



مركز البيان للدراسات والتخطيط
Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies

Al Bayan Observatory



May 2023

A periodical bulletin to monitor Iraqi affairs in international think tanks

About the Center

Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies is an independent, nonprofit think tank based in Baghdad, Iraq. In addition to other issues, its primary mission is to offer an authentic perspective on public and foreign policy issues related to Iraq in particular and the Middle East region in general. BCPS pursues its vision by conducting autonomous analysis and proposing workable solutions for complex issues that concern the political and academic fields.

Note:

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www.bayancenter.org

info@bayancenter.org

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AMERICAN THINK TANKS



Enforce Democratic Accountability Not Cooperation in Iraqi Kurdistan

Michael Rubin

May 12, 2023



American Enterprise Institute

<https://www.aei.org/foreign-and-defense-policy/enforce-democratic-accountability-not-cooperation-in-iraqi-kurdistan/>

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the American Enterprise Institute website, including links for About, Centers, Press, President's Page, National Affairs, and social media icons. Below the navigation is a dark header with categories like Scholars, Policy Areas, Products, Events, AEIdeas, Subscribe, and Donate. The main content area features a 'Post' label, the article title, author name (Michael Rubin), and date (May 12, 2023). A profile picture of Michael Rubin is shown on the right. The article text begins with 'Assistant Secretary of State Barbara Leaf traveled to Iraqi Kurdistan last week for a tough love session with both Masrour Barzani, the regional prime minister and a leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and Qubad Talabani, his deputy and co-leader of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).'

In this text, Michael Rubin emphasizes on the priority of Democratic Accountability to Cooperation in Iraqi Kurdistan by the international powers. He asserts that The main problem Kurds face is the obsessive demands that Barzanis and Talabanis cooperate come at the expense of democracy. For the author, “Corruption and abuse of power has made the Barzani family deeply unpopular in Iraqi Kurdistan. The Talabani family has also hemorrhaged popularity, though residents say the PUK listens more and tolerates dissent a bit better. Gorran, a once-promising third party alternative, flamed out. Kurdistan suffers democratic necrosis.” As a political advice to the American administration, he writes: “The US should provide no assistance until Masrour and younger brother Waysi free every journalist from their prisons. Most important, the US should stop paying Peshmerga salaries. Not only does the regional government’s

Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs siphon off most salaries before it gets to the men it is supposed to support, but the Barzanis and Talabanis use the Peshmerga less as national defense and more as party militias. To pay Kurdish militias undermines the moral authority to demand Iran stop paying party militias in Baghdad. In the aftermath of elections, the US should engage the government and opposition separately, rather than force them together.”. Michael Rubin concludes: “Kurdistan will neither be stable nor reach its potential until there is democracy. Leaf should know better. Making the same mistake twice is bad. Making it two dozen times is inexcusable.”

Michael Rubin

May 12, 2023



American Enterprise Institute

<https://www.aei.org/foreign-and-defense-policy/enforce-democratic-accountability-not-cooperation-in-iraqi-kurdistan/>

Decarbonization and Political Transformation in Iraq: The Impact on Politics, Society and Regional Relations

Shahla Al-Kli and Jared Miller

May 4, 2023



WORLD PEACE FOUNDATION

<https://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/2023/05/03/decarbonization-and-political-transformation-in-iraq-the-impact-on-politics-society-and-regional-relations/>



What happens when a petrostate loses its oil rents? While the oil market continues to go through boom-and-bust cycles, cases such as Iraq provide evidence of how the rapid loss of oil revenues—traumatic decarbonization—may affect the politics and stability of these petrostates. In Iraq, multiple shocks to oil revenues from 2014 through 2020 fundamentally altered the organization and concentration of political power in Iraq with destabilizing and democratic consequences. Using the Political Marketplace Framework as an analytic framework, this paper argues that the successive traumatic shocks to Iraq's oil revenues bankrupted the government triggering a nominal decentralization process, the fracturing of sectarian power, and contributed to a breakdown of sectarianism among the Iraqi people. This paper traces the evolution of these changes from 2014 through October 2021 and discusses the implications for the future of Iraqi politics.

The Iraqi Government Is Failing Victims of ISIS in Sinjar Government Should Pay Compensation to All Sinjar Communities



Adam Coogle

May 17, 2023



HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/17/iraqi-government-failing-victims-isis-sinjar>

After years of strife, the author claims 200,000 Sinjaris are still without a home. Many people live in camps and hope that compensation would provide them with an exit strategy. Nevertheless, despite the severity of the situation, only a limited number of Yazidis, a religious group that ISIS severely persecuted in Sinjar, have received compensation. The Yazidi Survivors Law provided a route for Yazidis who had survived was closed to most Sinjaris.

The author demonstrates how a confluence of factors, including an ongoing political conflict between the federal government and the Kurdish Regional Government over control of the district, a problematic and expensive application process, and a failure by Iraqi

Adam Coogle

May 17, 2023

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HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/17/iraqi-government-failing-victims-isis-sinjar>

authorities to disperse allocated funds, has left many Sinjaris in a state of limbo and unable to reclaim their lives and property.

He shows that not a single family has yet received compensation under Iraqi Law No.20, despite the fact that over half of the 10,500 applications submitted by Sinjaris have been granted. This contrasts sharply with other regions of Iraq, where at least some compensation has been granted.

The author comes to the conclusion that for the Sinjaris, receiving compensation would be a crucial lifeline in reassembling their lives after being ripped apart by violence. The Iraqi government has to resolve compensation bottlenecks right once and provide Sinjaris the assistance they need to start reconstructing their lives.

Iraq: Compensation for ISIS Victims Too Little, Too Late



May 9, 2023

Reparations Key to Returning Thousands of Displaced Yazidis, Others

The authors believe Iraqi authorities have neglected to compensate thousands of Yazidis and others from Sinjar governorate for property destruction in the ISIS war. Many cannot rebuild their homes or businesses without compensation, so going home is not an option. Refugee camps hold many. The Iraqi government should fix compensation procedure delays and give additional benefits to returnees. They provide these recommendations to the Iraqi government, to the US-led coalition and to the international community to solve the problems of displaced Iraqis from the northern areas especially the Yazidis: Strengthen the capacity of institutions involved in the compensation process; Ensure adequate funding is allocated for reparations programs; adopt



HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/09/iraq-compensation-isis-victims-too-little-too-late>

May 9, 2023

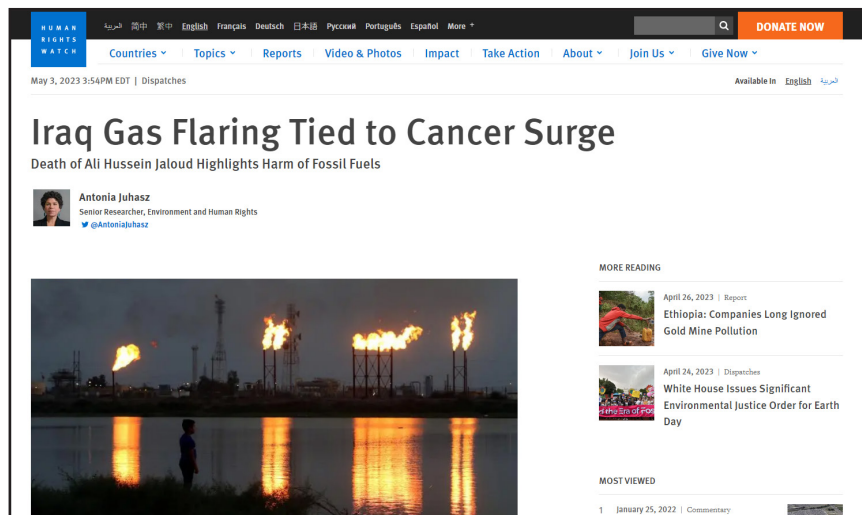
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<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/09/iraq-compensation-isis-victims-too-little-too-late>

a multi-pronged approach to reparations that goes beyond financial compensation; take concrete steps toward achieving the non-financial reparations envisaged in the Yazidi Survivors' Law; remove the requirement for survivors to file a criminal complaint to be eligible for reparations under the Survivors' Law and adopt simplified evidentiary requirements in line with international standards; conduct thorough and impartial investigations into all instances of civilian casualties caused by coalition military intervention in Iraq and provide reparations to victims; provide technical and financial support to the Iraqi government in implementing reparations programs including but not limited to Law No. 20 and the Survivors' Law; provide support to organizations supporting victims filing claims or raising awareness about reparations processes; provide technical and financial support to the Iraqi government in implementing reparations programs.

Iraq Gas Flaring Tied to Cancer Surge



Death of Ali Hussein Jaloud Highlights Harm of Fossil Fuels

A young Iraqi man named Ali Hussein Jaloud passed away on April 21 from leukemia, which he and his family blamed on the pollution caused by oil production and the ongoing gas flare-ups that surround their neighborhood in the southern Iraqi town of Rumaila, which is located about 50 kilometers from Basra. This study's author demonstrates that flaring also emits harmful toxic chemicals, such as benzene, a human carcinogen that may result in leukemia. According to a study from the Iraqi Health Ministry that was leaked to the BBC, pollution from the oil sector and other factors contributed to a 20 percent increase in cancer cases in Basra between 2015 and 2018. The investigation also found that the actual number of cancer cases in the area is three times greater than what has previously been reported. She argues that since flare-ups are a widespread issue with obvious solutions, the Iraqi

Antonia Juhasz

May 3, 2023

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<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/03/iraq-gas-flaring-tied-cancer-surge>

Antonia Juhasz

May 3, 2023

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<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/03/iraq-gas-flaring-tied-cancer-surge>

government should begin by doing more than just acknowledging the issue; it should also implement and enforce strict regulations to limit flare-ups, provide suitable health services to affected communities, and require polluters to make amends for their wrongdoing as required by Iraqi law. The author concludes that the government should make the transition away from fossil fuels in order to fully address the damage to regional populations and the global environment.

Local to Global: Tensions Course through Iraq's Waterways

Local to Global: Tensions Course through Iraq's Waterways



Photo: AHMAD AL-RUBAYE/AFP via Getty Images

Natasha Hall and Caleb Harper

May 12, 2023



CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/local-global-tensions-course-through-iraqs-waterways>

The authors of this report refer to the fact that on March 24, Iraq became the first Middle Eastern nation to join the UN Water Conference, a multilateral effort by the UN to promote cooperation on transboundary water resources. Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani announced Iraq's move at the UN's first significant conference on water since the 1970s. Just two days before, he had traveled to Ankara and asked President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to grant his request to release more water downstream to lessen the growing water insecurity in Iraq. They think that it is not easy to get precise information on the amount of water entering Iraq. Still, according to the country's minister of water resources, the Tigris-Euphrates river basin's flow has decreased by 40% due to irregular rainfall and dams in surrounding nations. Repeatedly releasing less than half of the 500 cubic meters of water per second required to discharge from the Euphrates, Turkey repeatedly breaches a 1987 transboundary water

Natasha Hall and Caleb Harper

May 12, 2023

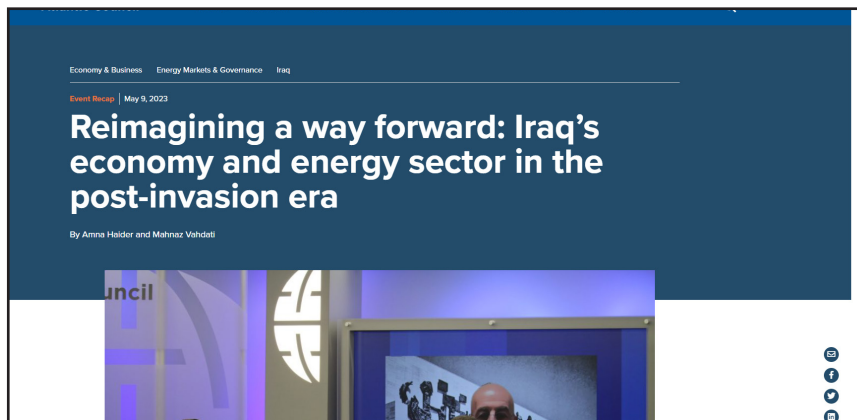


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INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/local-global-tensions-course-through-iraqs-waterways>

deal with Syria. The authors believe Iraq's water policy remains rooted in the past and is one of the most significant issues. The aging network of dams in Iraq was constructed to control floods during periods of excess water in the rivers, not during periods of deficiency. Iraq's water resources have declined dramatically in only two decades, and its poor water management has already sparked friction and war inside its borders.

Reimagining a way forward: Iraq's economy and energy sector in the post-invasion era



Amna Haider and Mahnaz Vahdati

May 9, 2023



ATLANTIC COUNCIL

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/uncategorized/reimagining-a-way-forward-iraqs-economy-and-energy-sector-in-the-post-invasion-era/>

On April 24, 2023, the Atlantic Council's Iraq Initiative convened a hybrid panel discussion to examine Iraq's current economic and energy landscape, and their future trajectory. The panel discussed Iraq's significant progress in rebuilding its economy and energy sectors that have suffered since the 2003 US invasion of the country, despite facing various challenges such as corruption, political instability, and conflict.

The event included introductory remarks from the Director of the Iraq Initiative at the Atlantic Council, Dr. Abbas Kadhim, and was moderated by the Senior Director, and Richard L. Morningstar Chair of the Global Energy Security Center at the Atlantic Council, Landon Derentz. The event featured the Chief Executive Officer of Crescent Petroleum, Majid Jafar; the Co-Founder and President of the Iraq Foundation, Ambassador Rend al-Rahim; and Atlantic Council

Amna Haider and Mahnaz Vahdati

May 9, 2023



ATLANTIC COUNCIL

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/uncategorized/reimagining-a-way-forward-iraqs-economy-and-energy-sector-in-the-post-invasion-era/>

Nonresident Senior Fellow, Ahmed Tabaqchali.

These issues were discussed in this event: Addressing economic and structural obstacles to foreign investment in Iraq's energy sector; Collaboration for energy security: overcoming geopolitical challenges in gas production in Iraq; Maximizing value for Iraq: balancing contract types and resource nationalism in the energy sector; Opportunity costs in face of high operational costs; A double-edged sword? reforms and accountability measures for the new administration; Iraq in the global community: addressing climate change and mobilizing the youth; the role of investors, industries, and the global community in unlocking Iraq's potential.

The US needs to be proactive in order to break its escalatory cycle with Iran



The author reminds the assassination of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force Commander, Qasem Soleimani, and Kataib Hezbollah leader, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and narrates the subsequent tensions between the Iraqi militia and American forces. The author believes that American strategic options have their own problems. He asserts that “Unfortunately, US options appear limited. The status quo—where the United States engages in a tit-for-tat exchange with Iran and its proxies, hoping the latter eventually gives up before the former does—works against US interests. While the United States overmatches these groups, this fight is taking place in said groups’ backyard, so the stakes are much higher.” Asserting that “The United States needs to be proactive—not reactive”, he writes: “Taken together, these measures can create space where Iran remains relatively free to exert influence while constrained in the violence it

C. Anthony Pfaff

May 24, 2023



ATLANTIC COUNCIL

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/iran-iraq-shia-militias-attacks/>

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May 24, 2023



Atlantic Council

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sees fit to employ. It also bolsters US options to retaliate should these efforts fail. This path gives the United States more options to pressure Iran and its proxies while possibly bolstering the Iraqi government's position relative to the militias. Such an equilibrium may not be ideal, but at least it could lower the temperature and decrease attacks against US forces. If reached, this could buy time for the United States and its partners to further leverage the thawing of Saudi-Iran relations—and Iraq's role in it—to create better conditions for regional stability.”

Should history rethink Paul Bremer's role in the Iraq war?



Andrew L. Peek refers to the role played by Paul Bremer in the post-2003 Iraq. According to the author, there is very little history between the Shia and the United States. The Sunnis, especially the Persian Gulf's ultra-orthodox Sunnis, are its friends both then and today. The US's first significant interaction with the hereditary Arab underclass was during a few of horrible incidents of violence in Lebanon two decades ago. In addition, communication between Iran and Iraq was limited to Iranian-created mouthpieces, and it was unclear how the Iraqi Shia would respond to an invasion since southern Lebanon was hostile and Iran and Iraq were blocked off from one another.

At its root, the US war in Iraq was a sectarian conflict. By definition, converting Iraq into a democracy would result in a Shia state rather

By Andrew L. Peek

May 1, 2023



ATLANTIC COUNCIL

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/should-history->

By **Andrew L. Peek**

May 1, 2023



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than a Sunni or even democratic one. Washington and Bremer may not have seen it at the time. The Bush administration's stated objective was to create a secular Iraq. However, there is a case to be made that his most well-known orders, although being crude and awkward, erred on the side of wisdom, perhaps saving the United States from a worsening disaster.

Iraq V Turkey International Chamber Of Commerce Final Award



Zayd al-Ali and Ahmad Tabaqchali

May 24, 2023



1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/24/commentary-iraq-v-turkey-international-chamber-of-commerce-final-award-13-february-2023/>

This article has focused on the legal challenge between Iraq and Turkey over the oil export from the northern pipelines. It follows the different stages of this challenge and continues it until very recently.

On 23 May 2014, the Republic of Iraq (“Iraq”) commenced arbitral proceedings against the Republic of Turkey (“Turkey”). Those proceedings were commenced pursuant to an allegation that Turkey was in violation of the terms of an agreement that was signed in 1973 relating to the construction and use of oil pipelines. The arbitral tribunal (the “Tribunal”) rendered its final award on 13 February 2023 (the “Award”).

Zayd al-Ali and Ahmad Tabaqchali

May 24, 2023



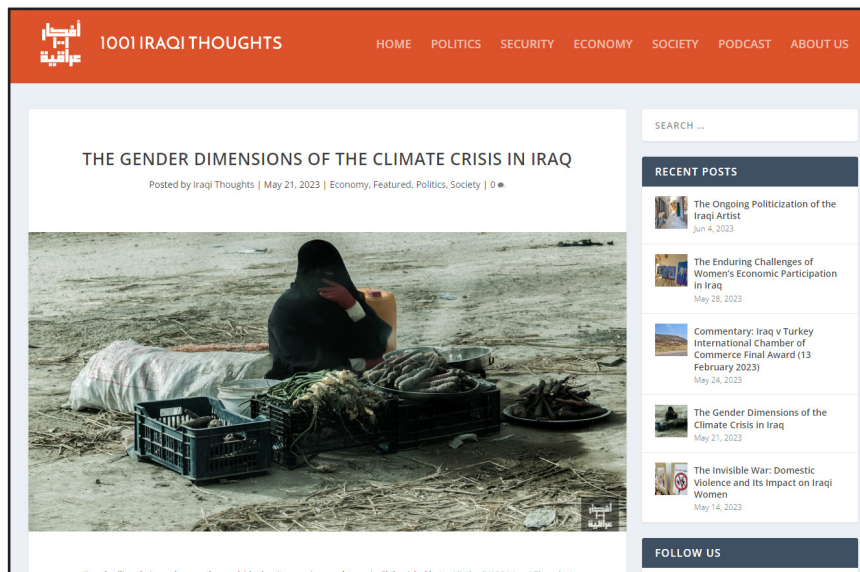
1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/24/commentary-iraq-v-turkey-international-chamber-of-commerce-final-award-13-february-2023/>

This commentary summarises the Award’s main contents, including the most important facts, the Parties’ arguments and the Tribunal’s reasoning and offers some analysis of the Award. The main elements of commentary concern the Tribunal’s award on the merits (and in particular its interpretation of the ITP Agreement), the Tribunal’s rationale for how damages should be calculated, the Tribunal’s damages award, and the Award’s likely impact. This commentary is not comprehensive and does not discuss all the elements and issues that are covered by the Award. The authors welcome comments and questions.

The author claims that environmental deterioration and climate change are affecting both the general stability of Iraq and the well-being of its citizens. Women, however, are particularly at danger since they rely on the land for both their economic well-being and the survival of their communities in rural regions. Even though many women in these areas already experience oppressive gender norms and patriarchal situations, environmental degradation increases the likelihood that

The Gender Dimensions Of The Climate Crisis In Iraq



women will experience abuse, endure physical and psychological dangers, and have less possibilities for education and employment. The gendered dimension of environmental vulnerability must be taken into consideration in any mitigating measures to solve Iraq's climate issue.

The psychological effects of these shifting dynamics are not yet well understood or studied in Iraq, and further research is needed to determine how family separation and the growing responsibility of women in a hostile environment affect individuals.

It is critical to emphasize that women must be at the forefront of climate responses since they face greater risks from a changing environment. In reality, research shows that include women in the decision-making

Zeinab Shuker

May 21, 2023



1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/21/the-gender-dimensions-of-the-climate-crisis-in-iraq/>

Zeinab Shuker

May 21, 2023

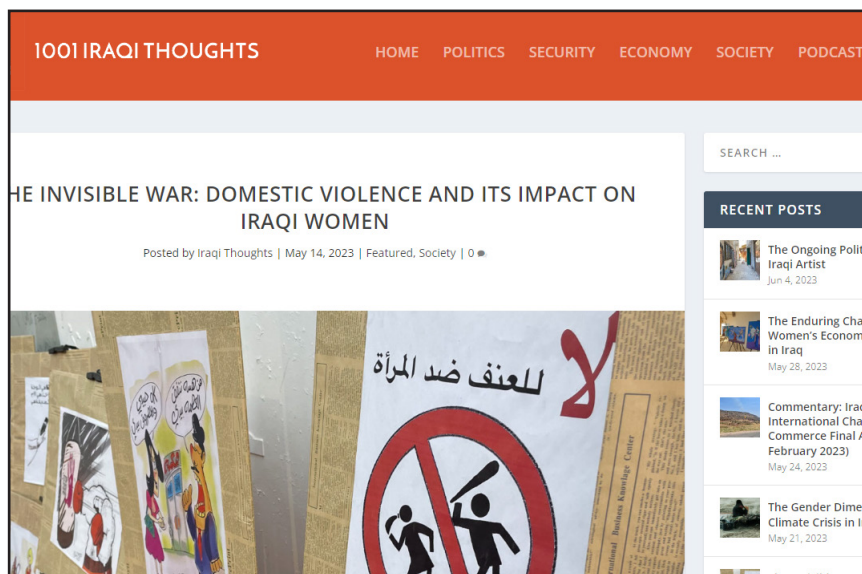


1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/21/the-gender-dimensions-of-the-climate-crisis-in-iraq/>

process helps communities develop capacity-building initiatives and environmental resilience. Therefore, without an awareness of how the climate affects women's well-being and access to resources, as well as without integrating women in the discourse and the decision-making process, no understanding of the climate or climate action in Iraq is complete.

The Invisible War: Domestic Violence And Its Impact On Iraqi Women



Mays Al-Ramadhani

May 14, 2023



1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/14/the-invisible-war-domestic-violence-and-its-impact-on-iraqi-women/>

The writer claims that debilitating sanctions, external conflicts with Iran and Kuwait, US invasions, and the fight against ISIS have all caused Iraq hardship in recent decades. Internally, there were periods of enormous emigration and a sectarian civil war. These tough times particularly impacted Iraqi women and children, notably via gender-based and interpersonal violence. According to the author, governmental and non-governmental groups, both local and international, have committed a lot of money to advancing women's rights in Iraq, but is it going in the right direction?

Asserting that women need laws that equally safeguard the rights of all people, she refers to the absence of shelters for women who need

Mays Al-Ramadhani

May 14, 2023



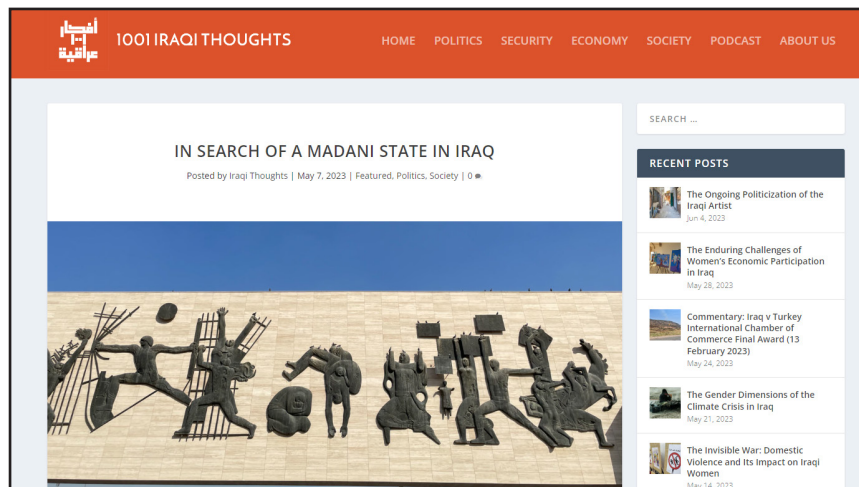
1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/14/the-invisible-war-domestic-violence-and-its-impact-on-iraqi-women/>

to flee and considers it a major issue in Iraq. Nearly all women who experienced domestic violence were financially vulnerable and reliant on their violent boyfriends or family. Youth unemployment in Iraq is undoubtedly an issue, but many females are denied access to school. It is about having the right to pursue education and get a degree, not about competing or finding the best opportunity.

In order to acquire work prospects, the author concludes, women need legal protection and representation, police intervention, counseling services, shelters, and capacity development. Women in Iraq need that. Instead, the author asserts, we squander a great deal of money and time on conferences, press conferences, meetings at posh hotels, and a ton of photographs, reels, and selfies.

In Search Of A Madani State In Iraq



According to the author, the evolution of the term “madani” in Iraqi intellectual and political circles may be seen as a reflection of the country’s efforts to establish an organic form of Middle Eastern or Iraqi democracy, balancing conservative social values with aspirations for a more pluralistic, free, and representative society. Elaborating different aspects of the presence of religion in the Iraqi political life, the author believes that this endeavor is still in its experimental and developmental phases. Iraqi civil society differs from many of its regional equivalents in that elections are an established method for the state’s agenda to be explored and implemented. Following the protest movement, many madani parties emerged throughout the political spectrum with diverse views of a madani state and links with the religious establishment.

Referring to the new political elites emerging in these years who are mentally occupied with the idea of madani state, the author expresses

Marsin Alshamary

May 7, 2023



1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/07/in-search-of-a-madani-state-in-iraq/>

Marsin Alshamary

May 7, 2023



1001 IRAQI THOUGHTS

<https://1001iraqithoughts.com/2023/05/07/in-search-of-a-madani-state-in-iraq/>

that the challenge facing many of these aspirant politicians from civil society and the protest movement is to find out how to present and sell the madani state to Iraqi society. On the one hand, they might appeal to the public's evident dissatisfaction with religious authorities and their influence in politics. How will they, on the other hand, create policies that resonate with a culture that is still mostly conservative and whose cultural, religious, and societal symbols are intricately entwined? Even this work is a practice run for creating the Iraqi madani state.

EUROPEAN THINK TANKS



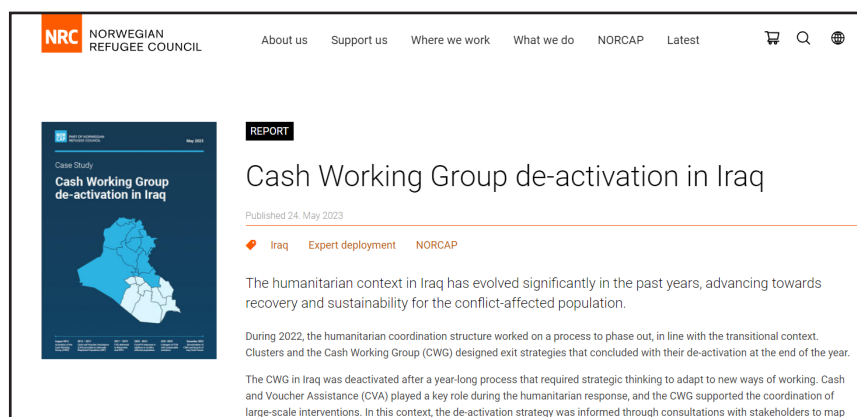
Cash Working Group de-activation in Iraq

24. May 2023



Norwegian Refugee Council

<https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/cash-working-group-de-activation-in-iraq/>



The humanitarian context in Iraq has evolved significantly in the past years, advancing towards recovery and sustainability for the conflict-affected population.

During 2022, the humanitarian coordination structure worked on a process to phase out, in line with the transitional context. Clusters and the Cash Working Group (CWG) designed exit strategies that concluded with their de-activation at the end of the year.

The CWG in Iraq was deactivated after a year-long process that required strategic thinking to adapt to new ways of working. Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) played a key role during the humanitarian response, and the CWG supported the coordination of large-scale interventions. In this context, the de-activation strategy was informed through consultations with stakeholders to map out of how CVA would be used beyond humanitarian responses, through a roadmap and other activities.

Iraq is not unique in the region in that it faces a number of protracted and interlinked crises, but it is the first country where the humanitarian coordination system has been deactivated. There are very few examples of this happening globally. This case study describes the deactivation of the CWG with a context analysis, details of key actions taken, and a discussion of challenges and lessons learned.

Authored by the CashCap expert who led the process, it is intended to document its complexity and serve as a reference point for humanitarian practitioners who might be involved in similar exercises. Each CWG and the environments they work in are unique, but sharing information and experiences from other countries will benefit global learning. This case study aims to contribute to this process.

24. May 2023



Norwegian Refugee Council

[https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/
cash-working-group-de-activation-in-
iraq/](https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/cash-working-group-de-activation-in-iraq/)

Iraq: A Rapidly Changing Climate, and imperative for coordinated action

Noor Taher

05. May 2023



Norwegian Refugee Council

<https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2023/iraq-a-rapidly-changing-climate-and-imperative-for-coordinated-action/>



In Iraq, the weather is becoming more unpredictable with every passing year. Climate change has left its mark on a country recovering from conflict, and what was predicted to happen in a decade is happening now. Ahead of the 3rd International Water Conference in Baghdad, the Norwegian Refugee Council is calling on the Government of Iraq, policy makers and international community to implement an ambitious Water Action Plan for Iraq to prevent climate related crises and support durable solutions to displacement.

Climate adaptation remains a key focus of Norwegian Refugee Council operations in Iraq and is geared toward supporting community resilience to shocks. In many of the regions where we work, farmers are completely reliant on rainwater, or on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. When the rains stop, livelihoods suffer. Norwegian Refugee Council continues to explore climate resilient adaptations like greenhouses, and more efficient agricultural practices like rainwater harvesting, drip-irrigation and hydroponics. For areas completely dependent on

rainwater, we support alternate value chains such as livestock rearing.

Norwegian Refugee Council remains committed to supporting the Iraqi government to identify acutely vulnerable areas and communities and provide them with the support they need to adapt to the changing environment. As people across Iraq rebuild, we look forward to continuing to work with the government for a more climate-resilient, more climate-adaptable Iraq.

Noor Taher

05. May 2023



Norwegian Refugee Council

<https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2023/iraq-a-rapidly-changing-climate-and-imperative-for-coordinated-action/>

From shock and awe to stability and flaws: Iraq's post-invasion journey

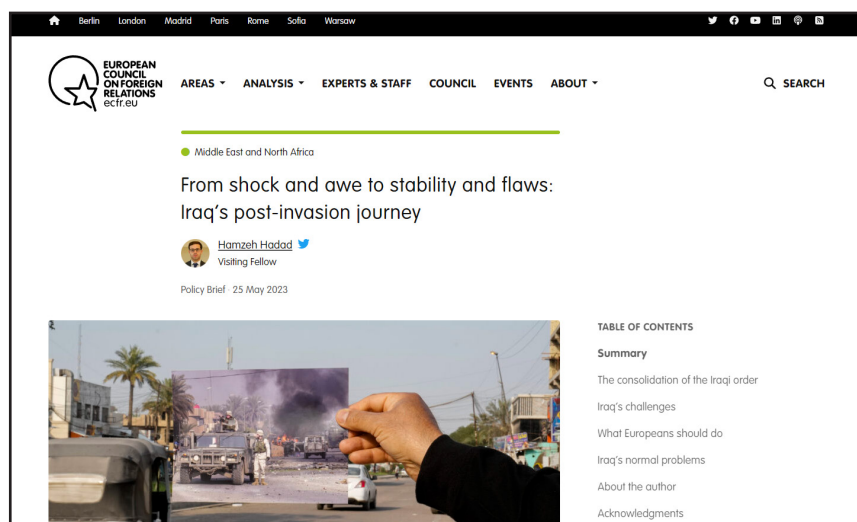
Hamzeh Hadad

25 May 2023



CARNEGIE MIDDLE EAST CENTER

<https://ecfr.eu/publication/from-shock-and-awe-to-stability-and-flaws-iraqs-post-invasion-journey/>



Iraq's political system may be durable, but the country faces a host of problems. But just as Iraq has problems, it also has powerful tools to address these challenges, including democratic institutions (e.g. elections), a robust civil society, a battle-hardened security force trained by the international coalition, abundant natural wealth, an important geostrategic position, and significant human capital. Rather than seeking to tackle overwhelming and multi-layered challenges that cannot be solved, Europeans need to have a more precise picture of where Iraq stands and choose the strategic areas in which they can help Iraq.

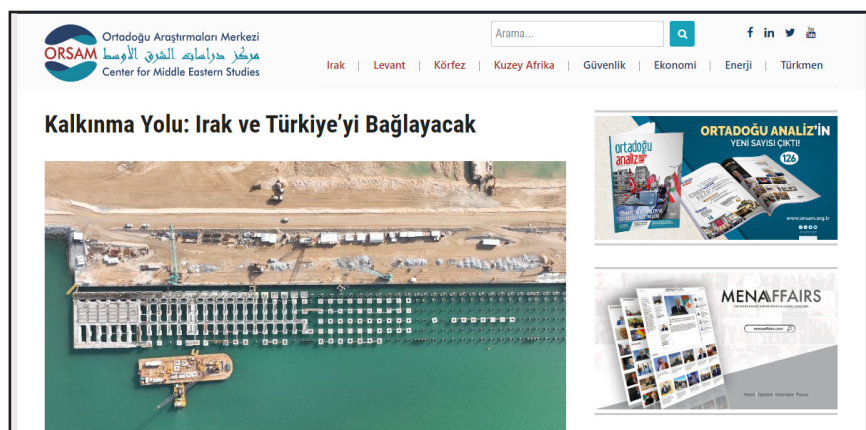
Summary of the paper

- In the 20 years since the US-led invasion, Iraq's political order and elite have proven surprisingly resilient in the face of numerous challenges, including terrorism, civil war, threats of secession, and mass protests.
- The informal consociational system, party politics, patronage networks, and competing paramilitaries are enduring features of Iraqi governance that have maintained stability even as they present many long-term problems.
- Despite the system's resilience, Iraq remains deeply challenged by corruption, a lack of economic diversity and development, climate vulnerability, and some persistent security deficits.
- Europeans should acknowledge the realities of Iraqi governance and work within them to achieve shared European-Iraqi interests rather than seeking to impose their own ideals or solutions.
- Europeans could, for example, help Iraqis to manage their youth bulge problem, digitise the economy, and prepare for and adapt to climate change.

TURKISH THINK TANKS



Development Path: Will Iraq and Turkey Connect?



The author has focused on the The Iraqi Grand Harbor and Development Road, originally the Dry Canal, that intends to build a commerce route between Basra and Turkey that bypasses the Suez Canal. Iraq is also building roads, trains, and industrial zones to make Basra–Turkey trade easier.

For the author, the Development Road will shorten East–West travel time, notably between Iraq and Turkey. The Development Path will make local businesses and international logistics organizations easier to utilize since time saving increases commerce and lowers transportation expenses. The Fav Port’s ability to handle bigger cargo ships will boost regional economic activity by increasing products carried.

These initiatives face many obstacles, despite their potential advantages. Security is difficult due to the existence of armed groups, including

Feyzullah Tuna Aygün

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Feyzullah Tuna Aygün

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terrorist organizations, particularly as the Development Road extends into Syria. Prevent these security hazards. Project funding, another difficulty, demands significant expenditures. Thus, project success depends on international collaboration and investment.

The Fav Grand Port and Development Road projects might change Turkey–Iraq ties. These initiatives will boost trade, energy cooperation, and regional integration, strengthening economic and diplomatic connections between the nations. These initiatives will boost economic growth and regional stability if completed.

How to Interpret the Meeting of Masrour Barzani and Qubat Talabani?



The author has focused on the recent meeting of two important politicians of the Iraqi Kurdistan. After six months, Masrour Barzani and Qubat Talabani met and discussed the Kurdistan Region's political situation and stressed the need for internal unity and solidarity to safeguard the region's residents' national interests and constitutional rights. The author shows that in the previous six months, KDP-PUK negotiations have accelerated. The meeting between Barzani and Talabani was vital to show the development of ties, particularly to national and international public opinion. At this moment, the discussions between the two parties are backed worldwide and even by the US. He writes "The solution of the problems between the KDP and the PUK in the KRG may also reflect positively on the KRG side at the local level. It would not be wrong to expect that one of the biggest reflections of this will be on the Sudanese government. The crises that emerged between the two parties due to the developments

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in the KRG's domestic politics will be important factors that test the robustness of the dialogue process.”

In this light, when examining the dialogue process of the KDP and PUK, the KRG's two main executive authorities, we should also consider where we are in fixing the players' chronic concerns. Because Jalal Talabani's death exposes the two parties' present issues. Although the KDP seeks to remain the major player by imposing its total control in the KRG on the PUK, the PUK's more harsh actions in Sulaymaniyah make the discussion process between the two parties questionable.

The Downed Helicopter in Iraq and Closure of Sulaymaniyah Flights Airspace



Sabah turkish Newspaper

<https://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/perspektif/murat-aslan/2023/04/08/irakta-dusen-helikopter-ve-suleymaniye-ucuslarına-hava-sahasinin-kapatılması>

Murat Aslan has focused on the crash of a helicopter carrying PKK/YPG members around the city of Duhok in northern Iraq on the night of March 15 and the implications of this accident to the Turkish national security. By tracing the helicopter, the author tries to argue that the western countries are supporting anti-Turkey PKK/YPG forces. According to him, there are some consequences of this event: “First of all, it is known that there is tension between the Barzani KDP and the PKK. The PKK is trying to make more room for itself in the KDP-controlled area. As a matter of fact, the PKK launched an attack directly targeting the KDP on 5 June 2020, and five peshmerga lost their lives. Another aim of the PKK is to link the Iraqi Kurds to its own structure by postponing the KDP. At this point, in the traditional KDP-PUK conflict, the PUK becomes a tool for the PKK.” Then, he

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raises a question of “So what should Türkiye do?” He replies: “Turkey cannot turn a blind eye to a PKK with an aircraft. In the context of the security of border posts and military bases, this threat cannot be postponed. In addition, the issue of what will be given to the PKK or what services will be provided after the acquisition of a capability such as a helicopter cannot be left to uncertainty.” At the end, he concludes: “it is useful to mention the Iraqi central government. The helicopter incident confirmed the authority vacuum in northern Iraq. Criticizing Turkey in its fight against terrorism, the Iraqi administration remains a spectator to the developments in the north in Baghdad. The message of the decision to close the airspace to the Iraqi Government is clear: Turkey takes every precaution for its security!”

IRANIAN THINK TANKS



The suspicious actions of America in Ain al-Assad and the responsibility of the Iraqi parliament

Hasan Hanizadeh

May 23, 2023



Strategic Council for Foreign Relations

<https://tinyurl.com/2395bthw>



The Iranian Strategic Council for Foreign Relations has talked with Hasan Hanizadeh, an expert on Middle East issues. In this interview, Hanizadeh asserts: “Recently, the commanders of the Iraqi People’s Forces responded to the suspicious and hidden movements of American forces at Ain Al Asad Air Base in the city of Hit, Anbar Province, located in the west. Iraq expressed concern. It is said that the US has recently reconstructed the destroyed parts of the Ain al-Assad base and increased its forces from 2,500 to 3,000.” For him, “After the assassination of General Haj Qassem Soleimani, the former commander of the Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis, the former deputy head of the Iraqi Hashd al-Shaabi, the Iraqi parliament obliged the Iraqi government to expel American forces from Iraqi territory.” Hanizadeh

further emphasized that “unfortunately,” the Iraqi governments could not implement the decision to expel the American troops from Iraqi land and the recent “suspicious” movements of the American troops have caused concern among the leaders of the Iraqi political currents. For Hanizadeh, “The speculation is that the United States, especially the Joe Biden team, is trying to adventure in the region on the eve of the 2024 presidential election in order to use it as an election propaganda process.” He concludes that “There is another speculation that the American Air Force and the Zionist regime may want to jointly organize a series of operations against the countries of the resistance axis in the future using the Ain al-Assad base.”

Hasan Hanizadeh

May 23, 2023



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