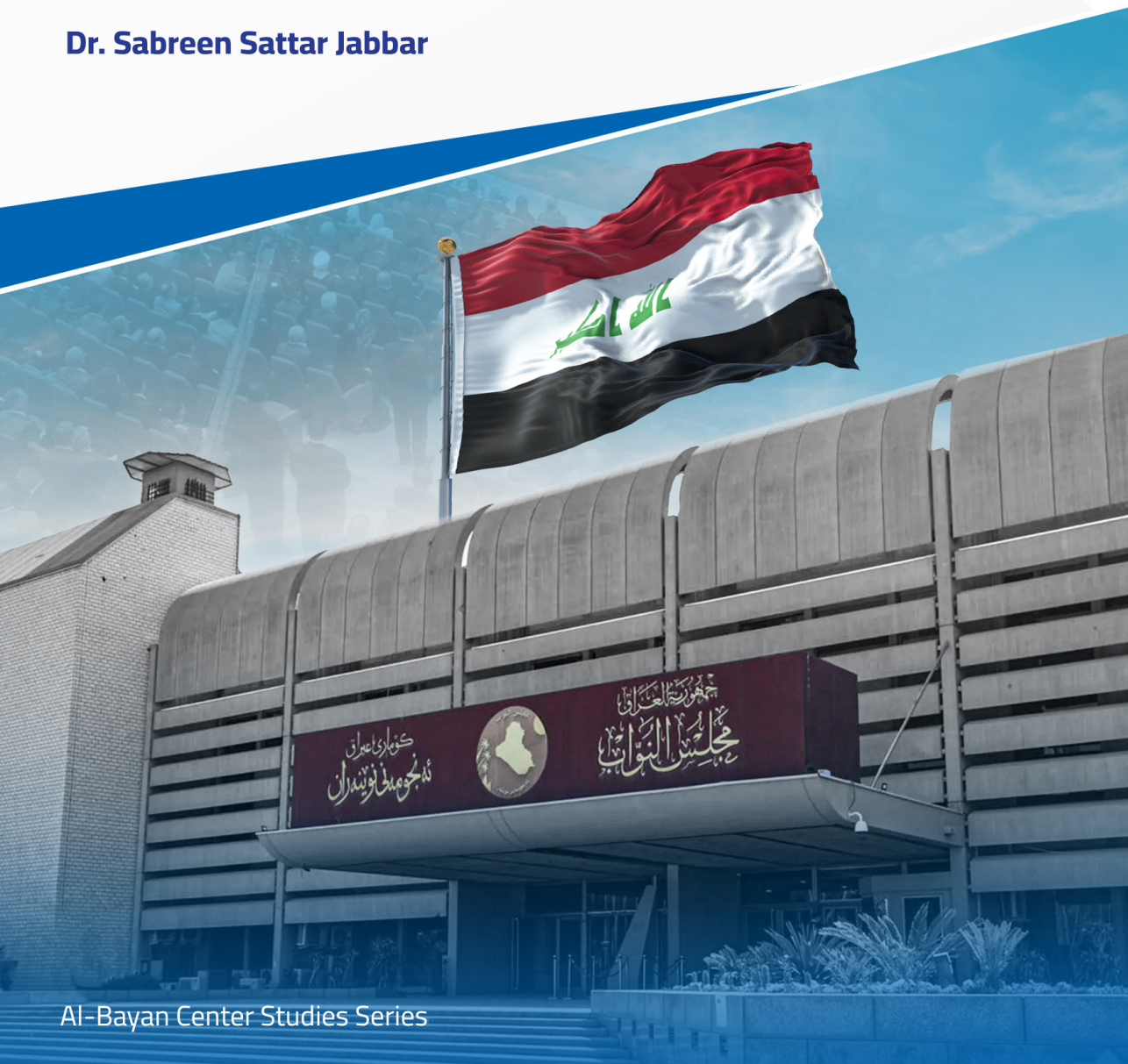




Parliamentary Performance of the Council of Representatives in Its Fifth Legislative Term

An Analysis of the Legislative Gap and Parliamentary Oversight Index

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About

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The parliamentary system is among the most widely adopted forms of governance worldwide and is considered one of the most effective in upholding democratic principles. Within such systems, the legislative body serves as a core official institution, essential for building democratic governance and revitalizing political life. It embodies the will of the people, defends their interests, and safeguards their rights and freedoms. Moreover, it is regarded as the institution most capable of absorbing emerging social dynamics, responding to national priorities, and addressing the needs arising from structural societal transformations.

In examining the subject of this paper—the performance of the Iraqi Council of Representatives during its fifth legislative term—it is necessary to begin with a brief overview of the evolution of parliamentary life in Iraq, along with an outline of the nature of legislative activity following 2003. These topics will be explored throughout the paper.

Iraq's democratic transition has unfolded under complex and challenging conditions, significantly affecting the development of democratic practices, particularly in terms of public engagement and parliamentary participation. On one hand, persistent terrorist threats, and on the other, external—especially regional—developments, have contributed to the weakening of state institutions. Despite these challenges, some legislative terms have shown notable progress in legislation, oversight, and the exercise of constitutional responsibilities. For example, the second legislative term saw the passage of approximately 215 laws. This contrasts sharply with the fifth legislative term, during which only 48 laws were enacted, despite the existence of numerous postponed and contentious legislative proposals that remain pending.

Additionally, the Council's oversight functions experienced a significant decline during the fifth term, highlighting the importance of analyzing the legislative and oversight gaps and identifying the primary factors behind the Council's diminished capacity to fulfill its constitutional obligations.





First: The Iraqi Parliament – A Deep-Rooted Experience in Political Life

The year 1921 marked the establishment of the modern Iraqi state under a monarchical system. An electoral framework was introduced to select the members of the Constituent Assembly, with elections held on June 10, 1924. This assembly was tasked with drafting the 1925 Iraqi Constitution, which established a constitutional monarchy based on an elected parliament composed of two chambers: the Council of Representatives and the Senate of Iraq (Majlis al-A`yan).

Article 19 of the 1925 Basic Law stated: “Iraq is an independent, hereditary, parliamentary monarchy; sovereignty resides with the nation, and it is entrusted to King Faisal bin Al-Hussein.”

Following the overthrow of the monarchy and the beginning of the First Republic (1958–1963), Abd al-Karim Qasim assumed the role of Prime Minister, consolidating both legislative and executive powers. After the coup of July 17, 1968, the Revolutionary Command Council likewise centralized legislative and executive authority, although it preserved a degree of judicial independence. Under the Temporary Constitution of July 16, 1970, legislative authority was shared between the Revolutionary Command Council and the National Assembly—further reinforcing the dominance of the executive branch over the legislative process.

In 2003, significant changes were introduced to the political system following the overthrow of the former regime by the United States and its allies. A parliamentary model was adopted as part of a broader political transition. On November 15, 2003, a political agreement outlining the transitional process was signed between the Interim Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority. The agreement included provisions for the Law of Administration for the State during the Transitional Period, a security arrangement, the selection of members of the National Assembly, the restoration of Iraqi sovereignty, and the adoption of a permanent constitution.

The transitional phase began with the formation of an Iraqi government appointed by the occupying authority in consultation with the Governing Council. Paul Bremer, the American civil administrator, departed Iraq in 2004, paving the way for the country’s first elections. Iraqis voted to elect 275 members to the National Assembly—also referred to as the Interim Parliament. A Presidential Council and a Prime Minister were subsequently chosen, and the Assembly drafted a constitution that was submitted to a public referendum on October 15, 2005. Once approved, the constitution entered into force, and parliamentary elections were held on December 15, 2005.



Second: The Legal Framework Governing the Iraqi Parliament After 2003

Article 1 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution establishes Iraq as a parliamentary system. Articles 48 through 65 outline the provisions related to the legislative authority. To regulate its operations, the Constitution mandates that the Iraqi Parliament adopt internal regulations. Accordingly, Article 1 of the Parliament's Internal Regulations designates the Council of Representatives as the supreme legislative and oversight authority, empowered to exercise the functions specified in Article 61 of the Constitution as well as other relevant provisions.

According to Article 48 (First) of the Constitution: "The Council of Representatives shall consist of a number of members at a ratio of one seat per 100,000 people of Iraq's population. Members are elected by general direct vote based on population distribution."

Accordingly, the Iraqi Parliament comprises 275 members, whose right to freedom of expression is protected under Article 63(Second) of the Constitution.

The Parliament establishes a number of permanent committees—currently 24—as well as temporary committees whose formation and functions are defined by the Rules of Procedure. These committees are responsible for proposing legislation, reviewing draft laws submitted by the Presidency of the Council within their respective areas of expertise, and offering legal and technical opinions on such legislation.

To promote transparency and uphold the democratic foundations of the state, the Constitution requires that parliamentary sessions be conducted publicly and broadcast through various media platforms.

Since the Council of Representatives derives its legislative and oversight authority from the will of the people, it is obligated to maintain high standards of transparency. This is consistent with the evolving role of public oversight over parliamentary functions, in line with democratic principles that recognize the people as the ultimate source of authority. Accordingly, the Council is required to establish robust legal mechanisms that guarantee public access to information and enable effective accountability.





Third: Roles and Powers of Parliament

First: Legislative Authority

This authority is defined in Article 61(First) of the Permanent Iraqi Constitution, which grants the Council of Representatives exclusive jurisdiction to enact legislation. The legislative process is multi-phased and proceeds as follows:

1. Proposal of Laws

This is the initial phase of the legislative process. The Constitution grants the right to propose laws to the legislative authority. In parliamentary systems, this right may be shared between members of the government and members of parliament.

2. Debate and Deliberation

In this phase, proposed laws are discussed in detail. Parliamentarians exercise their right to amend and ratify proposals. The topics subject to debate are identified, and mechanisms for resolving disagreements over specific articles are employed.

3. Voting

In Iraq, voting on a draft law does not commence until at least four days after the conclusion of deliberations. The process begins with a first reading, followed by a second reading at least two days later. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing and are subject to further discussion. Once these three stages—proposal, deliberation, and voting—are completed, the process moves to ratification and publication.

4. Ratification Phase

This phase follows parliamentary approval and precedes the law's publication in the official gazette. Article 59(Second) of the Constitution stipulates that most laws require a simple majority (i.e., half plus one) to pass, unless a special majority is specified.

After approval by the Council, the law is sent to the Presidency of the Republic (or the Presidential Council, depending on the constitutional framework in place) for ratification and publication. However, in practice, political disputes and factional rivalries often overshadow parliamentary sessions. The submission of legislation to the Presidential Council for ratification grants each member veto power, posing a risk of political deadlock.



A potential solution is to allow ratification by any two members of the Presidential Council or require ratification by the President and one deputy as sufficient for approval. This step, known as “issuance,” formalizes the ratification process.

It is important to note that most laws passed by the Council of Representatives during its term are either amendments to or repeals of existing laws, with relatively few being entirely new. Even these are often the product of negotiations and compromises among political blocs. Such dynamics contribute significantly to legislative delays and gridlock, resulting in numerous stalled or inactive bills due to the absence of political consensus.

Second: Approval of the Federal Budget

Third: Election of the President of the Republic and Approval of Senior Appointments

Fourth: Oversight Authority of the Council of Representatives

The Council exercises oversight over the executive branch using a range of tools and mechanisms, including:

1. Parliamentary questions
2. Interpellations (parliamentary interrogations)
3. Parliamentary debates
4. Investigative committees
5. Votes of no confidence in the government
6. Withdrawal of confidence from the Prime Minister
7. Withdrawal of confidence from individual ministers

The Iraqi parliamentary system includes procedural rules and mechanisms that support effective oversight of the executive branch. This oversight function can be further enhanced through the following measures:

1. Reinforcing the principles of constitutionalism and the rule of law
2. Activating mutual responsibility constitutionally.





Fourth: The Reality of the Legislative Authority in Iraq After 2003

Through their oversight role, members of the Iraqi Parliament are tasked with ensuring the implementation of the 2005 Permanent Constitution, as well as the enforcement of enacted laws and public policies issued by the government. Their ultimate goal is to serve the public interest by monitoring the performance of administrative institutions and promoting effective governance that benefits all Iraqis.

However, a critical question arises: **Is the Iraqi Parliament truly capable of representing the popular will, or has it become a tool that obstructs political progress?** This issue may be assessed through several key aspects:

1. Weaknesses of the Parliament's Legislative Role

Effective cooperation between the legislative and executive branches requires that parliament possess the authority to propose, deliberate on, and enact laws—functions that the executive is then responsible for implementing.

However, Article 60 of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution states: **First:** Draft laws and oversight of their implementation shall be submitted by the President of the Republic and the Council of Ministers. **Second:** Proposed laws may be submitted by ten members of the Council of Representatives or by one of its specialized committees.

This provision indicates that the executive authority maintains a degree of control over the legislative authority, particularly in the initiation of legislation. While the Council of Representatives enacts laws, the executive authority—namely, the President and the Council of Ministers—has the constitutional right to submit draft legislation. In contrast, a legislative proposal submitted by ten members of Parliament or by a specialized committee is treated merely as a preliminary idea. The process begins by referring it to the executive authority for review and possible amendments before it is returned to Parliament for legislative procedures.

Although lawmaking falls under the jurisdiction of Parliament, the executive branch often plays a central role in drafting legislation due to its superior technical and administrative resources, which support the sound preparation and formulation of legal texts.

The Council of Representatives also lacks strong financial authority. Article 62(Second) of the Constitution states:



“The Council of Representatives shall have the authority to make transfers between the sections and chapters of the general budget and to reduce its overall amounts. When necessary, it may propose to the Council of Ministers an increase in total expenditure.”

This means that parliament’s influence over public policy is largely dependent on coordination with the Executive authority, as the national budget reflects the government’s broader policy priorities. Parliament is also tasked with approving the government’s final accounts at the end of the fiscal year to evaluate compliance with the budgetary framework.

However, the executive’s consistent failure to submit final accounts on time has significantly strained its relationship with the legislative branch. This failure undermines parliamentary oversight and weakens government transparency—an obligation derived from the vote of confidence granted to the executive by the Council of Representatives.

2. Factors Affecting the Legislative Process in Iraq

- **Political Constraints:** The legacy of occupation imposed a significant burden on those managing Iraq’s post-2003 political transition, narrowing the scope of political decision-making. Deep internal disagreements among political actors created openings for both external and internal interventions, often influencing decisions according to shifting interests and circumstances. External interference tends to intensify when internal divisions deepen—and recedes when internal consensus strengthens.
- **Sectarian Quota System (Muhasasa):** Since the formation of new political institutions post-2003, the sectarian quota system has been deeply embedded in Iraq’s governance structure. Under this arrangement, the three branches of government and senior public positions are distributed based on sectarian affiliation and proportional demographic weight. This practice has undermined the credibility of parliamentary decisions, exacerbated political tensions, and restricted the parliament’s ability to act in a unified national interest.
- **Absence of Effective Political Opposition:** In theory, opposition refers to political forces that hold those in power accountable. However, in Iraq, most parliamentary blocs are simultaneously part of the executive authority, rendering genuine parliamentary opposition ineffective. This dynamic discourages oversight activities, as members fear political retaliation. Many MPs also





prioritize personal or partisan interests over national responsibilities. Even after the resignation of the Sadrist bloc during the fifth parliamentary session, no meaningful political opposition emerged to balance or challenge the dominant parliamentary blocs.

- **Electoral System Challenges:** Iraq's electoral system mirrors the entrenched political and party landscape. The existing election law and its implementation mechanisms present significant obstacles to institutional reform and the establishment of rule-of-law governance. With each electoral cycle, the system faces renewed challenges due to persistent political disagreements.
- **Lack of Trust Among Parliamentary Components.**
- **Weak Parliamentary Leadership and Limited Experience.**
- **Administrative and Financial Corruption:** Corruption has eroded the credibility and effectiveness of parliamentary oversight mechanisms. A notable exception remains the impeachment of Trade Minister Abdul Falah al-Sudani on June 16, 2009, during the first parliamentary session for administrative and financial misconduct. However, this case is rare, and subsequent sessions have largely failed to hold officials accountable.
- **Deficiencies in the Council of Representatives' Internal Regulations:** The shortcomings in these regulations are particularly evident in the implementation of certain provisions, especially those related to both formal and substantive requirements, as well as the mechanisms of parliamentary oversight. A clear example is the failure to adhere to the established standards for submitting parliamentary questions. In most legislative systems, such questions must meet specific conditions: they should be concise, focused on a particular issue requiring clarification, consistent with the constitution and the public interest, free from inappropriate or offensive language, and should not address matters under judicial consideration, in order to uphold the principle of separation of powers. The main criticism of the Iraqi Council of Representatives' internal regulations is that they overlook these essential conditions. Specifically, the procedures governing parliamentary questions lack the rigor found in many other parliamentary systems. The drafters of these regulations should have studied question procedures in comparative legislative frameworks to ensure stronger procedural standards and more effective oversight.



- **Party Fragmentation and Absence of Party Law.**
- **Social, Political, and Cultural Barriers.**
- **Article 136(b) of the Criminal Procedure Code:** This provision requires the approval of a government official's superior before prosecution can proceed. Ministers have exploited this clause to evade legal accountability, severely weakening parliamentary oversight. Parliament has failed to amend or repeal this article, despite its clear conflict with transparency and the rule of law.
- **Article 61 and Attendance of Government Members:** While Article 61 obligates government officials to attend parliamentary sessions, it does not set a time frame or enforcement mechanism. Consequently, many officials regularly abstain from attending, often shielded by the strength of their political blocs within Parliament.
- **Weak Individual Positions of Representatives.**
- **Legislative Failures and the Absence of Key Constitutional Laws:** One of the most significant legislative shortcomings is the failure to enact laws mandated by specific articles and paragraphs of the Constitution—articles that explicitly require implementation through legislation. Currently, there are 55 constitutional articles for which no specific laws have been enacted, or only a limited number have been addressed. Among the most critical of these is the Federal Council Law, which remains unpassed. This legislative gap is further compounded by the broader failure to enact laws with prompt and effective executive mechanisms—laws that are essential for advancing political, economic, social, and cultural reforms in a meaningful and timely manner. Moreover, the absence of the Federal Council, which represents the dual structure of the legislative authority, has had a profound impact on the overall performance of the Council of Representatives. The Federal Council is intended to represent the regions and governorates at the national level and to help resolve disputes that frequently arise due to the lack of a legal framework capable of preventing or managing them.





Fifth: Evaluation of Parliamentary Performance in Its Fifth Session (2022–2025)

Evaluating parliamentary performance involves two key dimensions: **quantitative achievement** and **qualitative effectiveness**, alongside an assessment of priority-setting, societal impact, and the alignment between intended goals and actual outcomes. Such an evaluation necessitates clarity on the institution's foundational objectives, which form the benchmark for performance assessment. These objectives must be realistic and time-bound to enable accurate measurement.

When a parliament's goals are ambiguous or lack defined timelines, effective evaluation becomes nearly impossible. This difficulty is exacerbated by the absence of a coherent governmental program, the nature of coalition governance, and the continued reliance on the sectarian quota system (*muhasasa*).

Additionally, any assessment of parliamentary performance must be contextualized within the broader political environment—whether the country is in a period of stability or turmoil—as well as external pressures and internal challenges.

Evaluating the fifth parliamentary session thus requires analysis from several key angles, including but not limited to the following:

1. Number of Sessions Held

During the fifth parliamentary session, the Council of Representatives convened only about **51%** of the expected sessions—approximately **132 sessions**—despite internal regulations stipulating **256 sessions annually** (8 per month, or 32 per four-month legislative term). Prior to entering its final legislative recess, the Council failed twice to hold sessions due to the lack of a legal quorum, a consequence of ongoing political disputes among members. Following these failures, the term was declared concluded, and recess commenced.

Moreover, the upcoming national elections scheduled for **November 2025** have shifted deputies' attention toward campaigning rather than legislative duties. This delay in convening the required number of sessions reveals a **lack of coordination and political will** to fulfill the parliament's legislative responsibilities. Notably, this level of performance is lower than that of the fourth parliamentary session—even though the latter faced interruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



2. Commitment to Attendance

According to **Articles 11 and 18** of the Iraqi Parliament's internal regulations, deputies are obligated to attend both general sessions and committee meetings. Repeated unexcused absences—five or ten consecutive sessions within a legislative term—trigger written warnings, and the names of absentee deputies are to be publicly disclosed. If absences exceed one-third of the total sessions, a deputy may face dismissal.

Article 16 also mandates that absences require a valid excuse approved by both the Speaker and the relevant committee chair. Additionally, deputies are allowed a **15-day annual leave**, subject to the Speaker's approval, with no provision for extension.

Despite these provisions, enforcement remains lax. Prominent political bloc leaders frequently miss sessions without consequence, reflecting the influence of behind-the-scenes political agreements.

3. Interpellation and Summoning

As the fifth session nears its end, the parliament has conducted **very few interpellations and summoning procedures**—a troubling trend given the widespread indicators of corruption and public fund mismanagement in various ministries and government institutions.

A notable example occurred on **March 13, 2024**, when the parliament interpellated the former head of the Iraqi Media Network, **Nabil Jassim**. While the parliament subsequently withdrew its oversight of the network, **no legal accountability** followed the session. Similarly, the Ministers of Interior and Communications were summoned, but this level of oversight **pales in comparison** to previous sessions. By contrast, the **fourth session** recorded **41 officials summoned** and **7 ministerial interpellations**, including those involving the Ministers of Finance, Health, and Electricity.¹

The reduced oversight activity in the fifth session can be largely attributed to the **broad political consensus** under the “**State Management Coalition**,” which effectively neutralized inter-bloc opposition. This consensus has transformed parliamentary blocs into a **de facto single bloc**, significantly diminishing independent oversight and weakening the core functions of parliamentary accountability.

4. Legislating Laws

1- These statistics are derived from data published in the archives of the fourth parliamentary session of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, accessible via the following link: <https://archive4.parliament.iq/ar/2017/08/07/مجلس-النواب-حصاد-3-سنوات/?utm>





The parliament has increasingly become a venue for exchanging pleasantries and settling political scores, particularly as the upcoming elections draw near. This dynamic has significantly hindered legislative performance. As a result, many crucial laws—those that directly affect the daily lives of Iraqi citizens—have been postponed or remain suspended due to the absence of genuine political consensus.

First: Pending Legislation

More than 140 draft laws—comprising both new bills and amendments to existing legislation—remain pending within parliamentary committees and await a vote in Parliament. These laws require significant consensus among parliamentary blocs in the Council of Representatives and have been repeatedly postponed in previous sessions due to ongoing disagreements among major blocs.

- A. The Mukhtars Law
- B. Amendment to the Council of Representatives Law
- C. The Right to Information Law
- D. Amendment to the Advocacy Law
- E. Social Security Law
- F. The Civil Service Law
- G. Amendment to the Law on Equivalence of Certificates
- H. The Popular Mobilization Law
- I. Oil and Gas Law

Passing these laws would represent a crucial step toward addressing the legislative vacuum resulting from the country's political and institutional challenges. Furthermore, they play a vital role in managing and resolving issues related to the implementation of domestic public policies, particularly those concerning the federal budget and the relationship between the federal government in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government.



Second: Enacted Legislation

The number of laws enacted during the fifth parliamentary session is significantly lower than in previous sessions. The legislation passed includes:

1. Amendment to the Personal Status Law No. (188) of 1959
2. Second amendment to the General Amnesty Law No. (27) of 2016
3. Law repealing decisions of the dissolved Revolutionary Command Council and restoring properties to their rightful owners
4. Law establishing Halabja Governorate within the Republic of Iraq
5. First amendment to the Federal General Budget Law for fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025, No. (13) of 2023
6. First amendment to the Passport Law No. (32) of 2015
7. First amendment to the Martyrs' Foundation Law No. (2) of 2016
8. Agricultural Land Leasing Law
9. Public and Private University Education Law
10. Birth and Death Registration Law
11. Law ratifying Iraq's accession to the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives of 2015
12. Twenty-first amendment to the Civil Servants Law No. (25) of 1960
13. Official Holidays Law
14. Second amendment to the Independent High Electoral Commission Law No. (31) of 2019
15. Iraqi National Security Service Law
16. Ninth Amendment to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research Law No. (40) of 1988
17. First amendment to the Organ Transplantation and Anti-Trafficking Law No. (11) of 2016





18. First Amendment to the Law on Regulating Agricultural Land Leasing and Granting Disposal Rights to Agricultural and Veterinary Graduates No. (24) of 2013
19. Law ratifying the Mutual Visa Exemption Agreement for diplomatic passport holders between Iraq and the Republic of Korea
20. First amendment to the Anti-Prostitution Law No. (8) of 1988
21. The law criminalizing normalization with the Zionist entity

In contrast, the Iraqi Parliamentary Observatory reports that approximately 60 laws were passed during the fourth parliamentary session, indicating a significant decline in legislative activity in the current session.

While the number of laws enacted is not the sole indicator of parliamentary performance—since the substance and impact of legislation on citizens are equally important—this principle also applies to the federal budget. Despite its passage, the budget continues to encounter numerous legal and administrative challenges. These stem primarily from tensions between Parliament and the executive branch, as well as unresolved disputes between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional Government, in addition to the complexity of expenditures requiring thorough parliamentary review.

5. Disputes and Altercations

The Council of Representatives experienced numerous disputes and verbal altercations during its fifth session, several of which were documented and publicly broadcast. These included intense conflicts surrounding the election of a new Council Speaker following the resignation of Al-Halbousi, as well as controversies over contentious laws later passed using the single-basket voting system. Additionally, some important laws remain unresolved, such as the Popular Mobilization Forces Retirement Law.

In 2024, the government submitted an amendment to this law proposing minimum and maximum salary limits for Popular Mobilization members, along with a defined legal retirement age. However, the Council failed to reach consensus on the text, resulting in its removal from the parliamentary agenda. This deadlock prompted several Shiite factions to announce a boycott of parliamentary sessions until the law is reconsidered and reintroduced.



In summary, the performance of the fifth parliamentary session has not significantly differed from previous terms. It continues to be heavily influenced by sectarian and partisan quota systems that impede its functionality and obstruct genuine legislative progress. This session has lost much of its moral and political authority and has been largely ineffective in fulfilling its legislative and oversight responsibilities. These challenges underscore the urgent need for a comprehensive review of the parliamentary system and the exploration of authentic reform mechanisms to ensure true national representation free from quota-based divisions.

During this session, the legislature has been largely constrained by the “State Management Alliance,” whose consensus has taken on a more rigid and dominant character. This is evident in parliamentary sessions where most enacted laws served private interests—such as amendments to the Personal Status Law, general amnesty, and the restitution of properties—while bills addressing the public interest were sidelined or obstructed. Reliance on political consensus has become a significant obstacle, delaying key laws urgently awaited by the Iraqi public and prioritizing political compromise over parliamentary responsibility.

The legislative output and oversight achievements of the fifth session are notably weak. The Council passed only a limited number of laws, many of which are marginal in effect and offer little positive impact for the country or its citizens; some laws have even exacerbated sectarian and ethnic divisions, undermining national unity. This negative trajectory has eroded public engagement and trust, with citizens demonstrating low awareness of the Council’s fundamental duties and diminished confidence in its effectiveness. Many prioritize personal or private concerns over public interest.

Another point of concern is the functioning of parliamentary committees, particularly those overseeing sensitive security ministries like Defense and Interior. Political blocs strategically ensure their members are represented across all committees to maintain influence over these critical sectors. This has resulted in persistent irregularities, including uneven membership distribution—some committees comprise as many as 25 deputies, while others fall below the minimum required membership.

Overall, the fifth parliamentary session ranks among the weakest in performance compared to previous sessions, especially considering the accumulated institutional experience and the growing responsibilities expected of the legislature regarding parliamentary conduct and institutional effectiveness.

To enhance the performance of the Council of Representatives in its legislative and oversight roles, concerted efforts must be undertaken across multiple dimensions within its representative and supervisory functions. These efforts can be summarized in the following recommendations:





1. **Emphasize the Legislative Function:** Prioritize the enactment of laws that have a direct and meaningful impact on the economic and social life of Iraqi society. This must be done in strict adherence to constitutional principles, ensuring respect for the Constitution and establishing practical safeguards to uphold constitutional norms.
2. **Prioritize Democratic Principles over Sectarian Quotas:** Shift the focus from sectarian quota systems to a national approach grounded in citizenship as the foundational principle. Strengthen this approach to foster the development of the state and its institutions on the basis of an inclusive national identity.
3. **Balance Responsibilities Within the Council:** Distribute tasks and authorities equitably among Council members to achieve internal balance, while maintaining a constructive equilibrium with the executive branch. This balance should reflect a commitment to justice, equality, cooperation, and integration in line with the principles of parliamentary governance.
4. **Develop Evaluation Mechanisms:** Establish clear tools and indicators for assessing parliamentary performance, enabling effective self-monitoring and institutional evaluation to identify and correct errors.
5. **Strengthen Connection with the Public:** For the legislative authority to succeed in both lawmaking and oversight, it must maintain close ties with the Iraqi public, attentively address their priorities, and operate free from political compromises and partisan agendas. The oversight function should be empowered through genuine parliamentary mechanisms, including effective questioning, requests for clarification, and, when warranted, dismissal—all exercised with full independence and free from party, sectarian, racial, or personal biases.





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