



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

# Al Bayan Observatory



July 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.

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### **Note:**

The opinions expressed in the article do not necessarily reflect the directions adopted by the Center but rather the opinion of its authors.

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**[www.bayancenter.org](http://www.bayancenter.org)**

**[info@bayancenter.org](mailto:info@bayancenter.org)**

**Since 2014**

# AMERICAN THINK TANKS



# The Deep Roots of Iraq's Climate Crisis

**Zeinab Shuker**

**July 11, 2023**



**The Century Foundation**

<https://tcf.org/content/report/the-deep-roots-of-iraqs-climate-crisis/>



Iraq is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. Extreme weather and drought are already displacing thousands. This report launches an open-ended Century International research initiative focused on climate change in the Middle East by investigating the deep roots of Iraq's unique vulnerability. This report is the first in "Living the Climate Emergency: Lessons from Iraq," a new Century International project exploring how policymakers and researchers can draw on the case of Iraq and its neighbors to translate into action the growing consensus that the climate crisis is already here. Century's Climate Emergency project will connect field researchers, policymakers, and a wider audience through roundtables, public events, podcasts, and reports. Future research in this project will place today's crisis in a historical context; map the contours and human impact of climate change in Iraq and its neighborhood; and finally, drawing on the lessons of the extreme case in Iraq, make projections about the future and propose solutions.

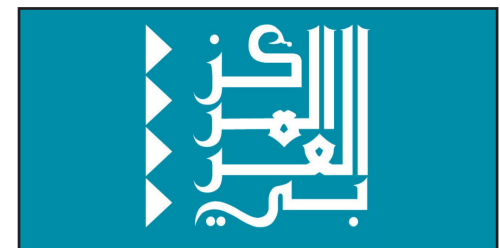
# Sudani's Premiership Is Failing in the Iraqi Fight Against Corruption



Patricia Karam, the non-fellow fellow at Arab Center, believes that in Iraq, “pervasive corruption is arguably the greatest barrier to reform and to curbing Iran’s influence in Iraq...one important manifestation of the systemic corruption has been the expansion of Iraq’s public sector... The country was shaken by the embezzlement of \$2,5 billion in tax revenues in 2021 that involved high level government officials... despite Iraq’s strategic importance and the need to support stability in the country, the American role has been effectively downgraded.” At the end, she concludes: “The United States and the international community must also recognize the necessity of re-engaging by supporting political actors and reformists who are committed to building accountability within the Iraqi political system, while pushing back against hegemonic capture by Iran. This will pave the road for a democratic Iraq that is a solid, sovereign American ally. Ignoring this reality continues to empower illiberal actors and undercuts the possibility of any democratic progress in Iraq.”

Patricia Karam

July 12, 2023



Arab Center Washington Dc

<https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/sudanis-premiership-is-failing-in-the-iraqi-fight-against-corruption/>

# The Cradle of Civilization Is Drying Up

## Climate change endangers the Tigris and Euphrates— but it's not the only reason the rivers are vanishing

Winthrop Rodgers

July 25, 2023



Foreign Policy

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/07/25/iraq-kurdistan-climate-change-rivers-tigris-euphrates/>



Winthrop Rodgers, a journalist, and analyst based in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, writes about the current situation of Iraq in terms of continuous drought. By interviewing some Iraqi who have suffered from drought and considering the challenges of finding and exerting solutions to this problem in Iraq, he writes: “Located at the southern end of the Tigris–Euphrates watershed, Basra is Iraq’s second–largest city, and temperatures there sometimes exceed 122 degrees Fahrenheit for days at a time in the summer. In 2018, contaminated drinking water in the city sent at least 118,000 people to the hospital, sparking massive protests. As less fresh water comes down the river system, salt water from the Persian Gulf penetrates farther inland up the Shatt al–Arab waterway, poisoning farmland across southern Iraq. The southern marshes, already damaged when large sections were drained under the orders of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, grow smaller each year.”

# Sinjar: Challenges and Resilience Nine Years after Genocide



Izat Noah

July 25, 2023



**The Washington Institute  
For Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/sinjar-challenges-and-resilience-nine-years-after-genocide>

Izat Noah, a graduate student in political sciences at Bielefeld University in Germany, writes about the challenges the citizens of Sanjar face years after the genocide done by ISIS. He writes that “The ninth anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide in Sinjar, Iraq is drawing near, a tragedy in which thousands of Yazidis were murdered, Yazidi women and children were enslaved, and Yazidi villages and compounds were destroyed by ISIS in August 2014.” He concludes: “Considering the repercussions of the Yazidi genocide and its devastating impact on the population, the question remains: is it possible for these people to end their story of tragedy, recover their identity, and live a safe, secure life into tomorrow? With the commitment of the international community, local and national government, and the continuing efforts of the Yazidis, these aspirations can be realized, and the challenges impeding Sinjar’s return to stability and safety can be overcome.”

# Blunting the Militia Campaign Against Iraq's Christian Leaders

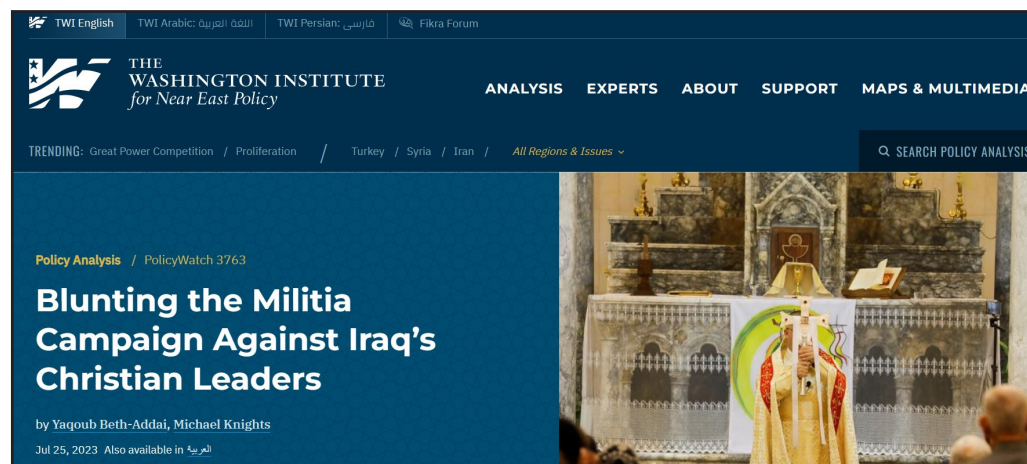
Yaqoub Beth-Addai, Michael Knights

July 25, 2023



**The Washington Institute  
For Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/blunting-militia-campaign-against-iraqs-christian-leaders>



Yaqoub Beth-Addai, an Iraqi expert on militias active in the Nineveh Plains region and Mosul, and Michael Knights, the Jill and Jay Bernstein Fellow of The Washington Institute, believe that “a U.S.-sanctioned, Iran-backed militia leader aims to sideline the country’s Chaldean Patriarch and take over billions of dollars’ worth of Christian property.” For them, this is a campaign to erode interfaith tolerance. They assert that “this issue has broader implications for U.S. security interests in Iraq beyond the important goal of protecting Christian leaders. Accordingly, Washington needs to act—and urge Baghdad to act as well. The following steps are most crucial in the near term: Keep appealing to President Rashid; End vote-rigging of minority quota seats; Leverage the U.S. religious freedom report; Create a more stable base for minority religious authorities; Encourage Iraq’s judiciary to act on legal cases against Kildan and Investigate Kildani’s broader network.”



# Iraq's Power Problem

## (Part 1): Persistent Financial and Technical Challenges

## (Part 2): Implications of the New Oil-for-Gas Deal with Iran

Bilal Wahab, Dennis Ross

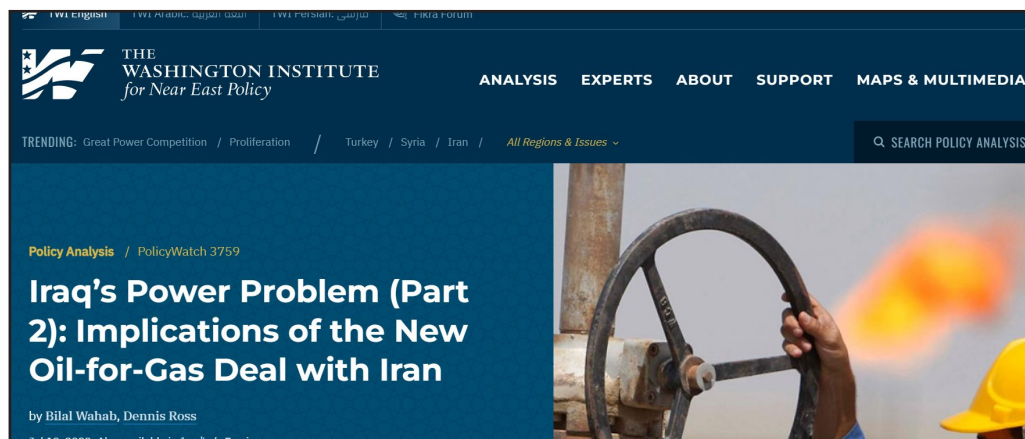
July 17, 2023



**The Washington Institute  
For Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/iraqs-power-problem-part-2-implications-new-oil-gas-deal-iran>

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/iraqs-power-problem-part-1-persistent-financial-and-technical-challenges>



In the first part, Noam Raydan, a Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute, writes asserts that “Diversifying Iraq’s energy supplies won’t mean much if its power infrastructure is not rehabilitated, and the skewed cost-revenue ratio at the Ministry of Electricity is unsustainable.” In the second part, Bilal Wahab, the Nathan and Esther K. Wagner Fellow at The Washington Institute and Dennis Ross, a former special assistant to President Barack Obama and the current counselor and William Davidson Distinguished Fellow at The Washington Institute, express that “Baghdad hopes to avoid power cuts, political turmoil, and U.S. sanctions by striking a barter agreement with Tehran, but the deal raises many questions.” At the end they conclude: “unless the new barter arrangements are aligned with a larger strategy for increasing the Iraqi government’s freedom of action from Iran, Baghdad and its international partners will repeatedly find themselves in a crisis footing that benefits Tehran.”

# The Abu Ragheef Committee Crisis: Security Repercussions for Iraq

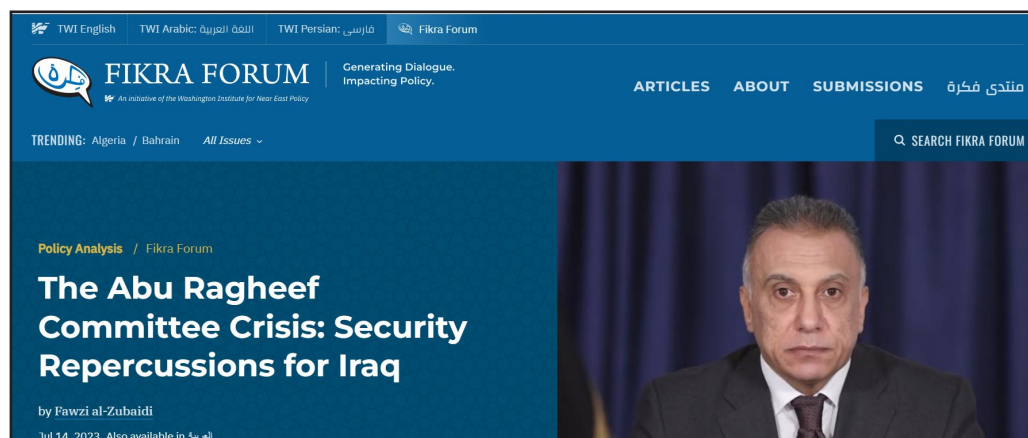
Fawzi al-Zubaidi

July 14, 2023



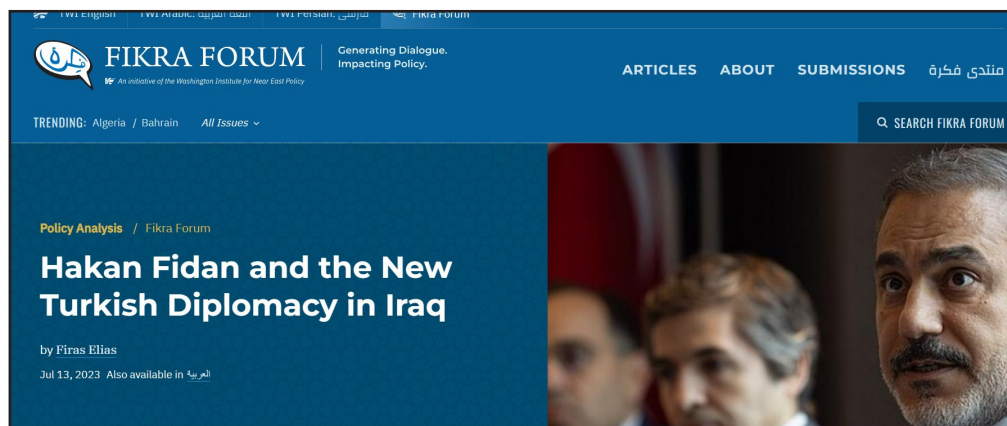
The Washington Institute  
For Near East Policy

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/abu-ragheef-committee-crisis-security-repercussions-iraq>



Fawzi al-Zubaidi, an expert on Middle East affairs and national security, believes that “The repercussions of the Abu Ragheef committee are still playing out in Iraq, as the Sudani government attempts to assign blame and pursue justice.” She concludes, “Sudani government must learn from the grave mistakes of the Kadhimi government and the Abu Ragheef Committee. Moving forward, the Iraqi government must approach anti-corruption measures with the utmost care, entrusting them to the constitutional institutions that already exist to address these issues and enhancing their capacities to do so. The Sudani government must avoid assigning advisors to roles that fall outside their professional expertise, because in the end, it is the prime minister alone who will be held responsible for any violations committed.”

# Hakan Fidan and the New Turkish Diplomacy in Iraq



Firas Elias, an expert in national security and Iranian studies, has focused on the chances and challenges the newly appointed Turkish Ministry of foreign affairs Hakan Fidan faces. For him, “As Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hakan Fidan will have to navigate urgent changes and new challenges in crafting Turkish policy towards Iraq.” Elias categorizes the main issues that Fidan would face into four groups: Expanding Political and Security Clout in Northern Iraq; Combatting Pro-Iranian Factions; Combatting Pro-Iranian Factions and Securing Economic Momentum. Ultimately, he concludes that “though Fidan will have to balance a variety of relationships in crafting Turkish foreign policy in Iraq, his appointment indicates that Erdogan intends to put Turkey’s own national interests...first. Of course, this roadmap in Iraq will encounter major challenges along the way .... Will Fidan’s policy approach in Iraq be able to balance the ever-changing political, economic, and security developments, or will it lag behind?”

Firas Elias

July 13, 2023



**The Washington Institute  
For Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/hakan-fidan-and-new-turkish-diplomacy-iraq>

# In Iraq, the Kurds Are Their Own Worst Enemy

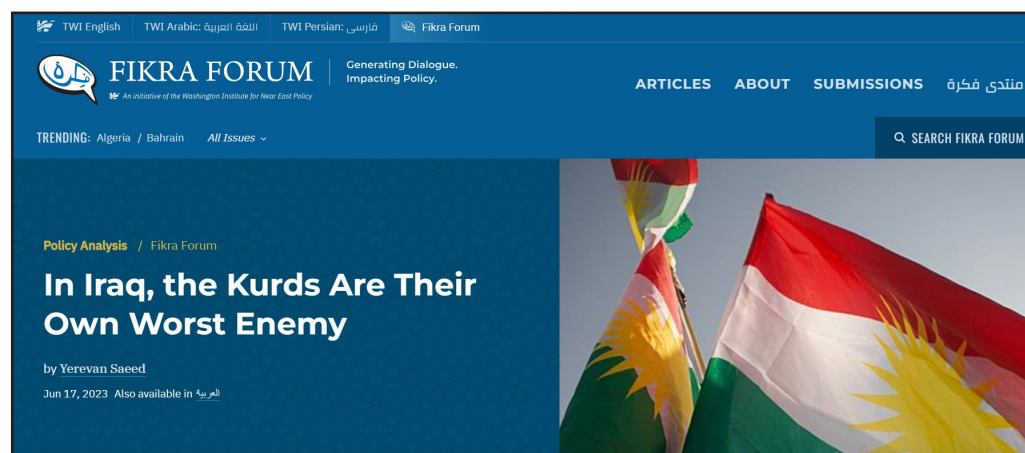
Yerevan Saeed

July 10, 2023



**The Washington Institute  
For Near East Policy**

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/iraq-kurds-are-their-own-worst-enemy>



Yerevan Saeed, a research associate at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington and a lecturer at the University of Kurdistan Hewler, believes that “Kurds were once referred to as kingmakers, a pillar of stability, and the most powerful force in the fight against ISIS. Now, the Kurdish Region of Iraq is crippled by ferocious partisanships, tribal politics, and internal splits.” Narrating the Kurdish role in post-2003 Iraq and discussing Kurdish divisions under the surface, he ends that “the political field in Kurdistan must be leveled through a new political pact backed by the KRG’s foreign patrons. This demands more American and European diplomatic engagement than ever before, despite their sense of diplomatic fatigue. In the event of a Western diplomatic vacuum, China and other western adversaries could seek to fill in the gap. Washington must not allow Beijing another diplomatic win in the Middle East.”

# Addressing challenges to tolerance and religious diversity in Iraq



Shivan Fazil, a researcher with the Middle East and North Africa Program at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, writes about Iraqi society’s challenges regarding tolerance and religious diversity. She believes, “First, the government needs to enact relevant legislation to fulfill its commitment to respect diversity and preserve pluralism by including minorities in public life and ensuring the right to effective and meaningful political participation... Second, it is also important to redevelop the curriculum with an emphasis on respect for diversity, human rights, and civic education. The curriculum should reflect Iraq’s rich mosaic of cultural diversity and contribute to the consolidation of values of citizenship and the formation of a national identity that bridges parochial differences... Finally, stakeholders involved in post-conflict reconstruction efforts should go beyond physical reconstruction by paying more attention to the role of cultural and religious practices in restoring peace and helping communities to heal and recover.”

Shivan Fazil

July 3, 2023



MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE

<https://www.mei.edu/publications/addressing-challenges-tolerance-and-religious-diversity-iraq>

# Water and Climate Change Will Shape Iraq-Turkey Relations

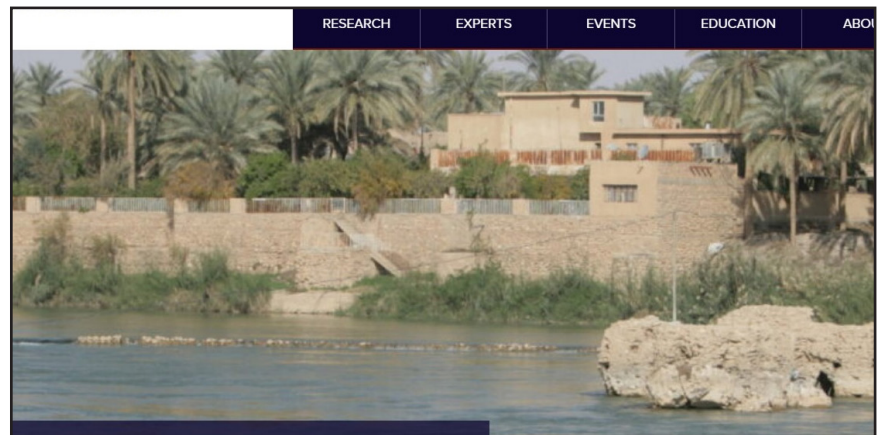
Mohammed A. Salih

July 19, 2023



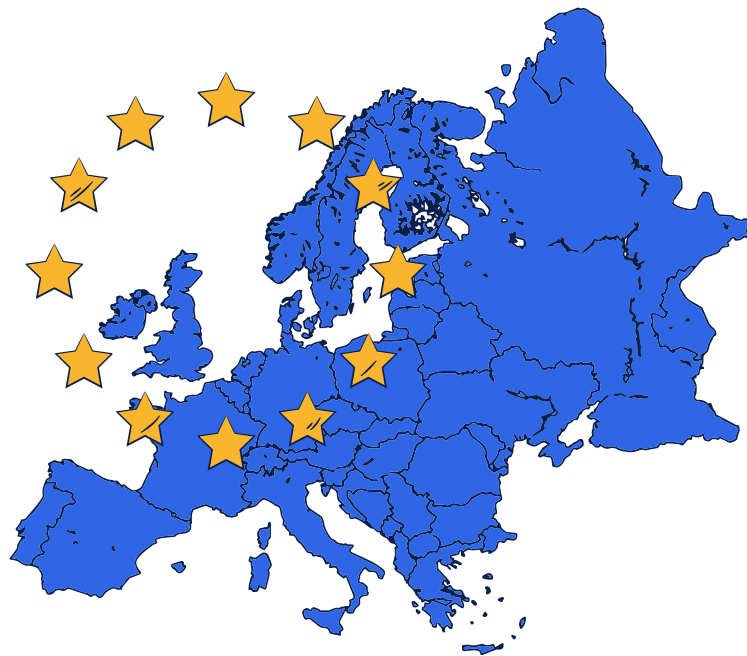
**Foreign Policy Research  
Institute**

<https://www.fpri.org/article/2023/07/water-and-climate-change-will-shape-iraq-turkey-relations/>



Mohammed A. Salih, a researcher, and journalist based in Virginia, United States, considers the role of environmental issues in shaping the relations of Iraq with its northern neighbor. Asserting that “[1] Water and climate change will be at the center of Iraq-Turkish relations for years to come; [2] There is a mismatch of priorities on the Turkish and Iraqi sides, with security constituting the most urgent element for Turkey and water/environment for Iraq. [3] Iraq lacks effective pressure cards against Turkey, while Ankara can successfully weaponize water against Iraq, particularly in the short and medium run. [4] A holistic approach that integrates the questions of trade, energy, security, and water can best help assuage Iraq’s water needs in dealing with Turkey.” He concludes that “what is certain is that minus a radical reconfiguration of the state of affairs inside Iraq, the country will grow thirstier and weaker vis-à-vis Turkey if the current trend of multiyear drought, rising temperatures, poor management of water resources, old-fashioned, water-intensive agricultural methods, and population growth continue.”

# EUROPEAN THINK TANKS



# A golden opportunity: How Iraq can benefit from regional calm

Hamzeh Hadad

July 25, 2023



**European Council On  
Foreign Relations**

<https://ecfr.eu/article/a-golden-opportunity-how-iraq-can-benefit-from-regional-calm/>



EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS ecfr.eu

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## A golden opportunity: How Iraq can benefit from regional calm

Following the recent thaw in relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, Iraq is strengthening its ties with GCC states. European countries should support this development, which could help Iraq address its domestic challenges

 [Hamzeh Hadad](#)   
Visiting Fellow

Hamzeh Haddad, a visiting fellow at European Council on Foreign Relations, believes that “following the recent thaw in relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, Iraq is strengthening its ties with GCC states. European countries should support this development, which could help Iraq address its domestic challenges” At the end, he concludes: “Iraq will need to continue to carefully balance relations with its neighbours, even as Iran and Saudi Arabia warm up to one another... The presence of paramilitary groups allied with Iran, which often take a more hardline approach than Tehran, as well as the risk of wider regional escalation linked to US and Israeli tensions with Iran, also pose threats to the sustainability of this path. But ultimately, a more regionally connected Iraq will be better positioned to meet its own internal challenges and mitigate the impact of these external pressures. Europeans should do what they can to strengthen this opportunity.”



# Iraq's Quest for a Social Contract

## An Approach to Promoting Social Cohesion and State Resilience



IDOS DISCUSSION PAPER

1/2023

### Iraq's Quest for a Social Contract

#### An Approach to Promoting Social Cohesion and State Resilience

This study sets out to examine state–society relations in Iraq through the conceptual lens of the social contract. Also, it provides a starting point for deriving potential areas of activity for external actors, such as German development cooperation (DC) and technical cooperation (TC). These players could support the re–negotiation of this fraught mesh of relationships. This analysis is founded on a concept of the social contract in which the relationship between the government and those it governs is viewed primarily as a process of negotiation and can be operationalised, for instance, on the basis of the three Ps (participation, provision and protection). As such, the concept is informed both by contemporary approaches and by traditional reflections of French and Anglo–Saxon thinkers, who focus on the restriction of individual freedoms in return for the provision of legal certainty by the state.

Wolfgang Mühlberger

July 2023



German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)

<https://www.idos-research.de/en/discussion-paper/article/iraqs-quest-for-a-social-contract-an-approach-to-promoting-social-cohesion-and-state-resilience/>

# Iraq as an energy partner?

Von Lucas Lamberty

July 19, 2023



Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

<https://www.kas.de/de/laenderberichte/detail/-/content/der-irak-als-energiepartner>

Juli 2023  
**Länderbericht**  
Länderbüro Irak

**Der Irak als Energiepartner?**

Von Lucas Lamberty

Deutschland sucht seit Beginn des russischen Angriffskriegs auf die Ukraine nach Möglichkeiten, seine Energieimporte zu diversifizieren. Der Irak verfügt im Bereich der fossilen Energieträger wie Erdöl und Erdgas über weitreichende Ressourcen. Bislang sind die Verbindungen zwischen Berlin und Bagdad im Energiebereich allerdings schwach – ein Umstand, der sich

In a report in the German language called *Der Irak als Energiepartner?*, Von Lucas Lamberty discusses the chances and challenges of considering Iraq as a stable and sustainable energy partner for the West. Stating that “Iraq has extensive resources in the field of fossil fuels such as oil and natural gas... Germany should work towards a stronger partnership with the country in this area,” the author concludes that “Iraq would be an important partner for Germany in the energy sector. The foundations for this should already be laid today. Germany should closely accompany the country’s development and expand strategic partnerships in the energy sector. There are also points of contact with the European Union’s Global Gateway initiative. These should be followed up and deepened. The idea of increased connectivity between Berlin and Baghdad is more than 100 years old – but no less relevant today.”

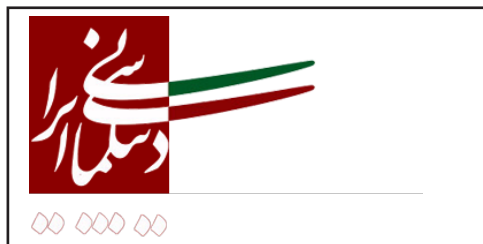
# IRANIAN THINK TANKS



# America's abuse of al-Howl camp - Iranian diplomacy

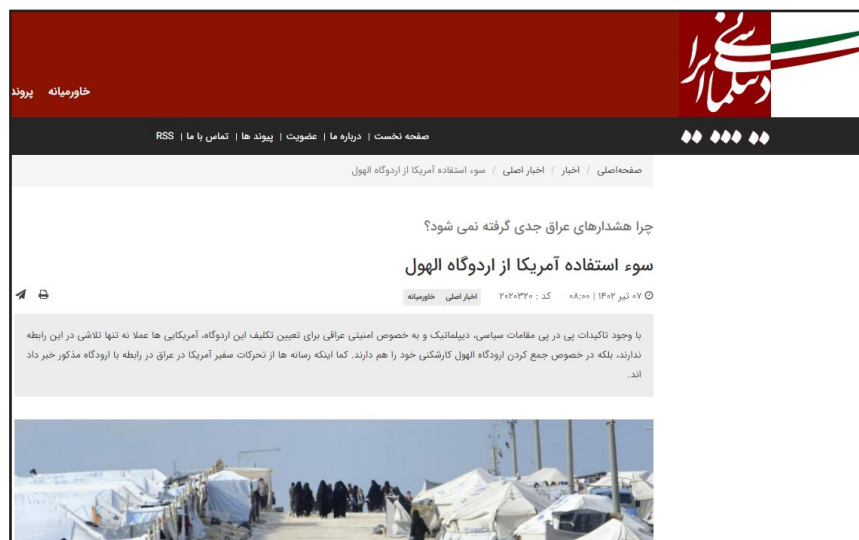
Hossein Fatemi

July 7, 2023



Iranian Diplomacy Website

<https://tinyurl.com/28ffv3cm>



Hossein Fatemi, on the website of Iranian diplomacy, which is close to Iranian reformists, writes: “despite the continuous emphasis of Iraqi political, diplomatic and especially security authorities to determine the fate of this camp, the Americans not only do not actually make any effort in this regard, But they also have their own obstacles regarding the gathering of Al-Howl Airport. In addition, the media has reported on the movements of the American ambassador in Iraq regarding the aforementioned airport. In the end, he writes: “a group of analysts believe that in addition to the American pressure on Iraq using the lever of the al-Howl camp, Washington is trying to stoke the fire of terrorism by using the potential forces that exist in this camp to find a justification for his continued presence in the region, especially in the two countries of Syria and Iraq.”

# A trip after 12 years

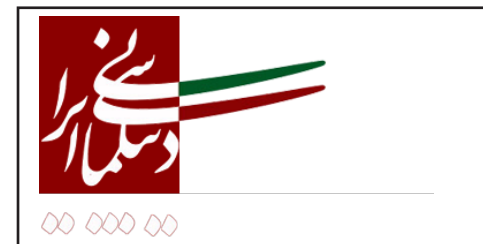
## Investigating the objectives of Sudanese presence in Damascus



Hossein Fatemi writes on the website of Iranian diplomacy, which is close to Iranian reformists, about the Iraqi Prime Minister's recent visit to Syria: "on October 1, 2019, following the defeat of ISIS, Syria and Iraq reopened the Bukamal-Qaim border crossing to normalize the situation to revive law enforcement and the development of cross-border trade. This incident added to the importance of the crossing due to the fact that two other crossings on the border between Syria and Iraq are still closed.... However, the situation in the region is much more complicated than these. New configurations of power and border management have emerged, whose characteristics include the current and dual security relations among various countries and non-state actors and forces seeking autonomy along the Qaim-Bukamal border. On the other hand, with the increase in air strikes by the United States and the Zionist regime, there is a special security situation along the border.

Hossein Fatemi

July 26, 2023



Iranian Diplomacy Website

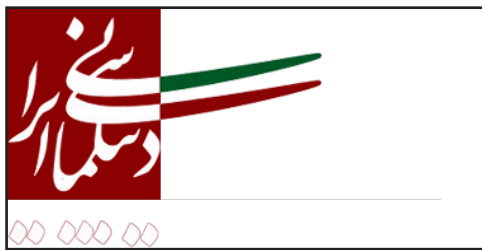
<https://tinyurl.com/2dforc4b>

# Kurdistan Region Owes Iran

## About General Bagheri's recent serious warning to the Iraqi side to disarm or expel armed groups

Hasan Lasjerdi

July, 2023



Iranian Diplomacy Website

<https://tinyurl.com/27cjswx8>



In an interview with the Iranian Diplomacy website, Hassan Lasjerdi conveyed his opinions regarding the recent warning of General Bagheri to the Iraqi side about the disarmament or expulsion of Kurdish armed groups in the north of this country: “Islamic Republic of Iran’s aid to the northern region of Iraq did not allow ISIS to conquer Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, they are somehow considered as debtors to Iran...we have witnessed the presence of some groups opposed to Iran in the north of that country, groups that have an armed approach against the Islamic Republic of Iran and are considered a threat to our national security... after many warnings and requests to the Iraqi side, Iran has asked them to resolve this problem within a certain period of time, which is until September of this year, and if they cannot do anything ..., Iran itself will take action and once again hit the positions and headquarters of the armed groups in northern Iraq.

# Iraq needs regional peace for its development

## A double motivation for Iraq to Join Dialogue Forum between Iran and Joining Gulf Council

Seyed Ali Musavi Khalkhali

July 31, 2023



Iranian Diplomacy Website

<https://tinyurl.com/2cp8ueb6>

Ali Mousavi Khalkhali mentions the coming meeting of Iran with the Persian Gulf countries, which is scheduled to be held soon at the initiative of Iran and speaks of Iraq's desire to participate in it. For him, "Iraq has already defined extensive cases for its development. From the huge Faw Port project to the Basra-Turkey corridor with the aim of becoming a regional hub and also expanding economic relations with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt. Baghdad intends to realize its dream of being an economic center, and this dream will not be realized unless the competition of regional powers turns into regional cooperation and interactions, the economic aspect of which is undoubtedly of great importance. Therefore, it is expected that Iraq will attend the meeting of the countries of the Persian Gulf or Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, with a double motivation."

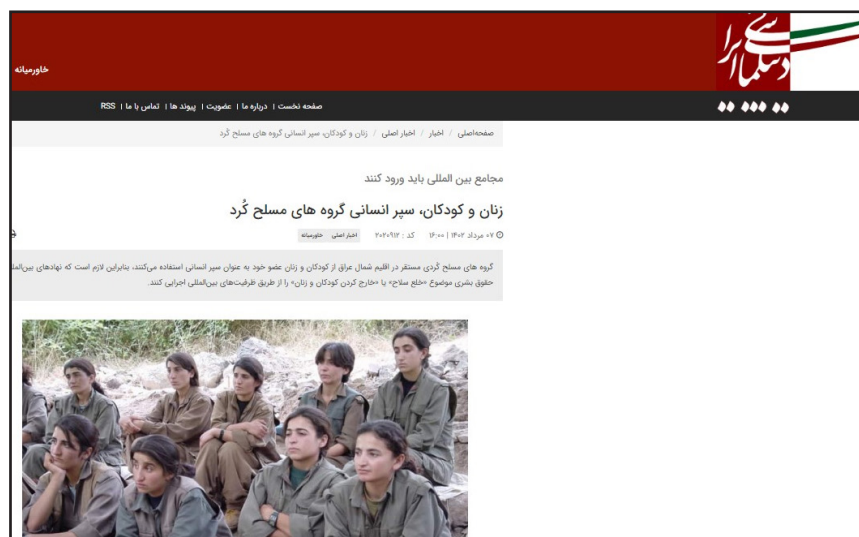
# International organizations must meddle Women and children are the human shields of Kurdish armed groups

Hormoz Jafari



Iranian Diplomacy Website

<https://tinyurl.com/27o4h5nq>



Kurdish armed groups based in the northern region of Iraq use children and women as human shields, so international and human rights institutions must address the issue of “disarmament” or “removal of children and women” through international enforcement capacities. After the fall of Saddam’s Baath regime and the formation of the northern region of that country, one of the strategic issues between Iran and the Kurdistan region has been the presence of Kurdish anti-Iranian militias in that region. Unfortunately, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not yet been able to use its legal and legal capacities, to save these vulnerable children and women. According to the reports that have been published, the mentioned armed groups use children and women members as “human shields”, so it seems that the human responsibility of the officials of the northern region of Iraq, international institutions and human rights.



# TURKISH THINK TANKS



# Is the New Budget in Iraq a Blow to the Political and Economic Status of the KRG?

Mehmet Alaca

July 17, 2023



**ORSAM (Center for Middle Eastern Studies)**

<https://orsam.org.tr/tr/irakta-yeni-butce-ikbynin-siyasi-ve-ekonomik-statukosuna-darbe-mi/>



Mehmet Alaca believes that “the fact that pro-Iranian Shiites do not negotiate sufficiently with Sunnis and Kurds in the budget process may cause heavy blockages in Iraqi politics in the medium term...it can be instructive for all groups that the segregated Kurdish politics is constantly losing. Despite the recent weakening of Erbil’s influence and reputation, the budget law could increase the region’s revenues and transparency,” the author concludes that: “Kurdish oil was sold below the market value, but in the new period, it will be sold at the same standards as Iraq. In addition, the budget will provide funds for KRG’s infrastructure projects and services. Instead of drowning in the differences between KDP and PUK, Iraqi Kurds can protect their gains by turning this into an opportunity. Otherwise, it seems inevitable that they will continue to weaken”.

# Election Tension Rising in Kirkuk



Bilgay Duman

July 21, 2023



**ORSAM (Center for Middle Eastern Studies)**

<https://orsam.org.tr/tr/kerkukte-secim-tansiyonu-yukseliyor/>

Bilgay Duman refers to the coming election in Iraq and writes: “The Arabs, who have increased their social, political and administrative influence in Kirkuk after Rakan Sait became the deputy governor, have been well consolidated. However, the fact that Arabs have a closed region like Hawija is an important advantage. At this point, the legal process regarding the elections has started. The groups must determine the decision on how they will enter the elections by the end of July and report them to the Iraqi High Election Commission. It seems that what kind of alliance and political structure the Turkmens and Kurds will participate in the elections will determine the outcome of the elections in Kirkuk. If both parties disperse and participate in the elections, they may face bigger problems in choosing candidates and if this situation escalates, it seems inevitable that the Arabs will gain the advantage. From this point of view, it seems like the best way for Turkmens and Kurds to act with a holistic perspective.

# Türkiye – Iraq Relations

Murat Aslan

July 29, 2023



Sabah Newspaper

<https://www.sabah.com.tr/yazarlar/perspektif/murat-aslan/2023/07/29/turkiye-irak-iliskileri>



According to Murat Aslan, “Iraq is one of the important border stakeholders for Turkey in terms of trade, energy, security and social interaction. It is a fact that the developments in Iraq are followed closely in Turkey, and any negativity is reflected primarily to Turkey... It can be mentioned that there is a slowdown in the relations between Iraq and Turkey. However, Türkiye is the only country that can sincerely extend a hand to Iraq. For Iraq, relying on Iran or the USA for help, a terrorist organization such as the PKK, whose separatism has been registered, cannot be a way out.” He concludes that “while strategic dialogue with Turkey contributes both to the solution of current problems and to Iraq’s security, it is Sudanese’s greatest duty to ensure that Iraq is not instrumentalized. On the other hand, it is necessary to put the political preferences of Iraqi President Rashid and the disorganization of Iraqi politics in parentheses.”

# REGIONAL THINK TANKS

# Unintended Bubble: The Truth Behind US Sanctions on Iraqi Banks

Aqeel Abbas

July 28, 2023



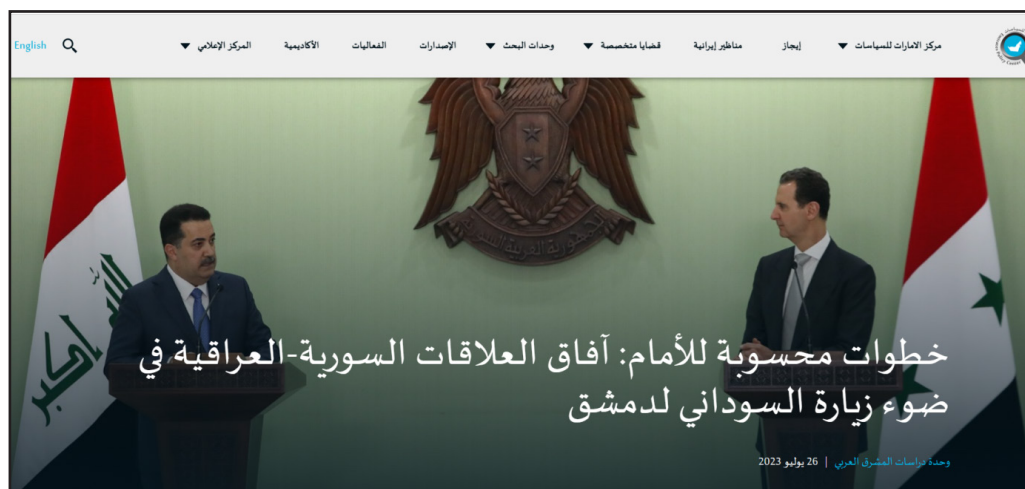
Emirates Policy Center

<https://www.epc.ae/ar/details/brief/haqiqat-alouqubat-alamrikia-alamasarif-aleiraqia>



Concern has risen in Iraq after the United States announced that it would punish 14 Iraqi banks and prevent them from dealing in US dollars, due to strong suspicions about their involvement in smuggling dollars to Iran, which is under US economic and financial sanctions. This announcement led to a rise in the price of the dollar in the Iraqi parallel market, which is not under government control, to reach 1550 dinars after being around 1445 (note that the official price of the dollar is set at 1320 dinars). As a result, the door has been opened to the expectation of further political confrontation between the United States and the Shiite forces that are influential in Iraq and loyal to Iran, which are usually accused of being behind the smuggling of dollars to Iran through the use of some banks as fronts for them.

# Calculated Steps: Sudani's Damascus Visit and Prospects of Syria-Iraq Relations



The Levant Studies Unit

July 26, 2023



Emirates Policy Center

<https://epc.ae/ar/details/brief/afaq-alalaqat-alsuwria-aleiraqia-fi-daw-ziarat-alsuwdani-lidimashq>

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani's recent visit to Syria and his discussions with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad on July 16, 2023, raises the question of whether the two countries will resolve their outstanding issues, which have kept their bilateral relations at low levels. This is the Iraqi prime minister's first-of-its-kind visit since 2011. However, it is the highest by any Arab official since the Arab détente with Damascus.

This paper sheds light on issues of mutual interest and obstacles to improving Baghdad-Damascus relations.

# Significance of the diplomatic escalation between Iraq and Sweden

Safinaz Muhammad Ahmad

July 24, 2023



Al-Ahram Center For Political & Strategic Studies

<https://acpss.ahram.org.eg/News/20956.aspx>



Safinaz Mohamed Ahmed, an expert specializing in Arab political affairs and editor-in-chief of the Badael periodical at Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, connects the demonstrations in Iraq against Sweden's political representative to the Iraqi politics internal mobilities. For her, demonstrations held by Muqtada Sadr's followers, even if it is not against the government, delivers "a message to the Coordination Framework forces that he is about to return soon to the Iraqi political scene, and that he has the ability to mobilize and take control of the protests if he decides to return, or decides something beyond that, such as participating in the upcoming elections, for example... The reappearance of al-Sadr and his movement again in the arenas of public influence near the Green Zone, has gained this position popular momentum... Muqtada al-Sadr's recent appearance may open the way for other appearances to come in the future".