2009 KRG election.



Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani

Ethnicity/Religion:

Shia Islam

Political Positions:

None

Party/Coalition:

None

Note: Highest-ranking Shia cleric in the world; advocate of restraint during times of violence. His *fatwas* encouraged Iraq's Shia population to participate in the democratic process.



Jalal Talabani

Ethnicity/Religion:

Kurd/Sunni Islam

Political Positions:

President of Iraq (2005–Present)

Party/Coalition:

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Note: Founder/leader of the PUK.

Major Tribal and Ethnosectarian Groups



Kurds

In 1974, a short-lived autonomy agreement between Iraq's Kurdish population and the Iraqi government collapsed, and war broke out, causing thousands of Kurds to flee to neighboring countries. Kurds fought the Iraqi government again in the 1980s—at one point eliciting support from Iran—and in 1988, Saddam Hussein's government dropped poison gas on the Kurdish village of Halabja, killing an estimated 5,000 people. In 1991, Kurds fled again to Iran and Turkey after staging a failed uprising against Saddam Hussein's regime following the Persian Gulf War, but later attained de facto self-rule and held parliamentary elections. Kurdish factions fought each other in a civil war in the mid-1990s, but since 2003, those factions have participated in Iraqi elections as well as separate elections to form the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

Al-Shammar Tribe

The Shammar claim to be Iraq's biggest tribal confederation, with more than 1.5 million people concentrated in the northwest, but spread out across the northern half of Iraq. Like other big confederations, it has tended to be unified only when threatened from the outside, as in wartime. Shammar member tribes include the Toqa (historically settled in central Iraq) and the Jarba (centered in the north). Comprising Sunni and Shia groups, the tribes' reach extends from Yemen to the United Arab Emirates in the Arabian Peninsula.

Al-Tikriti Tribe

Saddam Hussein came from the Nassir branch of this large Sunni tribe located in central Iraq, which formed the core of the Ba'athist Party. The former President of Iraq, General Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr, was also a Tikriti. The Nassir sub-tribe is believed to include more than 350,000 young men. In July 2003, its leader, Abdullah Mahmoud al-Khattab, was gunned down in Tikrit, a few weeks after he publicly disavowed Saddam Hussein.

Al-Dulaimi Tribe

One of the largest Arab tribes, the majority-Sunni Dulaimis formed the nucleus of the insurgency against U.S. forces in Iraq, and many volunteered for suicide missions. Concentrated in Anbar and Samarra, in 2006, they participated in the Iraqi Awakening, or "Sahwa," and worked with Coalition forces against al-Qaeda groups. Many joined the Sons of Iraq.

Shia Tribes

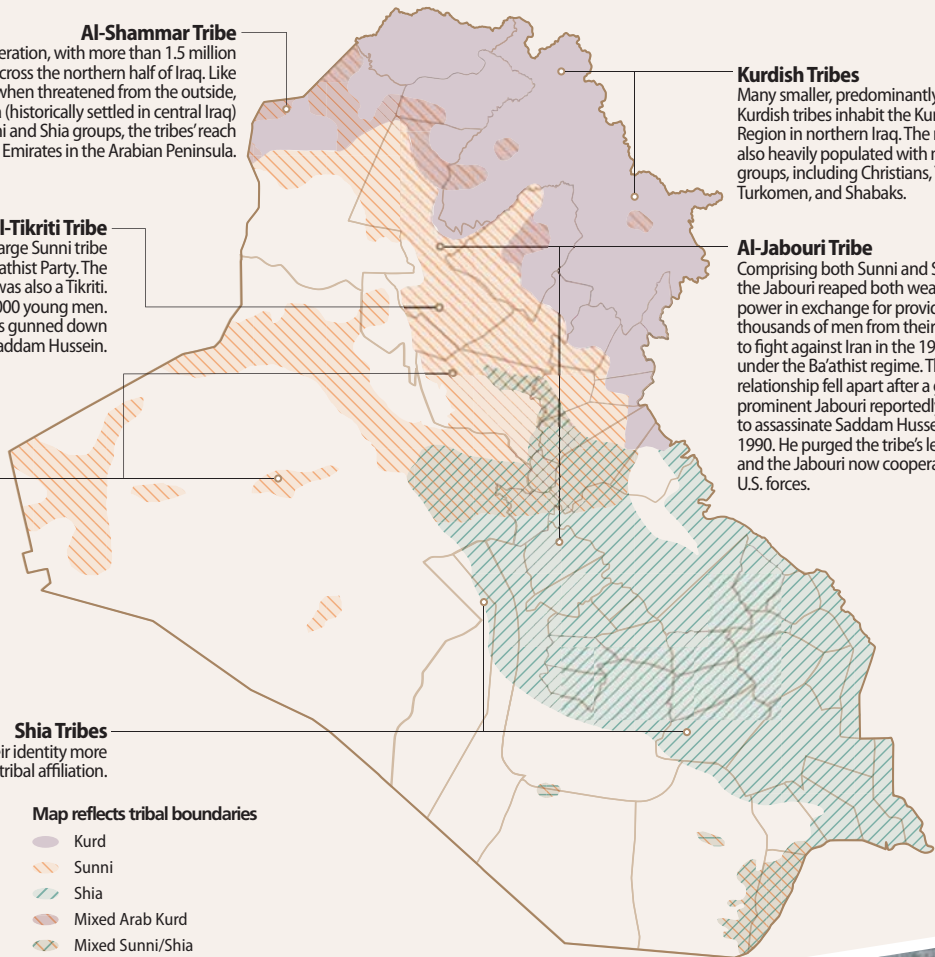
Dozens of Shia tribes inhabit southern Iraq. They derive their identity more from religious affiliations than from tribal affiliation.

Kurdish Tribes

Many smaller, predominantly Sunni Kurdish tribes inhabit the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq. The region is also heavily populated with minority groups, including Christians, Yazidis, Turkomen, and Shabaks.

Al-Jabouri Tribe

Comprising both Sunni and Shia, the Jabouri reaped both wealth and power in exchange for providing thousands of men from their tribe to fight against Iran in the 1980s under the Ba'athist regime. That relationship fell apart after a group of prominent Jabouri reportedly plotted to assassinate Saddam Hussein in 1990. He purged the tribe's leaders, and the Jabouri now cooperate with U.S. forces.



Sunni and Shia

Iraq's Sunni and Shia have coexisted for centuries, despite ancient religious rifts and Shia resistance to Sunni Ba'athist rule. Inter-marriage between the sects is not uncommon. In the predominantly Shia south, however, rebels sought unsuccessfully throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s to overthrow successive Ba'athist regimes. The Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988) increased the Sunni-controlled government's distrust of Iraq's Shia population, and tens of thousands were expelled to Iran. At the same time, Iraq's Shia fought in the war against Iran. Socially and economically, Sunnis tended to benefit from largesse of the Ba'athist government, while Shia areas were often neglected, creating marked economic and social disparities between the two groups. In 2003, both Shia and Sunni groups joined Iraq's interim governments, and though a majority of Sunnis boycotted the 2005 CoR elections, both groups participated in the 2010 CoR elections.



on advising and assisting the ISF and safeguarding civilian development specialists. September will also see the departure of USF-I's Commanding General, Raymond Odierno, who will transfer command after the conclusion of the U.S. combat mission.

Transforming the U.S. Diplomatic Posture in the Provinces

The United States currently has deployed 16 joint civilian-military reconstruction teams, known as Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Reductions in this number are planned for the remainder of 2010 and 2011 as DoS moves toward normalizing its posture in Iraq. Ultimately, five PRTs will be transformed into Enduring Presence Posts—two as consulates (in Erbil and Basrah) and three temporary posts along the Arab-Kurd “fault line” in Tameem, Ninewa, and Diyala provinces.

Preparing for the Handover of Police Training

In October 2011, DoS's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) will assume from DoD responsibility for training Iraq's police. Currently, DoD's training program focuses on basic policing skills and counter-insurgency operations and has more than 5,000 personnel operating from more than 50 bases and training centers. INL's program will place greater emphasis on advanced training and management skills, rely on about 350 advisors, and operate out of regional bases in northern, central, and southern Iraq.

SIGIR Oversight

As USF-I and DoS alter the size and scope of their presence in Iraq, SIGIR will adjust the focus and nature of its oversight work. This quarter, SIGIR issued 12 audit and inspection reports, reviewing progress on a diverse assortment of U.S.-funded reconstruction projects, including a slaughterhouse, a series of projects aimed at refurbishing the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP), and a bee farm. Notable findings from these twelve reports included:

- 24 BIAP-related projects valued at \$16.1 million have largely led to unsuccessful outcomes.

- A \$5.6 million slaughterhouse-construction project in Basrah was plagued by poor planning; and 19 months after the contract was awarded, it still lacks reliable electricity, water, and a way to dispose of the waste products from meat processing.
- The contractor responsible for improving the Iraqi Ministry of Health's ability to operate and maintain 109 Primary Healthcare Centers corrected construction and equipment deficiencies at 17 of them.
- \$1 million in equipment intended for Iraq's Special Operations Forces is either not being used or is missing.

To date, SIGIR's audit work has saved, recovered, or put to better use more than \$800 million.

This quarter, SIGIR also issued the third interim report on its congressionally mandated forensic review of all U.S.-funded transactions concerning the Iraq reconstruction effort. A major aspect of SIGIR's forensic audit program is the joint audit and investigative initiative in which teams of SIGIR auditors and investigators focus on programs that afford easy access to cash and have weak controls over expenditures. This initiative continues to identify instances of questionable activity. Since our last report in January 2010, SIGIR has opened an additional 13 criminal investigations involving 18 subjects. This brings the total number of criminal investigations opened resulting from this initiative to 45, involving a total of 60 subjects.

Another major aspect of SIGIR's forensic audit program is the congressionally mandated forensic audit of DoD, DoS, and USAID expenditures. Since its last report, SIGIR has reviewed an additional 10,000 transactions valued at \$4 billion, bringing the total transactions reviewed to 83,000 transactions valued at \$32 billion. In addition to testing for anomalous activity, this forensic effort provides critical information in support of ongoing SIGIR audits, investigations, and the audit and investigative initiative.

In the coming months, SIGIR will issue its first evaluations reports. These assessments—seven of which are currently planned—will step back and take a broader view of the U.S. reconstruction effort, asking what the U.S. taxpayer has received for the more than \$53 billion in U.S. funds committed to rebuilding and developing Iraq.

Regarding U.S. relief and reconstruction plans, programs, and operations in Iraq, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction provides independent and objective:

- oversight and review through comprehensive audits, inspections, and investigations
- advice and recommendations on policies to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness
- prevention, detection, and deterrence of fraud, waste, and abuse
- information and analysis to the Congress, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the American people

Stuart W. Bowen, Jr., was appointed Inspector General in January 2004. In March, the IG completed his 26th trip to Iraq to review progress on the reconstruction effort.

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