Iraqi Public Opinion on the Rise, Fall, and Future of ISIS

Featuring:

Dr. Munqith Dagher
CEO, Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society Studies (IIACSS)

Anthony H. Cordesman
Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy, CSIS

October 30, 2017
Figure One: ISW Estimate of Zones of Control in Iraq as of June 16, 2017

Figure One: Iraq's Growing Population and “Youth Bulge”

Figure Three: Iraq's Direct Youth Unemployment

Figure Four: Iraq's Bloated, Costly Public Sector

Core Public Employment 2003-2015

Government Wage Bill

Growth of Public Sector Wages

Comparison of Public Sector Wages in MENA Countries

Source: Iraq Ministry of Finance and World Development Indicators

Source: Iraq Ministry of Finance and the IMF

Source: Ministry of Finance, Iraq, and IMF staff estimates and projections.

Source: Iraqi authorities and IMF staff estimates.
Figure Five: Iraq's Failed Governance

The inner, thicker blue line shows the selected country's percentile rank on each of the six aggregate governance indicators. The outer, thinner red lines show the indicate margins of error.


Notes: The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) are a composite index of indicators that reflect the quality of governance provided by a large number...
Figure Six: Iraq – Budget Deficits

Figure Six: Iraq - Ease of Doing Business

## Figure Seven: Iraq – Petroleum Export Revenue ($US Billions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>308.9</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>228.6</td>
<td>335.9</td>
<td>352.9</td>
<td>334.4</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>157.3</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>107.3</td>
<td>104.4</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>988.5</td>
<td>592.7</td>
<td>770.4</td>
<td>1076.8</td>
<td>1131</td>
<td>1045.8</td>
<td>933.5</td>
<td>508.9</td>
<td>433.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Figure Eight: Iraq – Per Capita Petroleum Export Revenue ($US)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>1705.4</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1240.4</td>
<td>1698.3</td>
<td>1633.1</td>
<td>1423.8</td>
<td>1221.9</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>475.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>3312.2</td>
<td>1969.5</td>
<td>2474.3</td>
<td>3067.9</td>
<td>3025.4</td>
<td>2845.8</td>
<td>2395.8</td>
<td>1304.9</td>
<td>1011.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>624.4</td>
<td>349.2</td>
<td>437.2</td>
<td>621.1</td>
<td>619.7</td>
<td>583.7</td>
<td>546.7</td>
<td>309.7</td>
<td>265.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>5401.9</td>
<td>3423.4</td>
<td>4227.7</td>
<td>5576.9</td>
<td>5288.2</td>
<td>4749</td>
<td>4200.1</td>
<td>2103</td>
<td>1691.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>1049.3</td>
<td>672.1</td>
<td>919.4</td>
<td>1234.3</td>
<td>858.6</td>
<td>613.8</td>
<td>639.6</td>
<td>367.1</td>
<td>452.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>2204.6</td>
<td>1338.6</td>
<td>1594.4</td>
<td>2349.4</td>
<td>2647.1</td>
<td>2515.5</td>
<td>2451.7</td>
<td>1570.3</td>
<td>1423.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>29001.7</td>
<td>15670.1</td>
<td>18257.4</td>
<td>26652.4</td>
<td>27304.3</td>
<td>25209.9</td>
<td>21170.7</td>
<td>11248.3</td>
<td>9343.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>9333.3</td>
<td>5367.1</td>
<td>6796.9</td>
<td>1846.5</td>
<td>7990.3</td>
<td>4607.1</td>
<td>1296.4</td>
<td>501.4</td>
<td>361.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>460.8</td>
<td>295.1</td>
<td>402.8</td>
<td>573.1</td>
<td>551.2</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>433.3</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>136.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>32244.2</td>
<td>19460.9</td>
<td>25012.8</td>
<td>34354.7</td>
<td>32987.2</td>
<td>30897.7</td>
<td>26724.8</td>
<td>13439.1</td>
<td>10458.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>11563.1</td>
<td>6266.5</td>
<td>8133.7</td>
<td>11665.1</td>
<td>11968.9</td>
<td>11072.5</td>
<td>9623.3</td>
<td>4991.3</td>
<td>4132.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>12448.7</td>
<td>6372.7</td>
<td>7437.5</td>
<td>11335.2</td>
<td>11986</td>
<td>11548.3</td>
<td>10644.2</td>
<td>6083.8</td>
<td>5043.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>2233.6</td>
<td>1395.5</td>
<td>1554.8</td>
<td>2337.5</td>
<td>2268.9</td>
<td>2211.1</td>
<td>1946.3</td>
<td>939.6</td>
<td>690.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>2503.1</td>
<td>1461.4</td>
<td>1856.7</td>
<td>2535.4</td>
<td>2603.7</td>
<td>2352.8</td>
<td>2055.2</td>
<td>1095.9</td>
<td>912.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Iraq: Studies of Key Trends and Challenges


• Aid, Stability and Recovery in Warfighting, June 1, 2017

Dai’sh in Iraq: The full story
Is it the final chapter?

Munqith Dagher
IIACSS research group – Iraq
CSIS-30th of Oct.2017
• For the last three years I have argued that ISIL (Da’esh) is a symptom rather than a disease in itself.
• My theory to explain the sudden rise of ISIL in Iraq and the region is based on:
  1. Hundreds of thousands of face-to-face interviews that have been conducted over the last decade.
  2. Tens of focus groups, especially in Sunni Areas.
  3. 30 F2F in-depth interviews with Da’ish captured fighters.
  4. Confiscated documents from IS in Iraq.
1- Genesis
The Iraqi government’s failure to understand people’s needs and feelings.
• 16 out of 29 captured terrorists joined Da’ish to fulfil the basic physical and security needs.

2- Maturation chapter
Da’ish deception

3- Deterioration chapter
Da’ish reality
• ISIL benefited from the widely and strongly felt negativity among Sunni’s in Iraq after 2003 invasion. In the areas where Da'esh/ISIL have surged, there exist widespread feelings of injustice, deep resentments about basic inequality and a growing gap of trust between the governors and the governed.

• Deep dissatisfaction with the central government has long been clear in the Sunni triangle.
Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you think things are going in the wrong direction?

**Sunnis perception about Iraq direction**

- **Right direction**
- **Wrong direction**

**Key Events:**
- US Forces withdrawal
- ISIL took over Mosul

**Timeline:**
- Nov 2010
- Mar 2011
- Jul 2011
- Oct 2011
- Apr 2012
- Feb 2013
- Sep 2013
- Mar 2014
- Jan 2015
- Sep 2015
- Jan 2016
Lack of trust

How much confidence do you have in the Iraqi government to improve the situation in Iraq?

Nation wide surveys
How much trust do you have in the judicial system?

- Sunni: 30%
- Shi'a: 68%
Iraq: Confidence in Iraqi Army

How much confidence do you have in the Iraqi Army to improve the situation in Iraq?

Nation wide surveys

Sunni Muslim

Shia Muslim

2011 2012 2013 2014

85% 86% 78% 91%

69% 60% 40% 28%

IIA SS
How much confidence do you have in the Iraqi Police to improve the situation in Iraq?

Nation wide surveys

Sunni Muslim

Shia Muslim

2011 2012 2013 2014
Sunni vs. Shi’a Perceived Insecurity – Mosul and Salahdin

HOW UNSAFE DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

MOSUL AND SALAHDIN

Nation wide surveys
Sunnis’ association with Iraq as the basis for their identity decreased sharply from 80% in 2008 to 60% in 2010 and it is now only 40%.

I AM IRAQI ABOVE ALL
1- Genesis
The failure of understanding people needs and feelings

2- Maturation chapter
Da’ish deception.
“IS will not stop in Iraq and conquer the world”
5 terrorists stated that this was the main message IS sent when it occupied Iraq.

3- Deterioration chapter
Da’ish reality
In June 2014, ISIL occupied Ninawa, the second largest province in Iraq and extended within one week its control to over 40% of Iraq territories.

Sunnis welcomed the change in the beginning.

ISIL enjoyed more than one year of honeymoon in most occupied areas due to its good financial status and the ineffective response of the Iraqi government and the international community.

By the end of 2015 and beginning of 2016, ISIL became hostile and unresponsive to people’s needs as a result of effective international alliance measures and its cooperation with the Iraqi government to fight back against Da'esh.
What happened in Mosul was a result of:

- Wrong practices of the army & federal police in Ninevah: 36%
- As a result of conspiracy of internal Iraqi political parties inside & outside of Mosul: 12%
- Wrong practices of the central government in Baghdad: 28%
- As a result of foreign plot to Iraq: 12%
- The Occupation of Mosul by foreign armed groups: 6.5%
- Marginalization & sectarianism against Sunni: 5.5%

200 telephone interviews were conducted with people from Mosul in the period of 19-21 June 2014.
Is it safe and secure in your neighborhood after the withdrawal of the army and the armed groups took over the city?

200 telephone interviews were conducted with people from Mosul in the period of 19-21 June

- Yes: 82
- No: 14
- Don't Know: 4

Category 1
More people said that their current life was better than it was under the Iraqi central government - Dec 2015

Thinking about life in general, is it better or worse today than eighteen months ago?

- June 2015: 21% Better, 2% Same, 77% Worse
- December 2015: 42% Better, 3% Same, 55% Worse
Consistent rise in the support for Da’esh (Mosul) - Dec 2015

In your opinion, does Da’esh represent the views and interests of people like you?

- **Yes**
  - Jun 2014: 10
  - Jun 2015: 26
  - Dec 2015: 39

- **No**
  - Jun 2014: 72
  - Jun 2015: 67
  - Dec 2015: 57
1- Genesis
The failure of understanding people needs and feelings

2- Maturation chapter
Da’ish deception

3- Deterioration chapter
Da’ish reality.
“They were not able to protect us in Mosul from airstrikes while they kept saying that they will conquer the world”
“In the beginning they provided food, some public services and security but after a while they become very brutal with serious shortages in food and health services”
Da’ish captured fighters
In your opinion, does Da’esh represent the views and interests of people like you?
Why I changed the subject from Da’ish still winning to source of the support for Da’ish? Da’ish is losing now but is it the final scene?

Thinking about life in general, is it better or worse today than eighteen months ago?
Source: F2F surveys in Mosul

- same
- better
- worse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>same</th>
<th>better</th>
<th>worse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jun-15</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec-15</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar-16</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IRAQ AFTER DA’ESH: HOPES AND CONCERNS

HOPES
New take off
Generally speaking, do you think that things in Iraq are going in the right direction, or do you think things are going in the wrong direction?

- Right direction
- Wrong direction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

US Forces withdrawal
ISIL took over Mosul
Mosul free
Sunnis’ association with Iraq as the basis for their identity decreased sharply from 80% in 2008 to 60% in 2010 and only 40% in 2014, and increased to 81% again in 2017.

I AM IRAQI ABOVE ALL
DO YOU THINK THAT THINGS IN IRAQ ARE GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

Sunni Arab

63%
HOW FAVOURABLE IS AL-ABADI?

Sunni Arab

PM Favorability (Sunni)

April 2014: 4%
February 2015: 67%
April 2017: 75%
August 2017: 77%
Iraqis Federal Forces (Army & Police) are the most favored to provide security in previously ISIL-controlled areas.

WHO SHOULD PROVIDE SECURITY IN YOUR AREA?

Sunni Arab

Confidence in Iraqi Army to improve situation

Confidence in Iraqi Police to improve situation

August 2017
HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU THAT ISIS OR A SIMILAR ORGANIZATION WILL REAPPEAR IN YOUR CITY?

Nationwide poll April 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Concerned</th>
<th>Not Concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 2017</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 2017</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IRAQ AFTER DA’ESH: HOPES AND CONCERNS

CONCERNS

Nation wide survey 8th June 2014
CONCERNS

HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU THAT IRAQI POLITICS WILL RETURN TO THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE ISIL CAPTURED MOSUL?

SUNNI ARAB

Previously ISIL-controlled Areas

- Areas previously controlled by ISIL
  - Not at all concerned: 12%
  - Just a little concerned: 20%
  - Somewhat concerned: 28%
  - Very concerned: 41%

Nationwide poll April 2017
How much trust do you have in the Iraqi government to treat Sunnis the same way they treat Shi'a? ARAB SUNNI

Nationwide poll April 2017
Most important things to make sure that ISIS or other extremist organizations do not re-emerge in Iraq

The Immunization Recipe

- Fighting corruption of local leaders: 84%
- Treating people equally regardless of sect or ethnic background: 82%
- Creating more jobs and opportunities for youth: 82%

F2F survey in Sunni areas August & October 2017
“Security forces and PMF (Hashd) always look to us as Da’ish (ISIL members)”.  
Participants in focus groups in Mosul and Anbar

“I joined Da’ish because no one wanted to give me a second chance after being released from prison”.  
Da’ish captured young fighter
Alerts

1- Al-Anbar. Some red flags

2- Kurdistan
In general, do you think things in Iraq are going in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

F2F survey in Sunni areas August & October 2017
How much do you trust Iraq’s central government and the local government?

- Iraq’s Central Government
  - Anbar: 41%
  - Sunnis: 63%

- Local Government
  - Anbar: 25%
  - Sunnis: 43%

F2F survey in Sunni areas August & October 2017
Anbar Sunnis

Jobs and unemployment concerns

Anbar: 36%
Sunnis: 24%

F2F survey in Sunni areas August & October 2017
One year from now, do you think that life in Iraq in general will be better or worse?

- **Better**: 66% (Sunnis)
  - Anbar: 46%

- **The same as it is now**: 34% (Anbar)

- **Worse**: 20% (Anbar)
  - 20% (Sunnis)
  - 11% (Sunnis)

*F2F survey in Sunni areas August & October 2017*
How much are you worried about ISIL sleeper cells?

- August 2017:
  - Anbar: 59%
  - Sunnis: 33%

- October 2017:
  - Anbar: 71%
  - Sunnis: 35%

F2F survey in Sunni areas August & October 2017
If asked about your sense of identity, do you think of yourself mostly as:

- Anbar
- Sunnis

81% Sunnis, 60% Anbar
Alerts

1- Al-Anbar

2- Kurdistan. A time bomb
How Do Kurds Perceive Their Lives Now?

• 360 F2F interviews with Kurds +18 in three cities (Erbil, Sulaymaniah and Kirkuk). Dohuk excluded due to time and sources limitations.
• ± %5.1 Margin of error is
• %95 confident
• Fieldwork from 19-22 Oct 2017
Do you think that Kurdistan is going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

- **Right direction**
  - 9 (11-2010)
  - 15 (9-2011)
  - 29 (2-2013)
  - 63 (1-2016)
  - 74 (7-2017)
  - 83 (10-2017)

- **Wrong direction**
  - 84 (11-2010)
  - 78 (9-2011)
  - 68 (2-2013)
  - 28 (1-2016)
  - 20 (7-2017)
  - 10 (10-2017)

**US Forces withdrawal**

**Kurdistan referendum**
Do you think that the referendum done in 25/9 made life better for you and your family?

- Made life better for me and my family: 7%
- Made life worse for me and my family: 61%
Support for independent Kurdistan

July 2017 _ Before Referendum
56%

Kurdistan referendum
Sep. 25th
2017

October 2017 _ After Referendum
22%
What do you prefer for the future of Kirkuk?

- Be affiliated to the central government in Baghdad
- To become a region with a special status within a unified federal Iraq
- To become part of the current Kurdistan region within a unified federal Iraq
- To be part of a new region that includes Sulaymaniyah too, within a unified federal Iraq
- Be a part of the independent Kurdistan State of Iraq

Choices of staying in a unified Iraq:
- Independence choice: 23%
- 23%
- 16%
- 8%
- 28%
- 70%
What do you prefer for the future of Kurdistan?
Clear difference among Kurds

- Suly: 90% Stay with Iraq (different choices), 7% Independency, 3% Don't know / No answer
- Kirkuk: 72% Stay with Iraq (different choices), 26% Independency, 2% Don't know / No answer
- Erbil: 33% Stay with Iraq (different choices), 33% Independency, 33% Don't know / No answer
The one million dollar question:

Why do we want to defeat Da’ish?

For a better life or keeping power of different players?

Two different roads
Iraqi Public Opinion on the Rise, Fall, and Future of ISIS

Featuring:

Dr. Munqith Dagher
CEO, Independent Institute for Administration and Civil Society Studies (IIACSS)

Anthony H. Cordesman
Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy, CSIS

October 30, 2017