

Violence in Iraq in Mid 2013: The Growing Risk of Serious Civil Conflict

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INTRODUCTION

Iraq is a nation with great potential, and despite its current political divisions and ongoing low-level violence, it can succeed in establishing stability, security, and a better life for its people. Iraq cannot succeed, however, by denying the problems it faces, failing to address increasing internal violence, and growing level of violence and by denying the responsibility of its current political leaders to take on the challenges it currently faces. There are gaps in the data on Iraq's current levels of violence, its causes, and the responsibility of given actors. The data are still good enough, however, to illustrate that Iraq may be moving back to a level of civil conflict that will amount to a serious civil war. There is also substantial reporting to show that Iraq's violence is not simply the product of extremists and terrorist groups.

Iraq's growing violence is also the result of the fact that it is in the midst of an ongoing struggle to establish a new national identity: one that can hopefully bridge the deep sectarian divides between Shi'ites and Sunnis, as well as the ethnic divisions between Arabs, Kurds, and other minorities.

Improving the quality and focus of Iraqi efforts at counterterrorism and internal security is a key priority, but it cannot end its violence through force or repression. Iraq's leaders must build a new structure of political consensus. They must build an effective structure of governance and social order that sharply reduces the problems caused by the mix of dictatorship, war, sanctions, occupation, and civil conflict that began in the 1970s and has continued to the present. Iraq's political leaders must create the kind of national government that can give democracy real meaning and serve the needs of all the Iraqi people.

Iraq must also deal with deep underlying problems. It must cope with a steadily growing population, and diversify an economy that is so excessively dependent on petroleum exports that they provide some 95% of its government revenues.

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THE CHALLENGES THAT SHAPE IRAQI VIOLENCE

Iraq remains a nation with tremendous potential if it can ever achieve a working level of sectarian and ethnic unity and transform its potential petroleum wealth into effective economic development. It is also important to point out that Iraq has made progress in many areas since the fall of Saddam Hussein and the departure of US forces at the end of 2011. The period since the Iraqi election of 2010, the unfulfilled Erbil power sharing agreement, and the departure of US forces at the end of 2011 have, however, left Iraq with deep political fissures, dangerous elements of extremism, and a complex mix of challenges that now shape a growing level of violence.

At one level, all of Iraq's major political factions share the blame. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has continued to consolidate his grip on power, arresting and otherwise intimidating political adversaries. At the same time, Sunni political factions have actively sought to undermine him and have sometimes posed a threat. Their actions and political conflicts have fueled a nationwide surge in ethnic violence that has contributed to a major spike in sectarian violence across Iraq, bringing about political instability, and significant security challenges.

Iraq's tensions between Arab and Kurd, and specifically between the central government and KRG over the distribution of oil revenues and government funds, have not yet led to serious violence but threaten to do so. From late 2012 to early 2013, tensions between the government in Baghdad and the semi-autonomous Kurdish region triggered a standoff between Kurdish Peshmerga troops and Iraqi security forces. Kurdish leaders moved troops south of Erbil into the disputed area in and around Kirkuk. Kurdish officials maintain they must enforce security in an area marred by increasing violence between security forces and Sunni protesters that left hundreds of Iraqis dead. Government officials in Baghdad wary of the Kurd's motivations, have accused the Kurds of exploiting Iraq's instability with the intention of taking over Kirkuk's valuable oil resources.¹

Although the dispute between the Kurdish Regional Government and Baghdad stopped short of spilling over into armed conflict, the escalation of Kurdish forces presents another layer of tension and worsens already poor relations. These tensions also help limit the ability to reach key compromises and decisions on the patterns of governance and development that can reduce violence and bring stability, as well as the unity and effectiveness of security.

Iraq's domestic divisions increasingly interact with the broader patterns of instability in the region. Iraq is caught up in the political struggles between the US, Arab states, and Iran. Iraq is a key area of focus of the competition not only between the US and Iran, but also between Iran and the Southern Gulf states. Relations with Turkey are strained over issues related to the Kurdish minority in both countries, the flow of oil through pipelines between Iraq and Turkey, and current unrest and regional instability.² With a steady stream of Syrian refugees fleeing into Iraq and a resurgence of al Qaeda linked groups cooperating in Iraq and Syria, Iraq is caught squarely in the civil conflict in Syria and the broader struggles between Sunni and Shi'ite that now affect much of the Islamic world.

At the same time, history does tell. No assessment of Iraq in 2013 can ignore the impact of the other factors that drive modern Iraq. These include the long history of sectarian and ethnic discrimination and violence that took place between the US invasion, a history of violent political struggles for period and periods of authoritarianism, government abuse of power to the point of state terrorism, failures in governance and development, and the rising pressure of population growth and other demographic factors.

The end result is that today's challenges in politics and violence interact with a wide range of lasting and structural challenges that far too many Iraqi politicians and technocrats try to ignore:

- *Iraq is a nation under deep structural demographic and financial pressures.* Iraq faces more than ethnic and sectarian challenges. It must also deal with massive, ongoing acute population growth and its government and economy remain grossly over-dependent on the petroleum sector. As Figure One shows Iraq's population was only 6.8 million in 1960, and is 31.9 million in 2013. Its rate of growth has dropped sharply, but the US Census Bureau estimates it will still grow to 56.3 million by 2050.

There are no reliable figures on Iraq's economy because of the lack of reliable data and difficulties in estimating the value of its non-market sectors, but the CIA estimates that -- in spite of record oil revenues -- Iraq remains poor in terms of per capita income -- the most reliable single indicator of wealth. In mid-2013, Iraq only ranked 141st in the world in a region where the wealthier, smaller Gulf states ranked near the top, Saudi Arabia ranked 46th, and even a heavily sanctioned Iran ranked 99th. The CIA estimated a poverty level of 25% in 2008 -- the last year for which it has data.

Direct and disguised unemployment present major problems although no accurate figures are available. The CIA estimates direct unemployment is at least 16%. Direct and disguised unemployment almost certainly exceed 25%-- heavily weighted toward youth unemployment in a nation experiencing massive demographic pressure and with nearly 40% of its population 14 years of age or younger. The CIA estimates that at least 332,000 males and 322,000 females reached the age where they should enter the labor force in 2012. This was 7% of a labor force of an existing labor force of some 8.9 million in a single year.

Corruption is an endemic problem, as is poorly distributed income where a small percentage of Iraqis get most of the nation's oil wealth. The CIA estimates that, "Iraq's largely state-run economy is dominated by the oil sector, which provides more than 90% of government revenue and 80% of foreign exchange earnings."

Transparency International ranked Iraq 169th out of a total of 176 countries in terms of corruption, one of the worst ratings for any state in the world, and as lacking in transparency to the point of "scant to none."

- *Iraqi violence has many causes but is still a permeating problem that affects attitude throughout the country.* Violence is more a symptom than a cause of Iraq's problems, but the progress achieved during 2007-2009 never meant that Iraq had eliminated the threat from violent Sunni and Shi'ite movements, and fighting between sects and ethnic groups. As the next chapter shows, violence has again reached the point of low level civil war and now interacts with violence and extremism in Syria and other parts of the region and Islamic world.
- *Iraqi politics remain divided along ethnic and sectarian lines.* Many Iraqis live in a state of near denial regarding the obvious. They ignore the fact there is nothing new about fighting between Arab and Kurd and that this has been a source of continuing recent violence a repression since the elder Barzani led a Kurdish uprising against the Arab central government that had funding and support from the Shah of Iran during the late 1960s to the mid-1970s.

This fighting, repression following the Algiers Accord, and the Shah's abandonment of the Kurds during 1976-1981, the use of force and poison gas from 1981-1990, and Kurdish near autonomy following the creation of the Kurdish security zone from 1992 to the present has persisted for roughly half a century.

- *Divisions between Arab Sunni and Arab Shi'ite, and divisions within each sect, remain a key source of tension and violence.* No one who visited Iraq from 1971 onwards could ignore the reality that it remained a nation dominated by its Sunni minority until the US invasion in 2003. In spite of formal declarations of equality, the ruling Sunni elite exploited the nation's oil wealth, dominated the armed forces, particularly its best and most elite units, discriminated against Shi'ites at the political level and within government service, and favored development of Sunni areas in terms of housing, education, social services, the building of mosques, and many other areas.

The revolution in Iran and Ba'athist repression during the Iran-Iraq War created a low-level civil war between Sunni and Shi'ite in parts of the largely Shi'ite Southern Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war and drove leading Shi'ite into exile. The uprising against Saddam Hussein after his defeat in the first Gulf War in 1991 was partly a sectarian uprising, and Saddam continued his repression of Shi'ite dissidents until the US invasion in 2003. Today's ruling Shi'ite elite has not forgotten Saddam's repression, any more than the Sunnis have forgotten their period in power.

- *Regionalism, tribalism, and the struggle for the future of Islam further divide Iraq. These broad divisions within Iraq are only part of the challenges Iraq faces.* There are deep divisions within each major faction. Some are local or driven by tribal tensions. Some are regional like the interest the oil rich provinces in the south have in some form of autonomy or power struggles for control over key Sunni areas like Mosul. Some are caught up in the struggle over the role of religion in politics and governance within both the Shi'ite and Sunni communities and conflicts between moderates and religious hardliners. The Kurds are divided between two corrupt major political factions that have fought in the past but now coexist in exploiting the gains from Kurdish autonomy.

Fragmentation might be a force for coalition building across sectarian and ethnic lines in a less violent nation, and public opinion polls show many Iraqis – particularly Arab Iraqis – think of themselves primarily Iraqis and not as members of a sect ethnic group. Violence has both reinforced compartmentation, however, and push given factions towards the use of force and extremism.

- *Years of internal power struggles and sectarian and ethnic conflict have left a history of segregation by sect and ethnicity, serious problems with internally and externally displaced persons, and tensions along ethnic and sectarian fault lines.* The previous tensions and conflicts have often redrawn and polarized the Iraqi population at both the provincial and local levels. The UNHCR estimated that Iraq has 1.13 million internally displaced persons in 2013, and a total population of concern of 2.2 million. Refugees International put the number at 2.8 million.
- *The ethnic divisions between Arab and Kurd, and disputes over petroleum resources, threaten to divide the country.* The "Kurdish issue" is scarcely a new one in Iraq or the region. Iraq's Kurds sought independence during the aftermath to World War I and there have been active tensions over the creation of some form of Kurdish state ever since –

tensions with links to similar Kurdish desires for autonomy or independence in Turkey, Iran, and Syria. The creation of a Kurdish security zone after the Gulf War has led to the creation of a Kurdistan Regional Government (the KRG) that has practical autonomy and whose leaders – like its president Massoud Barzani -- occasionally threaten to seek full independence.

The KRG not only controls clearly Kurdish areas but also contends for control of a large amount of disputed territory from Kirkuk to Mosul along what some call Iraq's ethnic fracture zone. The KRG is also involved in a continuing struggle over control of Iraq petroleum resources in northern Iraq and its right to exploit the resource in its own zone. There are other power struggles over the structure and funding of Kurdish (Pesh Merga) versus Iraqi forces and the allocation of central government funds and central government controlled oil export revenues. The KRG also now faces a future where it may receive far less foreign aid and see the central government limit the flow of these oil revenues while it jockey with the central government over the role of Turkey in the region and has taken the side of Syrian Kurds in the Syrian civil war.

Since late 2012, Kurdish and federal officials have been in a standoff over oil payments in the northern provinces. This tension has worsened relations between the two sides and brought the sides close to armed conflict in early 2013. In March 2013 the Iraqi parliament passed a budget that allocated only a fraction of the oil revenue demanded by the KRG to cover the costs of international oil companies operating there; exploratory contracts that Baghdad deems illegal due to unresolved issues over disputed territory. The central government in Baghdad, which controls oil revenues because it operates the export pipeline, set aside a mere \$644 million of the \$3.5 billion requested by Erbil aggravating already tense relations.

The KRG decreased its share of oil exports to the central government in protest over what it believes to be outstanding payments still owed from 2010-2013. For its part, Baghdad refused payments to the KRG when it failed to produce the 250,000 barrels per day agreed upon by the Iraqi parliament's Oil and Gas Committee. Baghdad has also accused the KRG of exporting oil without coordinating with the central government.

- *Iraq faces a growing mix of related challenges in defining its "Arab" identity; in the de facto segregation of its Arab Shi'ite and Arab Sunni population, and in defining the role of Islam in its society and state.* There is no clear split between Arab Sunni and Arab Shi'ite in today's heavily urbanized Iraq, but mixed cities and towns are increasingly divided into Sunni and Shi'ite areas, the southeast is largely Shi'ite and has much of the nation's currently producing petroleum wealth, and Iraq's west is largely Sunni and more tribal.

The emergence of a Shi'ite dominated central government since 2010 has tended to alienate many Arab Sunnis and push the West back towards at least the toleration of extremist movements like Al Qaeda while pushing Shi'ite areas on reliance on the Shi'ite dominated security forces and local Shi'ite security forces. Iraq's "Arab" identity is not only affected by the Kurdish issue, but by the increase division of Arab into Sunni and Shi'ite – coupled to a growing polarization around more fundamentalist or extreme interpretations of Sunni Salafist and Shi'ite Twelver practices and beliefs – mirroring the broader struggle between the majority of Islamic moderates and a minority of hardline or and some violent religious extremists.

- *A deeply flawed constitution, electoral system, weak legislature, and the reemergence of a strong leader have created further problems.* US, other outside, and exile efforts created a constitution that does not define a functioning executive or parliamentary system. The election system also attempted to avoid sectarian and ethnic divisions by creating national lists where no area has clear representation. Key aspects of the new legal system have never been clarified.

In absence of a comprehensive hydro-carbon law, Iraqis look to Article 112 of the Iraqi constitution for clarification over the distribution of oil revenues. Article 112 states:

“The federal government with the producing governorates and regional governments shall undertake the management of oil and gas extracted from current fields provided that it distributes oil and gas revenues in a fair manner in proportion to the population distribution in all parts of the country with a set allotment for a set time for the damaged regions.”

The article stresses, “The federal government, with the producing governorates and regional governments, shall undertake the management of oil and gas extracted from current fields provided that it distributes oil and gas revenues in a fair manner in proportion to the population distribution in all parts of the country with a set allotment for a set time for the damaged regions.” –Article 112 of Iraqi Constitution³

The failure of the 2010 election to produce a clear victor and any kind of functional national coalition, and the failure to implement the 2010 Erbil power sharing agreement, has divided the structure of the central government along sectarian lines while leaving divisions between Arab and Kurd unresolved. The ironic result is a structure where Maliki has reemerged – and perhaps been forced to emerge – as a strong central leader using his office to control the armed forces and security services

- *Iraqi military forces continue to make progress but remain weak, divided, and corrupt, and their leadership is increasingly tied to the Prime Minister and the “leader.”* Iraq military and key paramilitary forces continue to improve in effectiveness in counterinsurgency missions, but are making very slow progress in conventional war fighting capability. Corruption and power brokering is common, within the MoD and MoI. Promotions and positions are routinely sold.

Efforts to create a modern NCO system and give junior officers more initiative has often faltered. The Prime Minister has increasingly taken control by using interim appointments to select officers that are personally loyal, and by the way he allocates resources, bypassing the Iraqi parliament in the process. Efforts to include the Kurds in the regular Iraqi forces have encountered major problems, and a few elements have shifted their loyalty to the Kurdish Pesh Merga.

- *Weak Iraqi governance exists at every level, including the rule of law.* The US-led invasion was followed by the looting and collapse of many functional aspects of Iraqi governance, US intervention, and other outside efforts to reform Iraqi governance. The looting and near destruction of many ministries and government offices during the US-led advance, poorly planned and constantly changing advisory missions and efforts at reform, and the lack of effective transparency and accountability from 2003 onwards seriously weakened Iraqi central governance in a state that had had grossly over-centralized authoritarian control since at least 1979.

- *These failures have interacted with the failure to create elected local governments, focus on popular needs and services, create police forces that meet Iraqi needs and expectations, and create a functional local rule of law during most of the US-led occupation.* A flood of oil and aid money that was often allocated by power brokers to strengthen their positions or simply stolen in a grossing pattern of permeating corruption – coupled to sectarian, ethnic and tribal divisions and nepotism remains a legacy of the occupation now fueled by Iraqi infighting.
- *Efforts at police and legal reform largely failed and could not deal with either the need for security or the need to replace an over-centralized state-driven system with a rule of law that could support an effect price sector.* Efforts at police reform failed to avoid corruption and ties to power brokers before the collapse of the US –led advisory and train mission after 2011 and have not been replaced with an effective system. The same is true of efforts to reform the Iraqi legal system to go from a confessions-based to an evidence-based system and avoid abuses of detention and forced confessions.
- *The civil and commercial rule of law is equally uncertain as is the legal basis for managing and auditing the financial sector, for tax and property law, and for controlling investment.* Reform of the banking and financial system are still related and critical priorities. The legal system and its enforcement often lack the ability to get prompt and lasting decisions. Corruption remains a major problem. Efforts to extend the role of the police with state-controlled security forces protecting given sectors like the petroleum sector has have limited effectiveness and involve serious corruption and interference by power brokers and sometime criminal elements.
- *The government needs to improve its planning, programming and budgeting capabilities and focus on key sectors like education, health, and infrastructure.* Investment in these areas, along with development spending is sharply constrained by weak internal institutions and a pattern of spending that focusing on employment and maintaining a large state sector that often has little real output other than employment. The long standing failure to modernize and rebuild the education and medical sectors is a particularly serious problem – sometimes dealt largely through denial of the scale of the problem.
- *Progress in the petroleum sector, while very real, is still inhibited by the lack of a clear legal structure, security, realistic development plans and goals, and effective commercial incentives and arrangements for outside and internal development.* Petroleum revenues, investment, and related services dominate the market portion of the economy. The need for water, electricity, and the use of gas remain serious issues.
- *The allocation of oil export revenues is a major challenge as well.* As is the case with all Iraq statistics, there are no reliable numbers. The US Energy Information Agency estimates, however, that Iraq’s export revenues reached \$83 billion in current dollars (\$71 billion in 2005 dollars) and will be roughly the same or slightly higher in 2013. It also estimates that Iraq’s oil revenues per capita were worth \$2,675 in 2012.⁴ This compares with \$54,071 in the case of Qatar and \$10,315 for Saudi Arabia, and is a key part of Iraq’s total economy and the potential wealth of individual Iraqi. Distributing it equitably, and make intelligence choice between current disbursements and investments in development, is both a critical challenge and a further source of political, sectarian and ethnic tensions.

- *Far too much of the industrial and service sectors remain state-subsidized without being competitive, barriers exist to private investment and operation, and modernization of the financial sector is a serious issue.* US efforts to reform the state sector and state industries had only limited impact. There are no accurate current data, but the CIA estimated that some 60% of the Iraqi labor force was in the service sector in 2008, 19% was in industry, and 22% in agriculture. Much of the labor in both service and industrial sectors was state-subsidized and had limited productivity gain and amounted to disguised unemployment.
- *Agriculture and water present growing problems.* Steady population gains have increased the pressure on the land to the point where many Iraqis have been forced to move to urban slums, and the agricultural sector is over-employed and sharply undercapitalized – reducing productivity. Climate change may be presenting a problem in both areas dependent on rainfall and in terms of water flow, and Turkish and Syrian upstream water use has had a significant impact in reducing the flow into Iraq. Population pressure on water use creates another set of problems as does on sharp over-reliance on conventional irrigation canals and use of water.

Agricultural reform has a high priority but limited practical government support. Iraq's agricultural sector is rife with challenges. The agricultural sector, which accounts for some 22% of its labor force, only accounts for 9.7% of its GDP even when it is measured in PPP terms, and Iraq's farmers are so under-capitalized, limited by transport and food processing facilities and costs, and by growing problems in water that they cannot compete with Turkish and Iranian food imports.

- *Subsidies present problems and compound the demand for electricity, water, and refined petroleum product.* The US failed to reform Iraqi prices during the occupation and Iraq is left with a wide range of expensive and wasteful subsidies that distort its demand for petroleum products, electric power, water, and other goods and is steadily reducing the amount of its petroleum it can export. At the same time. Iraq still lacks the refinery capability to avoid importing product, and has water and power problems in both supporting the growth of its petroleum sector and its overall mix of industry and services. Iraq lacks the wealth to sustain these distortions of its economy.
- *All of these issues affect Iraq's efforts to redefine its national identity and regional alignments.* Iraq is struggling to find a balance between Iran, the other Arab states, and the US. It faces challenges in shaping its relations with Turkey and its level of involvement in the Syrian civil war. There are no good or easy challenges. Outside states and non-state actors will continue to seek to influence or control Iraq. Iraqi actors will take sides or attempt to exploit outside influence to their own benefit. Iraq exists in a region where everyone is forced to try to use everyone else, and where history warns the end result tends to be violence and failure for all of the actors involved.

One needs to be careful in exaggerating the difficulties Iraq faces in any practical effort to deal with these this list of challenges. The tendency of many Iraqi political leaders and officials to emphasize the “positive” means the list of challenges may appears to be more serious than is really case the case. The problem is not that they cannot be met over time if Iraq can develop effective political unity and sharply reduce its internal divisions and violence. The problem is they cannot be dealt with by denial and Panglossian hopes. Both security and progress can only come by honestly addressing the scale of effort required, forging a workable national political consensus

and effective working arrangements between Iraq's key factions, and actually moving forward to meet the needs of Iraq's people.

Figure One: US Census Bureau Estimate of the Growing Demographic Pressures on Iraq

Demographic Indicators	Demographic Overview - Custom Region - Iraq													
	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2013	2015	2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population														
<u>Midyear population</u> (in thousands)	6,822	9,414	13,233	18,140	19,564	22,679	26,076	31,858	33,310	36,889	40,387	43,831	50,459	56,316
<u>Growth rate</u> (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-2.7	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.3	2.2	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.3	0.9
Fertility														
<u>Total fertility rate</u> (births per woman)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	6.1	5.5	4.9	4.3	3.5	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.5	2.2	2.1
<u>Crude birth rate</u> (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	38	37	35	32	28	26	23	21	20	17	15
<u>Births</u> (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	697	716	794	847	876	872	862	862	872	880	861
Mortality														
<u>Life expectancy at birth</u> (years)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	67	67	67	69	71	72	73	74	75	77	79
<u>Infant mortality rate</u> (per 1,000 births)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	67	63	63	51	39	36	30	25	21	15	11
<u>Under 5 mortality rate</u> (per 1,000 births)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	83	79	79	64	48	44	37	31	25	18	13
<u>Crude death rate</u> (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	7	6	6	6	5	5	4	4	4	5	6
<u>Deaths</u> (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	127	127	146	143	148	150	157	170	190	247	329
Migration														
<u>Net migration rate</u> (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Net number of migrants</u> (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-1,067	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: US Census Bureau, International Data Base, <http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/region.php>, "Iraq," August 12, 2013.

IRAQ'S CONTINUING LEVELS OF INTERNAL VIOLENCE

The emerging patterns in Iraq's violence already present far more serious problems than the US anticipated as it left the country. In late-November, 2011, then US Commander in Iraq, General Lloyd Austin, summarized US-Iraqi relations as follows:

“As we leave, we can expect to see some turbulence in security initially, and that's because you'll see various elements try to increase their freedom of movement and freedom of action,” despite better conditions than at any other point, “there will probably be unfinished business for many, many years to come... Al Qa'ida will continue to do what it's done in the past, and we expect that it's possible they could even increase their capability... If the Iraqi security forces and the government of Iraq are able to counter that, it will be a good thing. If they can't, they'll continue to grow in capacity.”

In addition, he warned against militias, such as Asaib Ahl al-Haq and the Promised Day Brigade, which could threaten the remaining US civilian presence. He stated,

“These are elements that are really focused on creating a Lebanese Hezbollah kind of organization in this country... As we leave, if those elements are left unchecked, they will eventually turn on the government, and they should be concerned about that.” He did conclude that “there's likely to be setbacks, some tough times in the days ahead... But I'm very hopeful we'll stay on course... This is clearly not an endpoint... We really intend to remain engaged with Iraq, and we look forward to having Iraq as a great strategic partner in the future.”⁵

Worse, there are growing indicators that a combination of rising levels of violence and their underlying causes could push Iraq back to large-scale civil conflict. It is far too early to make such a prediction, and some estimates of trends in violence since 2012 are exaggerated, but all of Iraq's political and economic challenges must be evaluated in the context of patterns of violence that still threaten to divide the country.

The Underlying Patterns of Violence

The post 2010 period has not been a struggle against terrorism or extremism, but the result of the failure of Iraq current political leaders to create effective governance and the politics of division along ethnic and sectarian lines. These points are critical because they warn that no amount of success counterterrorism and counterinsurgency can bring Iraq lasting stability or eliminate its violence. Both Iraq's present and its future will be shaped by the reality that no mix of military and security actions against today's extremists can succeed in “winning” without fundamental changes in Iraq's politics and governance and major improvement in its economy and the way Iraq shares the nation's wealth.

The Problems in Analyzing Iraqi Violence

As the following analysis shows, there are no simple ways to summarize the meaning of the current trends in Iraqi violence and analyze patterns involved. There is no functional way to define the levels of violence that go from terrorism to insurgency to civil war or patterns of rises and falls in violence that show movement towards lasting stability or a growing threats of major civil conflict. Key tensions that could lead to a major civil conflict like the tensions between Arab and Kurd have produced very limited violence, while tensions between Arab Sunni and Shi'ite have produced major conflicts. At the same time, the data available do not distinguish between Sunni vs. Shi'ite violence and intra-Sunni and intra-Shi'ite violence, and intra-Sunni violence was a key factor in the rise of the Sons of Iraq movement and efforts to reduce the overall level of violence from 2007-2009.

Much of the reporting on Iraqi violence that existed during the time US forces were in Iraq has been cancelled since there no longer is any way for the US to collect it. It is also important to state – as is the case with virtually every set of numbers relating to Iraq – that the data are very uncertain and useful largely force the trends within a given source rather than as a basis for accurate numbers.

The history of efforts to quantify Iraq’s violence since 2003 has been one of consistent problems in collection, definition, interpretation and a constant failure to estimate uncertainty and perform parametric analysis. Both the US and allied command efforts and Iraqi government efforts from 2004-2011 had consistent problems in collecting and defining data, changed methods and failed to estimate the margin of uncertainty. Some NGOs like Iraq Body Count have made competent and consistent efforts to collect and interpret data and address uncertainty. Many other efforts have been highly politicized, or like the Lancet study, tried to introduce new methodologies without an adequate understanding of their limits and the problems in getting honest data collection in a war zone. Still other efforts were politicized from the start.⁶

Most unclassified reporting has never tried to systematically identify the cause of violence by organization, sect, or ethnicity; did not attempt to identify the purpose of attacks, and did not break out the target or casualty by sect or ethnicity. This may have sometimes been driven by the fear that such data would lead to tit for tat responses – although it is far from clear that Iraqis ever needed statistics as a cause for such violence.⁷

The degree to which the US government, Iraqi government, international organizations, and NGOs failed to meet them most basic criteria to validate the integrity of their reporting on Iraqi violence and casualties is striking. Only a few efforts publically defined their terms, defined their collection methods, assessed their level of uncertainty, and conduct parametric analysis – criteria that should define competence, integrity, and transparency in every aspect of such reporting.

The US Departments of Energy and Department of Defense were partial exceptions, but most DoD reporting suffered from these problems and the US State Department and USAID consistently set abysmal standards for every aspect of their public statistical and quantitative reporting, and the US government as a whole has politicized the use of polling data to the point where much of it is little more than self-serving propaganda.

Reassurance vs. Rising Violence

Even if the data on the patterns and causes of violence were clear, they would still present serious problems in interpreting their meaning. History is often event-driven, and key acts of violence or attacks can catalyze major uprisings or conflicts. This has been the case in Iraq where an attack on a key mosque, or major bombing in an urban area, has sometimes have more practical impact than a steady pattern of attacks.

Some of the maps and charts in the **Figures** that follow illustrate the extent to which such high profile attacks can have an impact that pattern analysis does not reveal. Similarly, the history of political events like an arrests or the tensions between Maliki and senior Sunni politicians shows that a non-violent can suddenly have more impact that a long series of killings that lack high public or political visibility.

Moreover, Iraq faces a potentially critical problem s problem in terms of the level of tension between Arab and Kurd, and between the Arab-dominated central government and the Kurdish

Regional Government (KRG), that could suddenly change the entire pattern of future violence in Iraq. The trends in Arab-Kurdish violence have been limited since the creation of the Kurdish security zone following the first Gulf War. Ever since 2004, however, it has been clear that dispute over control of territory, the level of autonomy for the KRG, control of security forces, and allocation of Iraq's oil export revenues and petroleum resources could explode into civil war. Iraq's ethnic differences have not exploded into the same violence as its sectarian difference, but it is all too clear that this could happen without warning, and the situation is not improving in terms of either Iraq's internal politics or the impact of outside Kurdish issues affecting Turkey and Syria.

The impact of violence is also shaped by the overall impact of the violence on society and not simply by those killed and injured. In cases like Iraq, the number of people whose lives are least temporarily shattered by being driven out of their homes and businesses and whose families have been put at risk is usually at least an order of magnitude higher than the number of deaths and wounded. Casualty analysis is important – even if it only deals with deaths – but it is only the tip of the iceberg in understanding the level of violence and instability taking place.

Many forms of violence like threats, extortion, intimidation, kidnappings, and “disappearances” cannot be counted with accuracy. The number of killings is easiest to count, and some analysts seem obsessed with them. The number of wounded is almost always far higher, however, is probably a better measure of the overall impact of violence. Moreover, every case where both sets of numbers have been collected shows there is no direct correlation between the trends in killing and the trends in wounded.

Measuring Trends Rather than Absolute Numbers

The data on the current trends in Iraqi violence present the added problem that uncertainties in the collection process, definition of events or casualties, and differences in methods of analysis mean the absolute numbers are extremely uncertain and are almost never comparable from one source to another.

That said, the broad trends in relatively consistent reporting from sources like the US government, Iraqi government, UNAMI, and Iraq Body Count do seem valid in showing that the trends in violence dropped sharply from the peak it reached in the mid-2000s, remained relatively moderate through 2011. UNAMI and Iraq Body Count data also show this violence began a slow rise in 2012, and has risen sharply enough in the first seven months of 2013 to be a subject of major concern.

Even these data, however, seem to deliberately avoid identifying both the cause and target by sect and ethnicity, but it is obvious that the majority of attacks through were by Sunni extremist groups reacting to a Shi'ite dominated government, and were conducted against Shi'ites. Intelligence experts also indicate that most were designed to give Sunni extremist movements visibility, uses for fundraising, and design the increase Sunni and Shi'ite tensions – if not push the country back toward civil conflict.

The Rise in Violence in 2012-2013: How Much is Too Much?

By some standards, Iraq's situation was not “good” even in 2010-2011. GOI data showed that 2,645 Iraqis were killed in 2011 alone, including 1,578 civilians, 609 police personnel, and 458 soldiers.⁸ Over 4,400 Iraqis were wounded in violence. And while December 2011 marked one of

lowest monthly death tolls (155 killed) in Iraq since 2003, December 22, 2011 was the bloodiest day in Iraq in since 2009. At least 31 incidents took place that one day, including 21 IED attacks killing over 60 Iraqis, and a suicide attack against a government building in Baghdad that left 32 people dead.⁹

Some experts did feel Iraq showed signs of progress in reducing its level of violence during this period. The CFR reported on August 20, 2012 that, “violence has fallen to its lowest level since 2003.”¹⁰ Others, however, saw a negative trend even in early 2011. Michael Knights of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy wrote in the *National Interest* on February 16, 2011, that “There has been a rapid and widespread deterioration of security in Iraq since the mid-December end of the U.S. military mission there.”¹¹ According to Knights, Iraq had also suffered 36 confirmed attempted mass-casualty attacks just in January 2012 alone. Officially reported deaths in Iraq also continued to rise, with 340 civilian deaths in Iraq in January 2012, compared to 155 in December 2011.

Other sources like the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR) warned the data were uncertain. Reporting by the SIRGIR for the first quarter of 2012 made it clear that in spite of claims that the violence is ending, there was still a significant level of violence inside Iraq, and it is clear from later parts of this analysis that show extremist groups will continue to threaten Iraq in the future.¹²

In an interview published March 5, Prime Minister al-Maliki commented on the state of Iraq’s ethnosectarian divide in the period since Saddam Hussein was deposed, saying that Iraq had “reached and entered into a civil war... the ugliest and most dangerous of wars to the stability of countries.” But, in effect he declared that war " finished:

We have adopted the principle of national reconciliation... Today we do not fear civil war. Yes, we may have disagreements: the central government may disagree with the provinces or at times the central government with KRG, but naturally we refer to the Constitution.

The GOI reported that violence in March reached its lowest level since 2003. To safeguard the Arab League summit, held at the end of the month, the GOI took extraordinary measures: nearly 100,000 Iraqi Army (IA) and police personnel were deployed to Baghdad to provide security, and the MOI ordered government employees not to report to work during March 20–29

Yet mass-casualty events continue, as do assassination attempts directed at government security forces, state officials, and unsuspecting citizens whose ethnosectarian profile appears to motivate violence. At the same time, tensions arising in the course of governance have spilled over into arrest warrants being issued for senior government officials who, in turn, have fled the jurisdiction of the national courts. Large-scale arrests and recent in- creases in court-sanctioned executions have raised human rights concerns.

Notwithstanding the challenges that persist, the MOI announced that Iraq’s armed forces would relinquish their role in internal security and shift to protecting the borders of the country by July 2012. The GOI reported that 413 Iraqis were killed in terrorist attacks this quarter—a 15% decrease from the number of fatalities reported by United States Forces-Iraq for the same period in 2011. The casualty total in March 2012 reportedly fell to 112, the lowest monthly level since the 2003 Coalition invasion.³³⁶

According to data compiled by the UN, however, 1,048 Iraqis died this quarter, more than 150% higher than the total attributed to the MOH.³³⁷ The Washington Institute for Near East Policy also has reported higher casualty numbers, emphasizing the “rapid and widespread deterioration of security in Iraq since the mid-December end of the U.S. military mission there.”³³⁸ Analysis by the Inter- national Institute for Strategic Studies notes that violence in specific areas is on the rise:

The latest bombings—in Kirkuk, Kerbala, Samarra, Baghdad and other cities—are part of an upsurge in violence following the withdrawal of U.S. troops.... In the first three months since troops left... there were 204 bombings—a 70% increase on the same period last year. With no more real U.S. military tar- gets in the

country, the spike necessarily means that Iraqi-on-Iraqi violence has increased, and illustrates the need for a strengthened local security force.

Although violence around the Arab League summit was low, the ISF faced a wave of co-ordinated mass-casualty attacks earlier in the quarter. On January 19, a suicide car bombing at the Baghdad Police College killed 15 people. On February 23, more than 21 bombings around Iraq killed at least 42 Iraqis and wounded approximately 285. Other mass-casualty and coordinated attacks this quarter included:

- January 24—A car bomb killed 11 people in Sadr City; multiple vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) and improvised explosive device (IED) attacks killed 12 and wounded 80 in predominately Shia areas of Baghdad.
- January 27—A suicide car bomb killed 12 in Baghdad.
- February 19—A suicide car bomb killed at least 14 police and recruits in Baghdad.
- February 29—A VBIED killed 3 and wounded 11 in Baghdad.
- March 5—Coordinated attacks targeting ISF members killed 26 officers and wounded 3 in and around Haditha.

Attacks continue against members of the Sons of Iraq (SOI) and their families, but reports indicate that they sustained lower total casualties this quarter than last. The largest MOI force, the Iraqi Police, and the largest Ministry of Defense (MOD) force, the IA, sustained higher wounded totals this quarter, but the number killed in action reportedly dropped.

Apparent targeted political violence against civilian and military officials continued this quarter. During January 11–April 10, 2012, at least 73 government officials (including some SOI commanders and their families) were assassinated...As a result of assassinations and attempted assassinations over the past year, the CoR budgeted for the purchase of armored sedans and sport-utility vehicles for senior government officials, drawing sharp criticism from cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

As the following figures show, the statistical trends in violence did not show a clear upward trend in 2011 or even in 2012. However, United Nations Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) warned that individual aspects of the levels of violence had become disturbing in the annual report on human rights it circulated in May 2012, and its report provides one of the best – if little read – assessments of the trends in Iraqi security at that time. UNAMI reported that,¹³

Levels of violence in Iraq (outside of the Kurdistan Region) remain high, and the number of civilians killed or injured in conflict-related incidents has only slightly decreased compared with figures for 2010. UNAMI figures show that during 2011 some 2,771 civilians were killed and some 7,961 civilians were wounded. Most of the violence was concentrated in and around Baghdad, Ninawa and Kirkuk. Violent incidents also occurred in Anbar and Diyala, while the south around Basra saw very few such incidents. Despite a decline in the overall number of incidents compared with 2010, those that did occur were often more deadly, with a few such attacks claiming scores of victims. As in 2010, attacks specifically targeting political leaders, government officials and security personnel, as well as of community and religious leaders, and legal, medical and education professionals continued. A destabilizing factor in relation to security was the steady withdrawal of remaining United States forces (USF-I) – a process completed by 18 December 2011.³ Shifting relationships between various political blocs, parties and factions, compounded by tribal, ethnic, and religious differences also contributed to a deterioration in the human rights environment.

Civilians continued to suffer from attacks based on their ethnic, religious and other affiliations. There were several large-scale attacks on Shi'a pilgrims and on places of worship. Members of the Christian community were also targeted – as were members of the Turkoman community (particularly around Kirkuk) and members of other religious and ethnic minorities, such as Yezidi, Shabaks, Sabian Mandaeans, and Manichaeans. Members of sexual minorities also suffered from killings and widespread social and State sanctioned discrimination – with Iraqi security forces and other State institutions failing to protect them.

The administration of justice and the rule of law remained weak. Iraqi citizens continued to suffer from arbitrary arrest and detention. A large number of arrests took place from the end of November and continued until the end of 2011 involving persons accused of being former members of the Ba`ath Party and allegedly linked to terrorist activities. UNAMI received credible reports that many of these detainees have been held without access to lawyers or family members. It is alleged that many have been detained because of political, ethnic or sectarian affiliations, and that some have been subjected to threats, abuse and mistreatment in order to force them into signing confessions.

Conditions in some prisons and detention facilities remain of serious concern, with many falling below accepted international standards in terms of overcrowding, lack of hygiene and lack of prisoner rehabilitation programmes. In many detention centres convicted prisoners were not adequately separated from those awaiting trial – and alternatives to detention for prisoners on remand remained under utilized. UNAMI continued to receive reports from detainees and their relatives that many face abuse and mistreatment, and on occasion, torture. State prosecutors were often under resourced, contributing to a lack of due diligence in investigation of accused persons and in bringing such persons to trial in a timely manner. While in some instances trials were conducted professionally, the judicial system continued to be plagued by under-resourcing – and there continued to be an over-reliance on confessions to found convictions, even when there is information or evidence suggesting that such confessions were obtained through coercion. There is ongoing deep concern at implementation of the death penalty in Iraq.

... UNAMI documented indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian objects, attacks targeting Iraqi security forces that resulted in civilian deaths and injuries - including the deliberate targeting of public officials, judges, religious figures, education professionals and members of diverse ethnic groups and minorities.

Ascertaining precise numbers of civilians killed and wounded as a result of violent conflict is difficult in Iraq. Figures from UNAMI's direct monitoring indicate that a minimum of 2,771 Iraqi civilians were killed and 7,961 were injured in armed conflict and violence during 2011.⁶ This represents a slight decrease compared to 2010, when UNAMI recorded 2,953 civilian deaths. According to the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) during 2011 around 2,781 civilians were killed in conflict related circumstances, including 184 women and 96 children. A further 10,386 civilians were injured, including 833 women and 382 children. The Iraq Body Count (IBC)⁷ recorded 4,087 civilian deaths from violence in Iraq during the year under review, slightly higher than the 4,045 civilian deaths recorded in 2010.

Irrespective of the precise figures, Iraq has one of the highest number of conflict-related civilian casualties per capita. Identifying trends is extremely challenging, although most sources are in agreement that the rate of decline in civilian casualties has considerably slowed since 2009, compared with the significant reduction in civilian casualties seen from the height of the violence in 2007, when almost 18,000 people were reportedly killed, and in 2008, when under 7,000 died.

The frequency of violent incidents, particularly the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs) by insurgent and terrorist groups, suggests a pattern of sustained, *ad hoc* violence which has the potential to continue for the foreseeable future. On an average day during 2011, UNAMI data shows that there were some 21 violent incidents in Iraq, the most common being IEDs and small arms fire resulting in 7.5 civilian deaths.... UNAMI data indicates that violence continued to be concentrated in Baghdad and the surrounding regions, and in the Disputed Internal Boundaries (DIBs) areas, notably Mosul and Kirkuk. There were also attacks, but of lesser frequency, in Anbar Governorate. The south of the country, around Basra, saw the fewest numbers of violent attacks and resulting civilian casualties. Baghdad and the North-central region suffered 865 and 739 recorded civilian deaths and 3,024 and 2,002 injuries respectively. South-central region recorded 433 civilian deaths and 1,165 injuries; the north region had 293 deaths and 692 injuries; the Western region had 212 deaths and 400 injuries; while the south region had 111 civilian deaths and 293 injuries. January witnessed a peak of violence, with 307 civilians reportedly killed, although in December the number of civilians killed rose significantly – being the highest for that month recorded since 2008. The second half of 2011 was more violent than the first half: 1,515 civilians were reportedly killed from July to December, compared with 1,256 from January to June 2011.

Examples of attacks carried out by armed insurgents that resulted in the death and injuries to civilians, include the suicide bomber in Tikrit on 18 January, consequently 64 people were killed and at least 150 injured as they queued in a line at a police recruitment center. On 27 January, between 48 and 64 people were killed in

what may have been a sectarian motivated attack when a car bomb exploded, destroying a funeral tent in the Shula area of Baghdad. On 24 February, up to 14 people were killed and 15 were reportedly wounded when a suicide bomber attacked a cultural center in Ramadi. On 6 March up to 12 people were killed – including women and children – when a roadside bomb struck a passing bus in the Al-Maqil area of central Basra, although the intended target may have been a USF-I convoy. On 29 March, up to 71 people, mainly members of the Iraqi police force were killed and over 100 were wounded in a complex attack of suicide bombers and hand grenades outside the city council building in Tikrit. The Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) claimed responsibility for this attack.

On 11 April, 10 members of a Shi`ite farming family were killed by bombs in their fields. On 3 May, up to 16 civilians were killed when a car bomb exploded outside a cafe in Abu Dsheer, Baghdad. On 3 June, in Tikrit, up to 18 worshippers were killed and more than 20 were injured (including children) in a mosque when attacked by a suicide bomber. On 11 June, at least fifteen people were killed and fifty-two others were injured in two VBIED attacks targeting an army patrol in Al-Dwoasa in Mosul. On 20 June in Mosul, two boys were killed and three other civilians injured in a roadside bomb explosion. On 23 June, at least 34 people were killed in the Al-Shurta Al-Rabaa area of Baghdad, when three bombs went off in quick succession - one targeted a Shi`ite mosque, while two targeted a market where people were shopping. On 26 June, 27 people, mostly civilians, were killed in Diwania when a suicide car bomb exploded outside the house of the governor.

On 28 July, at least 12 people were killed and 28 injured in a twin bombing in Tikrit: the first bomb exploded outside a State-run bank, followed by a suicide bomber seemingly timed in order to target emergency workers who had arrived at the scene. On 15 August, one of the most violent days of the year, more than 70 people were killed and hundreds injured in a wave of attacks in cities across Iraq. In the day`s worst incident, 37 people were killed when two bombs exploded in a busy market in the city center of Kut. In total, some 40 attacks were reported for which the Government blamed the Islamic State of Iraq. On 13 October at least 16 people were killed in the Sadr City area of Baghdad when two roadside bombs were detonated - although some sources indicated to UNAMI that up to 61 people were killed by the twin blasts. On 27 October, in Baghdad`s Ur district 18 civilians were killed in two explosions: the first bomb was detonated outside a music store, and then a second was detonated as people rushed to assist the victims.

In another series of attacks, on 22 December, at least 69 people were killed and around 200 injured in a coordinated series of nine car bombs and six roadside bombs targeting civilian infrastructure including markets, grocery stores, cafes and government buildings in a dozen mostly Shiite neighbourhoods in Baghdad. According to media reports, the Al-Qa`eda affiliated group, the Islamic State of Iraq, claimed responsibility.

As noted, armed opposition groups continued to deliberately target civilians. Many attacks targeting Iraqi security forces also employed asymmetric and indiscriminate tactics, such as the use of IEDs or VBIEDs on roadsides or near police checkpoints, government buildings and installations. Such attacks were often carried out in crowded public areas such as markets, cafes or mosques and churches, revealing an intent to kill and injure a maximum number of civilians, or with indifference to the number and type of casualties.

The motives for such attacks were diverse. Some appear to have been sectarian, targeting members of particular religious communities, their residential areas, and places of worship, including mosques and churches. A large number of such attacks were perpetrated against the Shi`a community, but there were also a sustained level of attacks against Christians and other minority religious groups, including Yezidis, Manicheans, and Sabian Mandaeans. Many attacks were directed at particular ethnic groups, such as members of the Turkoman community in Kirkuk. Reported tensions between members of ethnic groups may have led to violence, particularly between Christians and Yezidis in Ninawa. Attacks on Iraqi security forces, in particular on the police, frequently had political motives, aimed at undermining public confidence in the capacity of the Government and its institutions to maintain security. However, many such attacks also might have had underlying sectarian or other motivations. In the DIBs areas, violence appears to have been largely sectarian or ethnic in nature. There were a number of incidents, including killings and kidnappings, which although superficially motivated by criminal gain, may also have had sectarian, political or other motivations.

All such attacks constitute serious violations of Iraqi criminal law and of applicable international humanitarian law and international human rights law. While UNAMI recognises the enormous difficulties

facing the Iraqi government in its efforts to restore and maintain law and order, the Government of Iraq is required to do all it can, within the limits of the law and in compliance with its international legal obligations, to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice and take all legal and appropriate measures to curb the violence and to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure from the effects of conflict.

... The Kurdistan Region continued to be relatively free of armed conflict and violence.¹⁵ There, UNAMI recorded 12 civilian deaths and injuries during the year. This figure is lower than in 2010 when 22 deaths were recorded. In relation to this, there were concerns about the impact on civilians of military operations conducted along the Kurdistan Region's borders with Turkey and Iran by foreign military forces, which resulted in the deaths of at least ten civilians and injuries to at least 20 others, and the displacement of families.

...The frequency of targeted killings remains of concern, constituting serious violations of IHL and international human rights law. Many such attacks were carried out with IEDs placed on roadsides or in vehicles, or shootings by small firearms equipped with silencers. According to UNAMI during 2011 there were 296 such killings and attempted killings, resulting in 73 deaths and injuring 41, significantly higher than in 2010.

Those most frequently targeted were members of the Iraqi Police, including retired officers and family members of serving police personnel. Other victims included government officials, members of governorate councils, civil servants, journalists, education and medical professionals, judges, traditional leaders, members of ethnic and religious minorities and persons engaged in religious events and activities.

In some incidents, bombs detonated in public areas often killed and injured civilians, then, as police arrived at the scene, further bombs were detonated, with the intention of killing members of the security forces. Bombs detonated outside police stations or government buildings often harmed civilian bystanders. Incidents of such killings frequently left family members of the intended victim dead or injured.

Across Iraq, incidents of killings targeting Government officials increased compared to 2010. Based on UNAMI figures, the most affected cities were Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul and Tikrit. Among such incidents¹⁶ on 20 March in Baghdad, an official from the Oil Ministry was killed in a drive by shooting. On 19 April, an employee of the Education Ministry was killed by a magnetic car bomb in Doura, Baghdad. On 30 April, an employee of the Ministry of Industry and his daughter were killed in their home in a targeted shooting. On 26 May, the Chair of the Accountability and Justice Commission, Ali Faisal Al-Lami, was killed in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad. On 30 May, the Deputy Governor of Ninawa Province survived an assassination attempt when his convoy was targeted by an IED whilst en route to Tampa, west of Sharqat in Mosul. On 1 June in Baghdad, there was an attempted assassination of the Deputy Minister for Human Rights, Abdul-Karim Abdullah. On 3 June, following an earlier attack on a mosque, a suicide bomber blew himself up inside Salahadin Teaching Hospital killing two Iraqi Police personnel and leaving four injured, including a physician. The suicide bomber was targeting Al Iraqiya Parliament Member, Mr. Mutashar Husain Elewy, who was visiting people injured during the earlier attack. On 7 June, the son of a Defence Ministry official was shot dead in a drive by shooting in Jamiaa, Baghdad. On 25 September gunmen using silenced weapons killed a Foreign Ministry employee in Jamiaa, west Baghdad. On 25 September, a sticky bomb attached to the car of Mr Saad Fetehalah, the head of the international relations department within the Ministry of Human Rights killed Mr Fetehalah's driver. In a rare attack inside Baghdad's "Green Zone", on 28 November a bomb exploded outside of the parliament building. Reports indicated that the bomb may have targeted the Speaker of Parliament, or the Iraqi Prime Minister himself. The Islamic State in Iraq claimed responsibility for this attack. The Islamic State in Iraq¹⁷ also claimed it was responsible for the December 26 attack on the Interior Ministry, in which 7 people were killed. Also on 28 November, the house of a member of Kirkuk Provincial Council, a Turkman Shi'a was targeted by four bombs, which killed two civilians and injured.

...In further violence aimed at disrupting the functioning of government institutions and undermining the rule of law, attacks on judicial and legal professionals continued. Among the cases recorded by UNAMI¹⁹ on 2 January, the nephew of a judge in Al-Rufei'at was killed by a bomb inside the judge's residence. On the same day a lawyer working for an association defending Iraqi prisoners was shot dead in eastern Baghdad. On 4 January, a female lawyer was killed in a drive-by shooting on the airport road in Baghdad. On 18 March, a prominent lawyer in Kirkuk was shot dead near his home. On 19 April, a teacher, a lawyer and one other were killed by gunmen in their family home in Kirkuk. On 30 April, a judge was shot and killed by gunmen in his residence in Baghdad. A number of other people also reportedly died in the attack. On 9 June, a judge

was shot and killed in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad. On October 19, a judge and his driver were shot dead in a western area of Mosul. On 13 December, gunmen attacked a vehicle carrying judges in Fallujah. Three people were killed, and five others wounded, including three judges. On 21 December, a judge and his guard were killed when a bomb attached to his vehicle exploded in Kirkuk. The judge's daughter and two pedestrians were reportedly injured. A second bomb was later detonated under a vehicle belonging to one of the judge's guards, which had been used to transport the injured to hospital, injuring a further five civilians.

...UNAMI recorded at least 35 attacks targeting educational and medical professionals during the reporting period.²⁰ Motives for such attacks were not uniform and were often unclear. It is possible that some could have been targeted for personal or criminal motives, but in some cases there might have been political, ethnic or sectarian motivations.²¹ On 17 February, a university professor was shot dead in his home in Al-Khadhra, west Baghdad. On 26 February, a teacher at a technical university was shot dead in Saydiya, Baghdad. On 8 March, a faculty member of the Department of Basic Education, University of Mosul was shot dead by unidentified armed men in Barid, east Mosul. On 26 March, a professor specialising in cancer research was assassinated in al-Nisour Square, Baghdad. On 29 March, in Mansour, Baghdad, the Dean of Dentistry at Mustansiriya University was killed by a magnetic bomb attached to his car. On 4 April, up to six people were killed in an attack on the family home of a college professor. On 5 April, a teacher was reportedly shot dead in his home in Tarmiyah. On 9 April, a teacher was killed by a „sticky bomb“ attached to his car in Falluja. On 1 May, a teacher was reportedly killed by a „sticky bomb“ attached to his car in west Baquba. On 11 June, in Al-Dour a teacher and four members of his family were shot dead in their home.

On 21 June unidentified armed men kidnapped a doctor while he was heading out from his clinic in Kirkuk. The kidnappers contacted the doctor's family demanding USD\$300,000 to release the victim. A ransom was later paid and the doctor released. On 25 June, unknown armed men kidnapped the nine year old son of a dentist in Kirkuk city. He was released on 28 June. It is unknown whether a ransom was paid to secure his release. On 22 of July a doctor was shot dead in Kirkuk when he resisted a kidnap attempt. On 24 July a nurse was shot dead in a clinic in the village near the town of Garma north west of Baghdad. On 26 July gunmen broke into a medical clinic in al Tahrir neighborhood, east Mosul and shot dead Dr Haifa Jum'aa. On 23 August, a professor from Baghdad University was shot dead outside his home in the Adil district of Baghdad. The professor's son was injured in the attack. On 5 September neurologist Yeldrim Abbass was reportedly killed along with his brother by gunmen in Kirkuk. Also in Kirkuk, on 11 September, armed men in two vehicles kidnapped a Turkoman nurse. On 22 October a teacher and his daughter were reportedly killed in a drive by shooting in Tikrit. On 5 November, unidentified armed men dressed in uniform kidnapped the head of Kirkuk University and another professor, both Turkmen Shi'a. The two professors were released one month later on payment of a ransom. On 15 November a doctor was killed when gunmen opened fire in his clinic in a village near Qaiyara, north of Baghdad. On 27 December, the head of the Red Crescent in Kirkuk was targeted by a magnetic bomb on his vehicle, severely injuring him.

...Sectarian violence, in particular large scale attacks targeting religious events, continued to claim large numbers of civilian casualties. For instance, presumed Sunni militias attacked the Shi'a religious festival at Karbala in January. Such attacks on crowded areas routinely resulted in massive casualties. On 20 January, up to 56 Shi'a pilgrims were killed when two car bombs were detonated on roads used by thousands of pilgrims converging on Karbala for the Arba'een commemorations. Four days later, more than 33 pilgrims were killed by two car bombs which were detonated a few hours apart, the first targeted a bus terminal, while the second targeted the Da'oum area in the center of the city, where pilgrims were organising processions. In possibly retaliatory attacks, Sunni imams were reportedly targeted in Falluja. According to Iraq Body Count, two Imams were killed in drive-by shootings on 24 January and 31 January.²² In February, at least 46 Shi'a pilgrims were killed by two suicide bomb attacks targeting a religious ceremony in Samarra. In the first attack on 8 February, eight people were killed and around 30 wounded when a suicide car bomber attacked a group of Shi'a pilgrims heading to the city, where a religious commemoration for the death of an Imam was taking place. On 12 February, another suicide bomber blew himself up near a crowd of Shi'a pilgrims at a bus depot. According to media reports, 38 people were killed and 74 wounded in this second attack.²³

On July 15 and 16, four car bombs in Karbala, targeting Shi'ite pilgrims during a religious festival, killed 15 and injured 84. On 28 August, a suicide bomber blew himself up in the main area of the Umm al-Qura mosque during prayers in the western Baghdad neighbourhood of al-Jamiaah: Iraqi police and hospital officials reported that 29 worshippers were killed and at least a further 30 injured. On 12 September, 22

Shi'ite pilgrims were shot dead when unidentified gunmen boarded the bus and killed all those on board as they were travelling through al-Anbar governorate on their way to a holy shrine in Syria. On 30 September, 25 people were killed and 27 wounded when a car bomb was detonated among mourners at a Shi'ite funeral in the city of Hilla. At least 32 people were killed during different sectarian attacks during the Shi'ite Ashura festival. On 5 December, 15 people including women and children were killed by a car bomb targeting a religious procession in Hilla.

A second attack, also in Hilla on the same day, killed at least six more people. A number of other attacks targeting individual clerics were recorded by UNAMI.²⁴ On 17 February, a leading Sadrist cleric was shot dead in a drive by shooting in west Karbala. On 18 February, a religious leader, Sheikh Ali Fakhri was reportedly shot dead by unidentified armed men in front of his home in Al Rashidiya, north Mosul. On 19 April, three members of the family of a Sunni imam were shot in their home in Baquba. On 19 May, a Shi'a cleric was killed by a „sticky bomb“ attached to his car in the Bab al-Miy'adham area of Baghdad. On 31 May, unknown armed men kidnapped a prominent Imam, a member of Iraqi Scholars Council – Kirkuk Branch. The imam was also an active member of Iraqi Islamic Party in Kirkuk. On 13 August, Adil Jaijan, an imam, was killed in a drive by shooting in eastern Baghdad. On 9 September, an imam was shot dead near his mosque in Baghdad's Zaafaraniya district. On 25 October, near the town of Hilla a bomb was detonated at the house of Sheikh Safa Jasim, killing his wife and son, and injuring him and three other sons.

There were also attacks perpetrated against members of other religious minorities, including Christians, Shabaks and Yezidi.

Attacks against members of the ISF were frequent in 2011. According to UNAMI figures, some 1,052 members of the ISF were killed and 2,596 injured. Such attacks were carried out by various insurgent groups, apparently aimed at undermining public confidence in the Government's ability to maintain security.

Large-scale assaults on Iraqi police and police stations often result in the arbitrary loss of life and injury of civilians. Attacks targeted against individual police officers frequently led to loss of life of family members and innocent bystanders.

The majority of such attacks took place in the cities of Mosul, Kirkuk and Baghdad. In Mosul alone, UNAMI recorded 118 attacks against the Iraqi police during the first six months of the year. At least 82 security personnel were killed along with 78 civilians in these attacks.

UNAMI received reports of civilian deaths resulting from criminal acts, such as robberies of banks and jewellery stores. While such acts are criminal in nature, there are reports that armed groups carried out such robberies in order to obtain financing and to purchase weapons.

In Kirkuk, UNAMI received over twelve reports of kidnappings for ransom. For example, kidnapers demanded a ransom for the release of three Turkish citizens seized on 15 February. The three businessmen were released following an operation led by USF-I on 25 April. No details were available on whether a ransom was paid. On 18 July, a prominent businessman was kidnapped in Kirkuk. The man was released after five days following the payment of a ransom.

During the first six months of 2011, the draw-down of remaining USF-I forces continued, pursuant to the agreement between Iraq and the United States. The process was completed by 18 December 2011.

Nonetheless, there were a total of three incidents alleging civilian casualties caused by military operations of USF-I reported by the media, but only one was confirmed by UNAMI.²⁵ On 15 June one Iraqi civilian was killed and three injured in a rare USF-I raid, reportedly including air support. USF-I claimed that the victims were insurgents and that equipment for firing rockets was found at the scene of the raid. The raid was in response to an indirect fire attack on the US military base in Basra earlier the same day.

On 25 April one civilian was killed and five injured during clashes between Iraqi army soldiers and Kurdish *Asayesh* in a street in central Kirkuk.

...From mid June, there were occasional aerial bombardments and mortar attacks on border areas in the Kurdistan Region by foreign forces, aimed at dislodging PKK and PJAK rebel groups allegedly active there. By mid July, 176 families were displaced from the villages of Aliarash, Suney, Sarkhan, Pirdabardin and Barquislan to the town of Gojar. On 21 August, UNAMI confirmed that aerial bombardments killed seven civilians in the Pishdar area of Sulaymaniyah governorate. The victims were members of the same family

travelling in a vehicle which was hit during the raid. Among the victims were four children aged 6 months, 4 years, 10 years and 11 years. According to UN agencies, an additional 120 families were displaced from the villages of Zargali, Bokriskan and Prdshal as a result of the attacks. In early October, shelling reportedly caused damage to villages in border areas of eastern Erbil and north-eastern Sulaymaniyah provinces, although no civilian casualties were reported. Shelling continued to affect border areas around Sidakan and Zap during the week of 16 October. Kurdistan Region security sources stated that one civilian was slightly injured on 19 October in the Zap area as a result of the shelling. On 21 November, one civilian was reportedly killed near Sidakan as a result of aerial bombings.

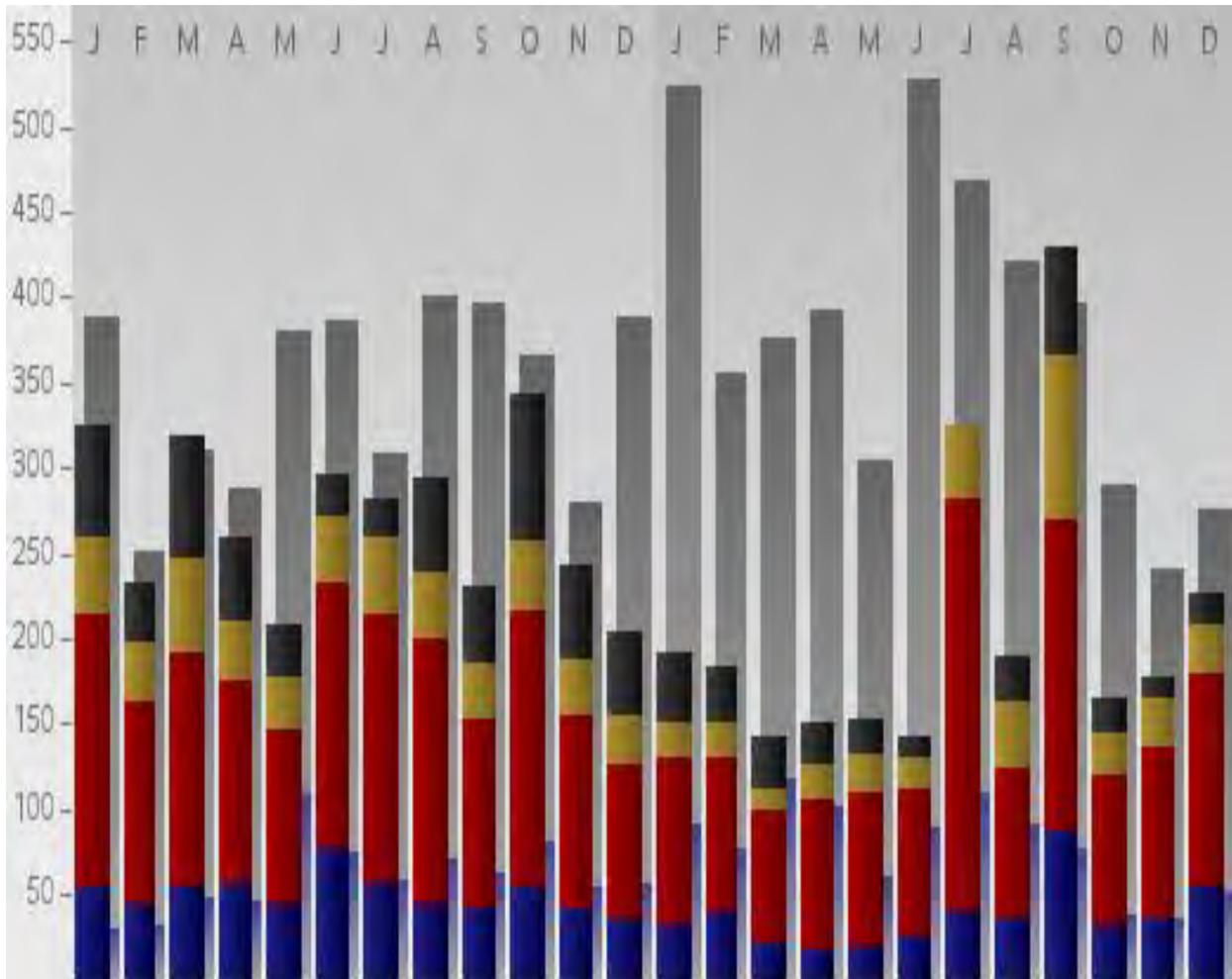
Casualty Estimates through 2012

For all of the uncertainties in the available data, a wide range of other measures of violence also warned indicate that the cut in violence that occurred during 2007-2008 has not brought security or stability. While the patterns in total casualties are uncertain and different sources provide different numbers, there are sources that are consistent enough in definition, and rigorous enough in their collection methods to produce useful trend data from period to period. Moreover, sources as diverse as UNAMI, Iraqi Body Count and the Iraqi government provide data that broadly agree on key trends.

- **Figure Two** compares a count by Iraqi ministries with the counts by an NGO called Iraqi Body Count – one of the most credible estimates. The Iraqi Body count data are far higher than the Iraqi Ministry Data – which in the past were higher than US command estimates.
- **Figure Three** shows an Iraqi Body count estimate of the patterns in casualties from 2003-2012 by week and by month. It shows a slow rise after mid-2012 as internal violence in Iraq worsened, driven by both domestic tensions and the impact of the flow of Sunni volunteers in and out of Syria. The count ends too early in 2013, however, to show the surge in violence during the first half of the year.
- **Figure Four** shows the Iraqi body count estimate of the human cost in dead of low level civil war that has gone on since 2009
- **Figure Five** shows that human costs is far higher when injuries and kidnappings are added to the total although it draws on US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) data that are not directly comparable to the Iraqi Body Count data,
- **Figure Six** shows that bombings and shootings remained the key killing mechanisms through 2012.
- **Figure Seven** provides only limited snapshots in terms of time span, but highlights the focus on attacking Iraqi army and police targets.
- **Figure Eight** shows one of the sadder effects of this violence, and its impact on other Iraqi minority sects of Islam and Iraq's remaining Christian minorities. Nearly half of Iraq's minorities were driven out of Iraq between 2003 and 2011.

All of these Figures show that a low level civil war did continue after the surge. The emphasis, however, must be kept on the term “low level” from at least 2009 through 2011. Moreover, all of the available reporting shows that many areas were relatively safe. At least through the end of 2012, and the net casualty rate was no higher than the total mix of casualties from crime and accidents in some peaceful states. Even in mid-2012, the slow rise and erratic rise in levels of violence was important and disturbing, but not critical.

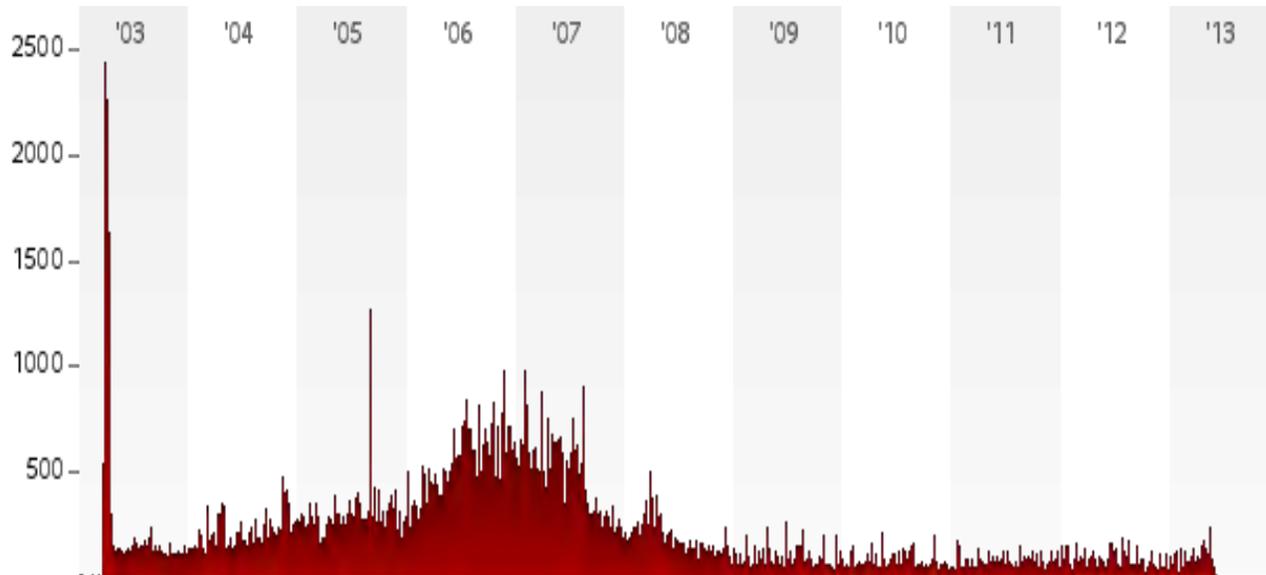
Figure Two: Iraqi Ministries (Color) vs. Iraq Body Count (Gray) Estimate of Trends in Casualties: 1 Jan 2011-30 December 2012



Note: As in previous years, monthly figures released by Iraqi ministries are significantly lower than the publicly-sourced data used by IBC, a discrepancy we have been drawing attention to since these official figures became available.⁸ For instance IBC's total for civilian (not including police) deaths between Jan-November 2012 is 3,412, against the ministries figure of 1,233. This year the discrepancy appears to have grown wider than ever (see graph below), and others have also drawn attention to the low official 2012 figures, including news agencies who compile their own data and could compare it to the government's.

When comparing differing published figures for Iraq it is important to note that on its public database IBC transparently lists the violent incidents from which it derives its data, along with the original publishing sources for each entry.¹⁰ Progress in understanding differences between IBC and others requires looking beyond such "competing totals" and examining what lies beneath them: that is, identifying which specific incidents are included in each total. Until Iraqi ministries also publish the underlying data for their totals in a similarly disaggregated, incident-by-incident fashion, it will remain impossible for third parties to meaningfully investigate and understand these differences (which is one reason why we have also been calling for such open publication by official sources).

Source: <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/analysis/numbers/2012/>.

Figure Three: Iraqi Body Count Estimate of Trends in Casualties: 2003-2013**Weekly Graph****Monthly Table**

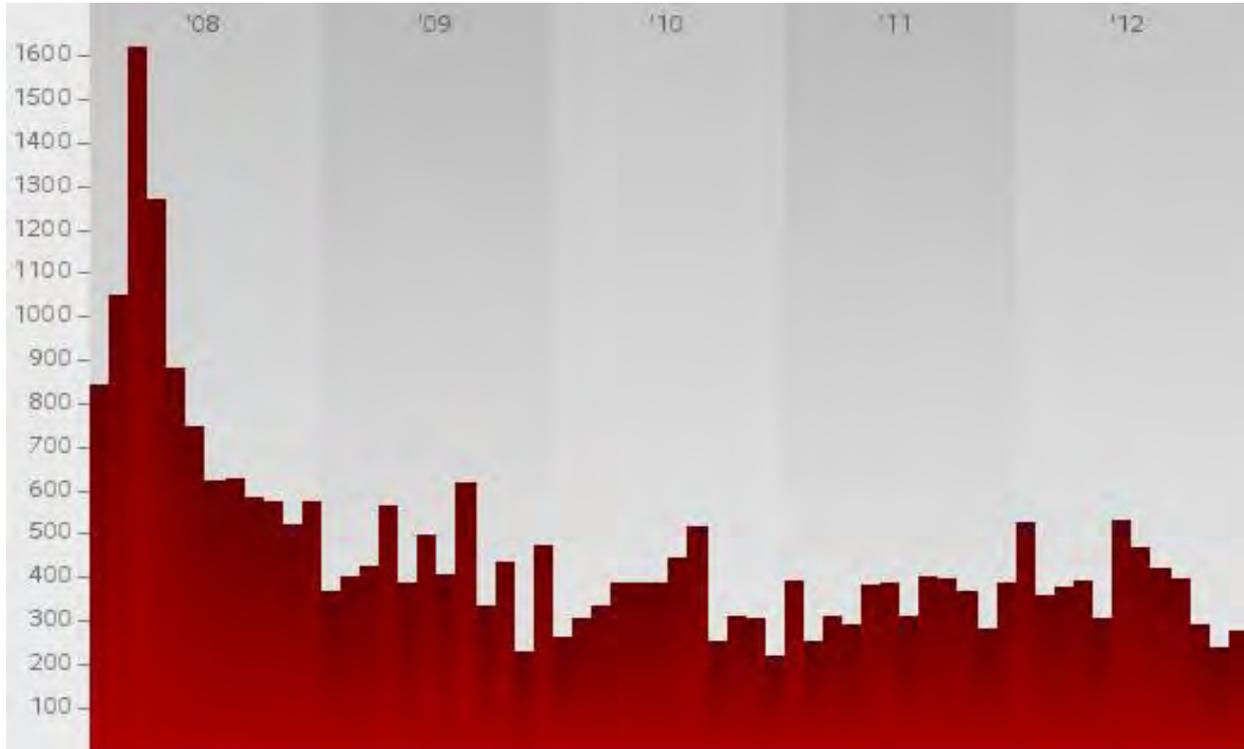
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Jan	3	601	1188	1543	2948	844	366	263	389	524	357
Feb	2	660	1266	1569	2607	1049	402	304	252	356	358
Mar	3977	1001	871	1940	2682	1623	426	336	311	377	394
Apr	3436	1304	1119	1769	2495	1270	565	385	289	392	544
May	545	656	1336	2250	2809	881	387	387	381	304	527
Jun	598	900	1299	2553	2180	747	498	385	386	529	
Jul	647	818	1528	3279	2671	623	407	443	308	469	
Aug	794	868	2266	2833	2457	627	615	516	401	422	
Sep	560	1031	1415	2548	1360	584	332	254	397	396	
Oct	518	1011	1298	2965	1286	575	435	312	366	290	
Nov	486	1653	1465	3037	1095	521	226	307	279	240	
Dec	527	1105	1135	2885	982	576	475	217	388	275	
	12,093	11,608	16,186	29,171	25,572	9,920	5,134	4,109	4,147	4,574	2,180

Iraq Body Count estimates a total of 113,876 – 124,698 documented civilian deaths from violence through June 3, 2013, and states that further analysis of the WikiLeaks' Iraq War Logs may add 11,000 civilian deaths. Its data are based on 32,864 database entries from the beginning of the war to 3 Jun 2013. The most recent weeks are always in the process of compilation and rise further. The current range contains 11,234–11,663 deaths (9.9%–9.4%, a portion which may rise or fall over time) based on single-sourced reports. Graphs are based on the higher number in our totals. Gaps in recording and reporting suggest that even our highest totals to date may be missing many civilian deaths from violence.

Source: Iraq Body Count. Accessed August 12, 2013, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/>.

Figure Four: Recent Trends in Casualties: “The Country Remains in a State of Low-Level war Little Changed Since Early 2009”

Violent civilian deaths per month from 2008



During 2012 Iraq Body Count (IBC) recorded 4,574 civilian deaths from violence... The 2012 figures bring the number of civilian deaths recorded by IBC since March 2003 to between 112,125 and 122,516. (For some figures that incorporate evidence on combatant deaths, updated for 2012, see the 'Overall violent deaths' section below).

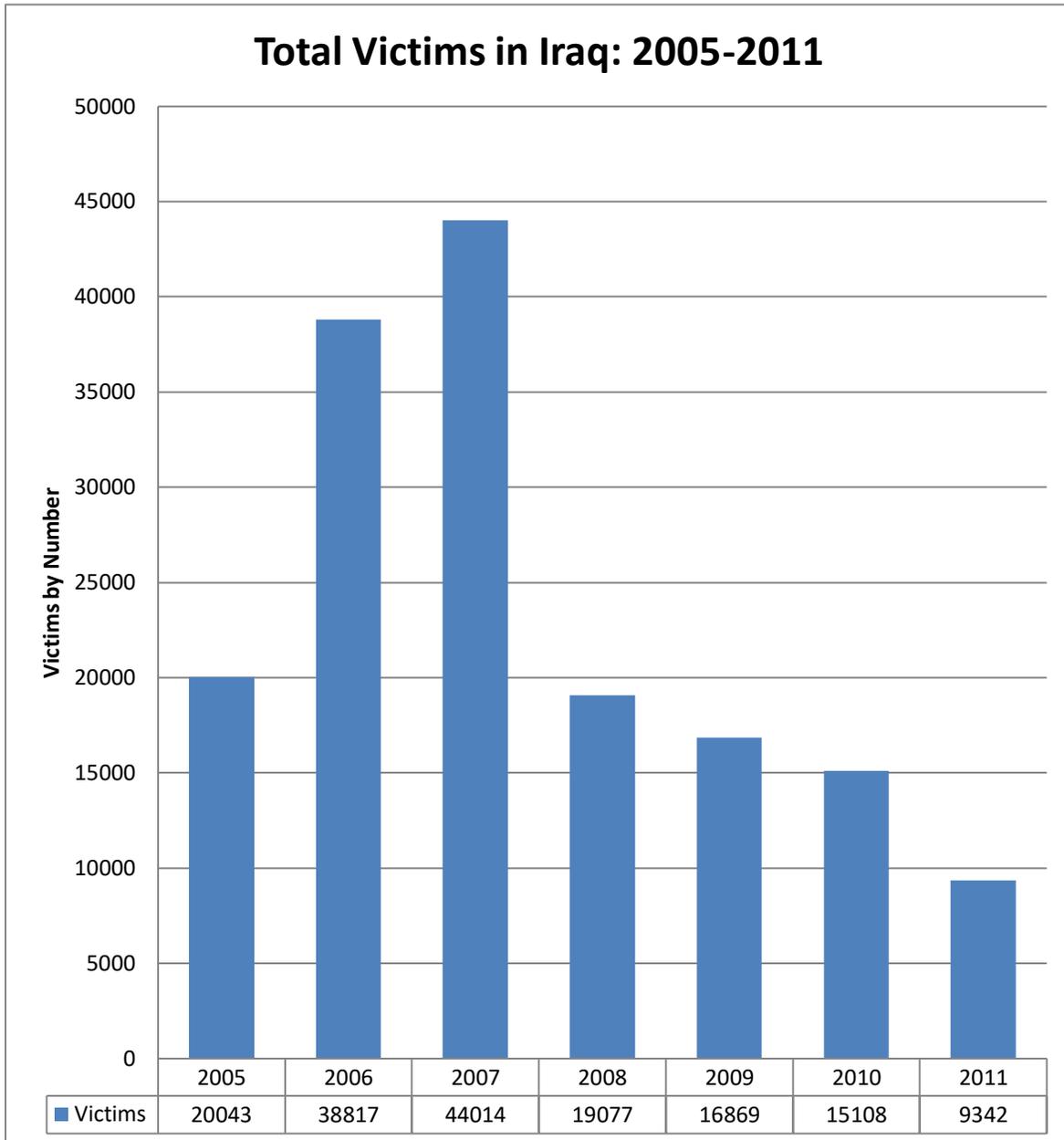
Violence in Iraq remains unevenly distributed, with the majority of incidents and civilian deaths occurring in just two provinces (also known as governorates) in the central regions of the country. In 2012, 43% of deaths occurred in just two provinces: Baghdad and Ninewa (capital city: Mosul). However, the absolute numbers of deaths alone does not indicate where the violence is most concentrated, as some provinces have much larger populations than others; in 2012 people in Diyala, Salah al-Din and Anbar were 2-2½ times more likely to suffer a violent death than in Baghdad.

We first noted in our 2009 analysis that our six-monthly data for that year *'may indicate that the situation is no longer improving'*, as it had done dramatically in comparison to the height of sustained violence in 2006-2008. This was born out by data for 2010 and then 2011, during which years the levels of violence, as measured in the number of civilians killed annually, were almost identical.

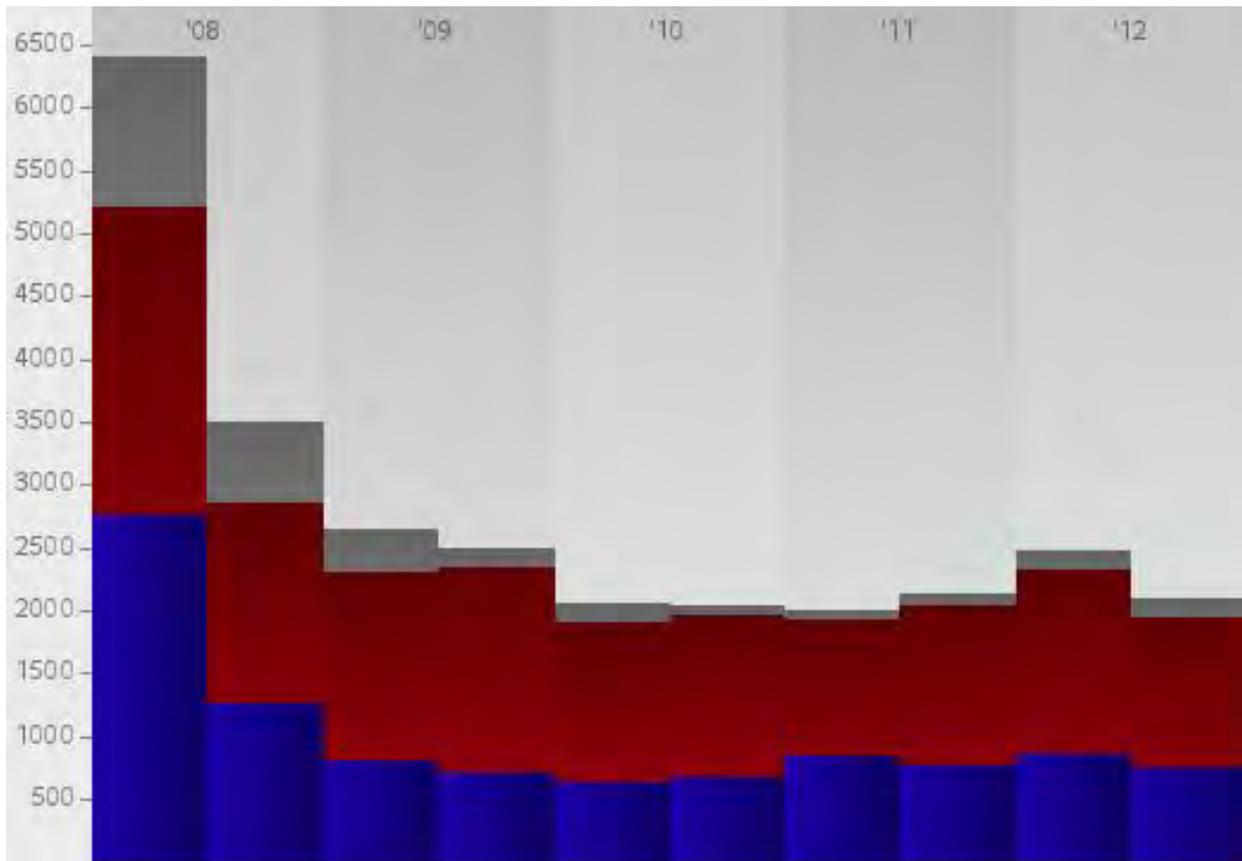
2012 marks the first year since 2009 where the death toll for the year has increased (up from 4,147 in 2011), but 2012 itself has been marked by contrasts. In sum the latest evidence suggests that the country remains in a state of low-level war little changed since early 2009, with a “background” level of everyday armed violence punctuated by occasional larger-scale attacks designed to kill many people at once.

Source: Iraq Body Count. Accessed August 12, 2013, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/>.

Figure Five: NCTC data on Total Victims (Killed, Injured, Kidnapped) In Iraq and recent Trends in Civilian Victims, 2005-2011



Source: National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) Worldwide Incident Tracking System (WITS) data.¹⁴

Figure Six: Bombings and Shootings Remained the Key Killing Mechanisms through 2012

During the height of sectarian violence in the years from 2006-2007, most deaths were from small arms fire, often in targeted killings. Such killings continue: in 2012 there were 964 reported incidents involving deadly shootings, or cases of bodies found shot dead, with a death toll of 1,616. Of these deaths, 667 were of a single individual (and many of the others family members, bodyguards or other bystanders in the vicinity of the target).

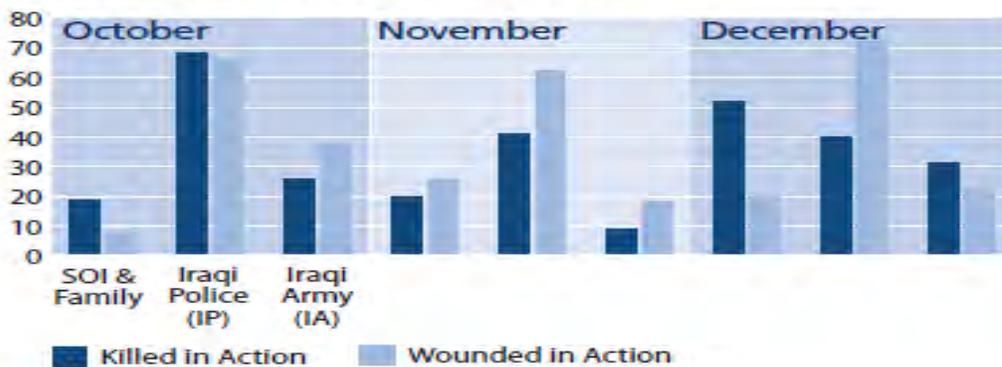
Since mid-2008 the majority of deaths have been caused by explosives that generally result in a higher death toll per incident and, on average, leave 3 wounded for every person killed. In 2012, 961 bombings in Iraq killed 2,813 civilians and left another 7,544 wounded. This equates to around 18 bombings claiming 54 civilian lives and wounding 145 others every week. The dozen largest-scale bombings killed over 400 and wounded more than 1,000.

In 2012, 43% of deaths occurred in just two provinces: Baghdad and Ninewa (capital city: Mosul)... people in Diyala, Salah al-Din and Anbar were 2-2 1/2 times more likely to suffer a violent death than in Baghdad.

Source: Iraq Body Count. Accessed August 12, 2013, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/>.

Figure Seven: Consistent Trend Data Do Not Exist, But Army and Police Remain Key Targets

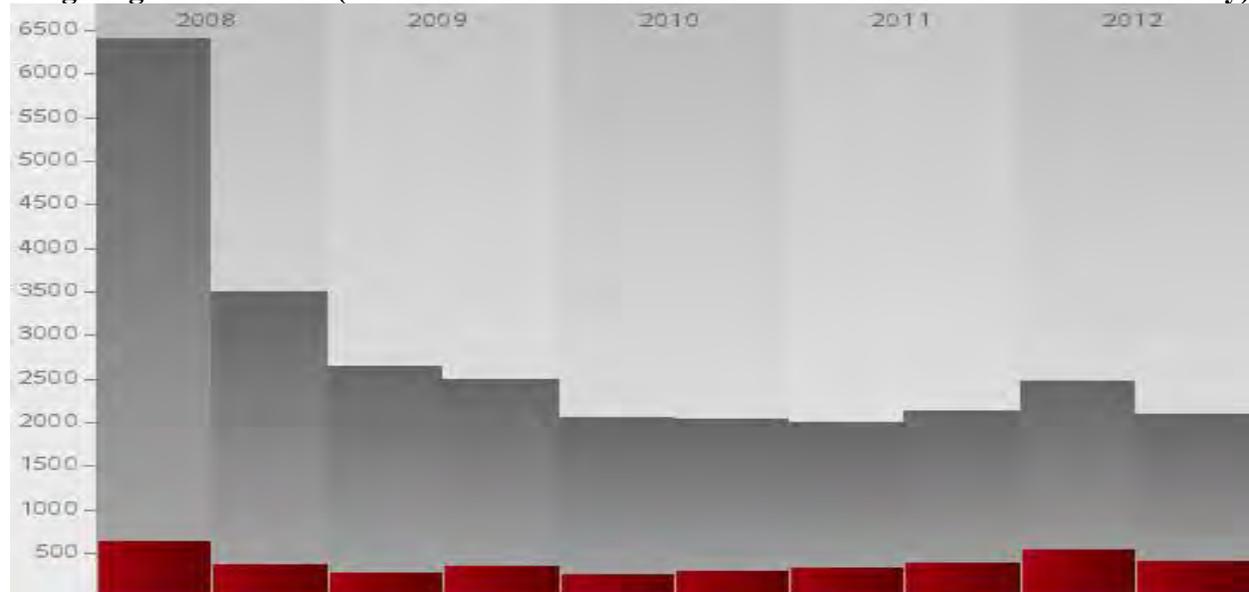
SOI & FAMILY, IRAQI POLICE, AND IRAQI ARMY CASUALTIES, 10/2011–12/2011



Source: GOI, MOI, information provided to SIGIR, 1/22/2012.

Sources: SIGIR, Quarterly Report, January 30, 2012, p. 68

Targeting of Police (Red Shows Police Casualties Relative to Total in Gray)



While Iraqi police have always been targeted by armed opposition groups (and represent the single largest professional demographic recorded in the IBC database), a particularly notable feature of recent years has been the increasing proportion that they represent of all deaths, especially in relation to 2008 and earlier. 2012 saw both an increase in the absolute number of police killed in comparison to 2011 (724 vs 939 in 2012), and an increase in their proportion of all deaths (17.5% of deaths in 2011 vs 20.5% in 2012).

Source: Iraq Body Count. Accessed August 12, 2013, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/>.

Figure Eight: The Impact of Internal Conflict on Smaller Minority Groups 2003-2011**POPULATION ESTIMATES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN IRAQ, 2003 AND 2011**

		2003	2011
Christians	Predominantly Assyrian, Chaldean, Armenian, and Syriac; most live in or around the Kurdistan Region; a small number of Armenians live in Basrah.	1.4 million	400,000 to 600,000
Turkmen	Descendants of Ottoman Empire-era soldiers and traders, about 60% of Turkmen are Sunni Muslim and the rest are Shia.	800,000	200,000
Sabaeans	Gnostics who follow John the Baptist, Sabaeans do not accept converts and must live near a river to observe religious rites; concentrated in southern Iraq.	60,000 to 70,000	5,000 to 10,000
Yazidis	Ancient group with religious traditions drawn from Zoroastrianism, Manicheism, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism; Yazidis do not accept converts or marry outside the faith; concentrated around Sinjar Mountain west of Mosul.	600,000 to 700,000	Less than 500,000
Shabaks	Most identify as Shia and the rest as Sunni, but do not observe all pillars of Islam and draw religious traditions from Yazidis and Sufism. Shabaks have lived along the Ninewa Plains since 1502.	400,000 to 500,000	200,000 to 500,000
Feyli Kurds	Ethnically Kurdish Shia, the Feyli live mainly in Diyala province along the Iranian border, in Baghdad, and in Iran. Under Saddam Hussein's regime, they were stripped of Iraqi citizenship.	1 million to 1.5 million	100,000 to 120,000
Kaka'is	Kurds who speak their own dialect, Kaka'is draw religious traditions from Yazidis, Zoroastrianism, and Shia Islam. They live primarily in Kirkuk and Mosul.	200,000	60,000 to 70,000

Note: Some population estimates were obtained from community leaders who met with the Minority Rights Group International; others were taken from SIGIR interviews with community leaders and U.S. government reports.

Sources: DRL, *International Religious Freedom Reports, 2006 and 2010*, www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/2010/148821.htm, accessed 6/5/2011; SIGIR interviews with members of Sabaeen community, 6/29/2011; Minority Rights Group International Report, "Still Targeted: Continued Persecution of Iraq's Minorities," 2010; Minority Rights Group International, information provided to SIGIR, 10/18/2011.

Source: SIGIR, Quarterly Report, October 30, 2011

Regional Patterns in Violence

One needs to be careful about assessing the regional patterns in violence. It is always possible for an extremist group to find vulnerable target areas in any open, functioning society, and Iraq's Sunni and Shi'ite extremists have done this – often focusing on high profile attacks that gain national and media attention rather than consistent patterns of attack or efforts to control territory or gain influence through violence. Moreover, many experts warn that Sunni extremist groups, and Al Qa'ida in particular, increasingly seek to broaden their range of high visibility attacks in Shi'ite and Kurdish areas to show no Shi'ite or Kurdish area is safe

There is a more general problem in both the regional and total statistic on violence. The Iraqi government and KRG do not report their own acts of repression, violence, and political arrests as part of the statistics they issue and such data is almost impossible to collect – although the US State Department report on Human rights, UNAMI, and virtually every NGO that examines the conduct of the central government and KRG warn such problem are endemic. As a result, both the regional and total patterns of violence sharply understate the impact of state-driven repression and terrorism and its rise as tensions have grown between the Maliki government and its Sunni opposition.

There also have been fewer reliable reports on the regional patterns of violence since US official sources in Iraq stopped reporting in late 2011 and early 2012. Moreover, the sources that are available do show that violence has tended to focus on the same provinces and cities – largely because of their political or religious importance -- but it is clear that there is no consistency over time.

- **Figure Nine** shows recent patterns in arrests by region. While they are concentrated in populated areas, it is clear that patterns can vary sharply in relatively short amounts of time. It also clear from other data that this indicator of violence does not correlate well in time to either acts of violence or casualties, and illustrates the difficulties in assessing the overall patterns in violence.
- **Figure Ten** shows the patterns in targeted acts of violence by key event and province. These data emphasize major attacks and significant events – indicators that may often have more individual impact on politics and popular perceptions than the total level of violence and casualties, but whose individual impact is often hard to assess or quantify.
- **Figure Eleven** shows the locality of key acts of terrorism by quarter. These indicators again show a focus on key populated areas or targets with religious or political significance. The data do, however, lack background on the attacker and target.
- **Figure Twelve** shows the pattern of violence by week in early 2012. These data are useful largely as warning about relying on stable local patterns of cases where the attackers have high mobility and deliberately strike outside their base areas.
- **Figure Thirteen** shows the patterns in total violence by province for all of 2102. Once again, they illustrate a relatively consistent emphasis on more populated areas, areas with high levels of ethnic and sectarian tension, and areas with high political and media visibility. They also reflect the relatively high mobility extremists have in attacking diverse targets. Many other cases are much more localized.

Figure Nine: Arrests on Terrorism Charges (1/14/2012-4/10/2012)

SELECTED ARRESTS ON TERRORISM CHARGES,
1/14/2012-4/10/2012

Region:  Kurd  Sunni  Shia

Arrests:  0-50  50-100  100+



Note: This table provides examples of arrests this quarter. It does not purport to be all-inclusive, nor presume to imply the guilt or innocence of those arrested. Analysis of incidents based on best available information, as of 4/10/2012.

Source: SIGIR analysis of open-source documents in Arabic and English, 1/2012-4/2012.

Source: SIGIR Quarterly Report, April 2012, page 81.

Figure Ten: Selected Acts of Apparent Targeted Violence, 1/11/2012–4/10/2012

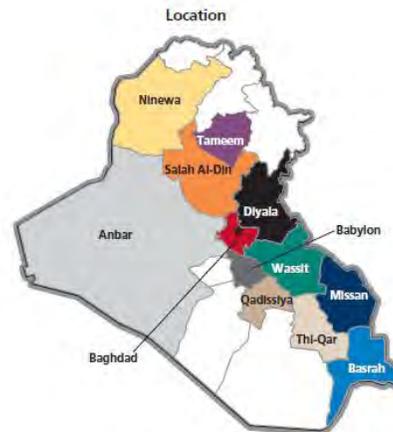
TABLE 4.2
SELECTED ACTS OF APPARENT TARGETED VIOLENCE, 1/11/2012–4/10/2012
Non-security Officials and Other Prominent Civilians

TARGETS/VICTIMS	LOCATION	DATE	CIRCUMSTANCES	RESULT
MOF official	●	1/29	Gunman attack	Killed
Deputy of al-Bayda' party	●	1/31	IED and VBIED attack on home	Unharmred; many others injured
Correctional deputy	●	2/7	Gunman attack	Killed
Baghdad Investment Commission Chairman	●	2/11	Gunman attack (silencers used)	Unharmred; guard injured
Tribal sheik	●	2/11	Gunman attack on family	Killed; wife, child, and brother killed
Tribal sheik	●	2/18	Gunman attack on home	Killed; son wounded
Criminal judge	●	2/18	Gunman attack on home	Killed
College professor	●	2/25	Gunman attack on home	Unharmred; 2 sons injured
Criminal judge	●	2/25	IED attack on home	Unharmred
Deputies to Ayatollah al-Sistani	●	2/27	Hand grenade attack on home	3 unharmred
Tribal sheik	●	2/28	Gunman attack on convoy	Killed; wife and 2 children injured
Lawyer	●	3/2	Gunman attack	Killed
Deputy to Ayatollah al-Sistani	●	3/3	IED	Unharmred
Assistant director of Civilian Affairs	●	3/4	SVBIED attack on car	Unharmred; daughter unharmred
Investigative judge	●	3/6	IED attack on office	IED disarmred
Doctor	●	3/7	Gunman attack on home	Unharmred; 2 family members injured
Al-Iraqiya deputy/MP	●	3/11	IED attack on convoy	Unharmred

Security Officials

TARGETS/VICTIMS	LOCATION	DATE	CIRCUMSTANCES	RESULT
SOI commander	●	1/18	Gunman attack on home	Killed; 4 children killed
SOI member	●	1/19	Gunman attack on home	Killed; wife and mother killed
MOI intelligence officer	●	1/24	IED attack on home	Killed; 10 family members killed
Iraqi Police officer	●	1/24	Gunman attack on home	Killed; 4 family members wounded
Police officials	●	1/25	Gunman attack on home	2 killed
Iraqi Army officer	●	1/29	SVBIED attack	Injured; 2 students injured
Iraqi Army officer	●	1/31	SVBIED attack	Injured
SOI commander	●	1/31	IED attack on home	Injured
SOI member	●	2/1	Gunman attack	Killed
Iraqi Army officer	●	2/7	Gunman attack on home	Unharmred; wife killed; child injured
MOI official	●	2/11	Gunman attack on car	Killed
Iraqi Army officer	●	2/13	Gunman attack	Killed; 2 assistants killed
Iraqi Police officers	●	2/13	Gunman/grenade attack on home	Killed; wife and sons killed
Iraqi Army brigadier general	●	2/14	Gunman attack (silencers used)	Killed
Iraqi Army brigadier general	●	2/18	Gunman attack on car	Injured
MOD brigadier general	●	2/18	Gunman attack on car (silencers used)	Several injured

Continued in next column



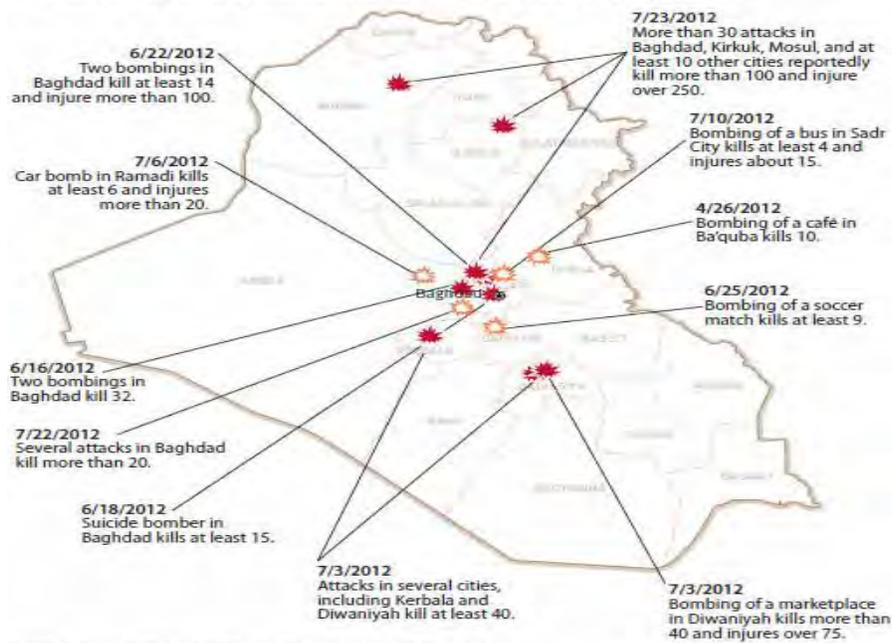
TARGETS/VICTIMS	LOCATION	DATE	CIRCUMSTANCES	RESULT
Police officials	●	2/19	Gunman attack on SOI Checkpoint	2 SOI killed; 1 Iraqi Police officer killed
Police colonel	●	2/20	SVBIED attack	Killed
Iraqi Army officer	●	2/26	Gunman attack on checkpoint	Killed
SOI commander	●	2/26	IED attack on SOI convoy	Killed; 1 soldier injured
Witness protection official	●	2/27	Gunman attack on Criminal Court	Killed
Iraqi Army officers	●	2/27	IED attack on convoy	2 injured
Correctional security officer	●	2/29	Explosives attack on convoy	Killed; 3 others injured
MOI officer	●	3/1	Gunman attack on home/car	Killed
MOD officer	●	3/4	IED attack	Injured
Iraqi Police officers	●	3/5	Gunman attack on checkpoint	3 killed; 3 injured
Iraqi Police officers	●	3/6	Suicide bomb	4 injured
Iraqi Police officers	●	3/7	IED attack on convoy	1 killed; 2 injured
Iraqi Police investigator	●	3/8	SVBIED attack on car	Killed
Iraqi Police officer	●	3/10	IED attack on home	Unharmred; 1 other killed, 4 injured
SOI member	●	3/10	Gunman attack	Killed
Iraqi Police officers	●	3/12	Gunman attack	5 killed; 2 wounded
Iraqi Police officers	●	3/14	Gunman attack	2 killed; 3 wounded
SOI member	●	3/15	IED attack on home	Killed
SOI member	●	3/18	IED attack	3 killed
SOI member	●	3/19	Gunman attack on home	Killed; 4 family members killed
Iraqi Police officers	●	3/20	Explosives attack on convoy	1 killed; 2 wounded
Iraqi Army officer	●	3/27	IED attack on Army patrol	1 killed; 1 injured
Iraqi Army colonel	●	3/28	IED attack on home	Unharmred
SOI member	●	3/31	Gunman attack on home	Killed; wife and son killed

Note: This table provides examples of assassinations, attempted assassinations, and other small-scale acts of violence that appear to have been aimed at specific persons or groups this quarter. It does not purport to be all-inclusive, nor presume to imply the attackers' respective motives.

Source: SIGIR Quarterly Report, April 2012, page 78.

Figure Eleven-Part 1: SIGIR Estimates of Patterns of Violence By Quarter

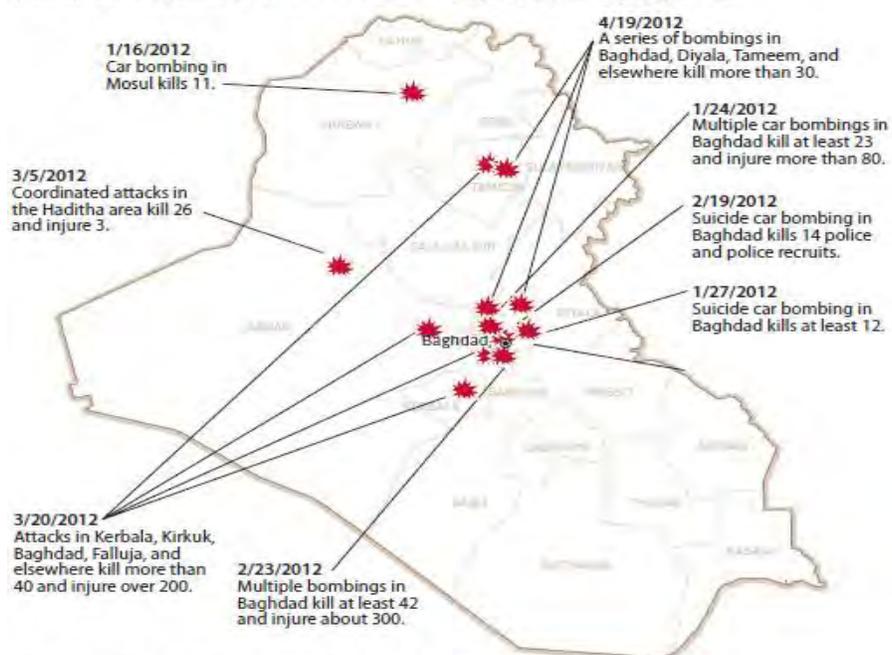
SELECTED MAJOR SECURITY INCIDENTS, 4/20/2012-7/23/2012



Note: All casualty figures are based on best available information.

Source: SIGIR analysis of GOI and U.S. government documents and open-source information in Arabic and English, 4/20/2012-7/23/2012.

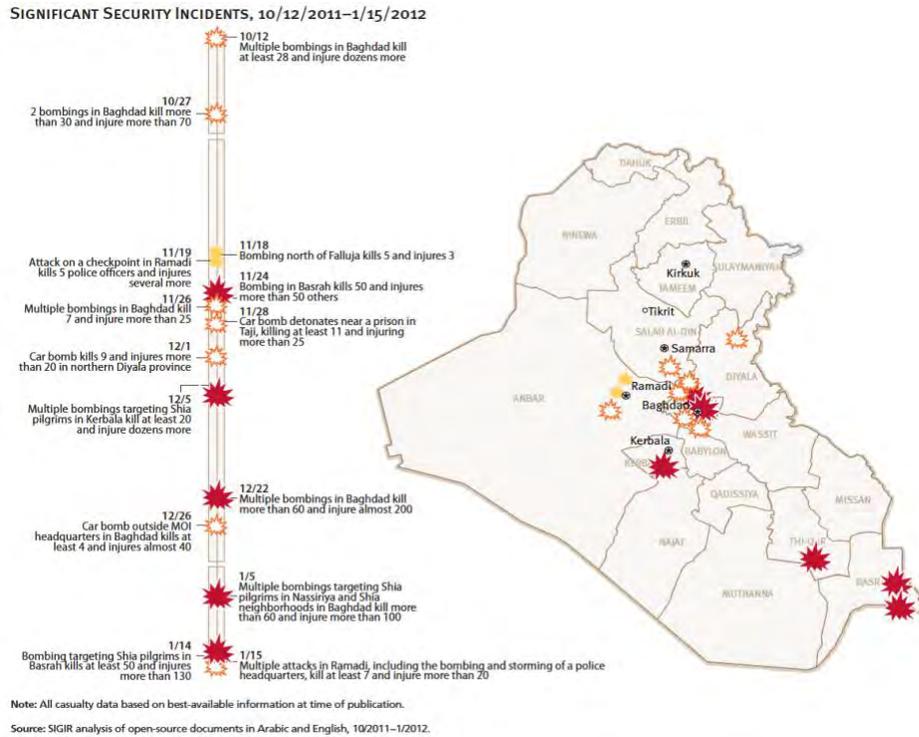
SELECTED MAJOR SECURITY INCIDENTS, 1/16/2012-4/19/2012



Note: All casualty figures are based on best available information.

Source: SIGIR analysis of GOI and U.S. government documents and open-source information in Arabic and English, 1/16/2012-4/19/2012.

Figure Eleven-Part 2: SIGIR Estimates of Patterns of Violence By Quarter

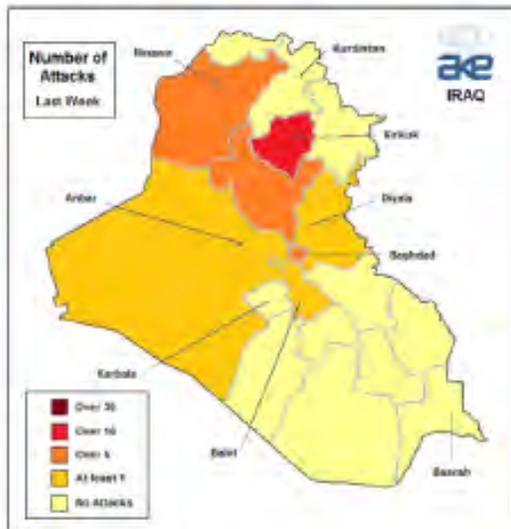


Source: SIGIR Quarterly Report, January 2012, page 8

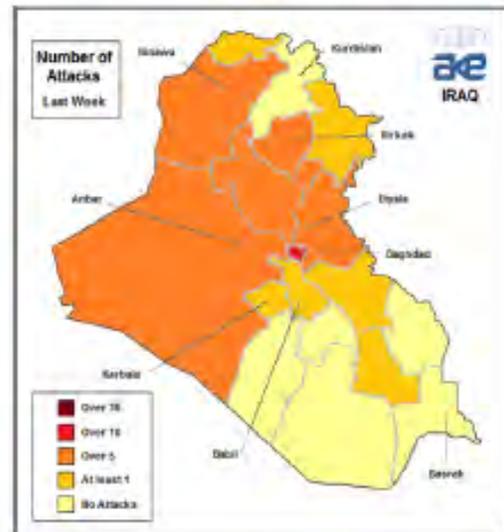
Figure Twelve– Part 1: AKE Estimates of Patterns of Violence By Quarter
Incidents During January 2012

Below is a weekly reporting by [AKE](#) of attacks occurring within Iraq. The map is organized by province. An attack constitutes a bombing, shooting, rocket/mortar attack, kidnap or stabbing.

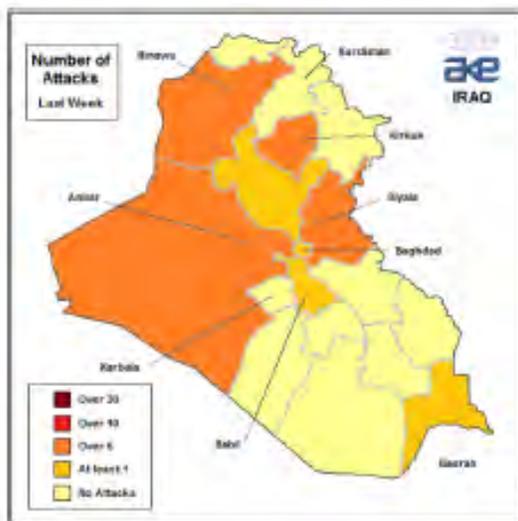
Weekly Security Update 04 January



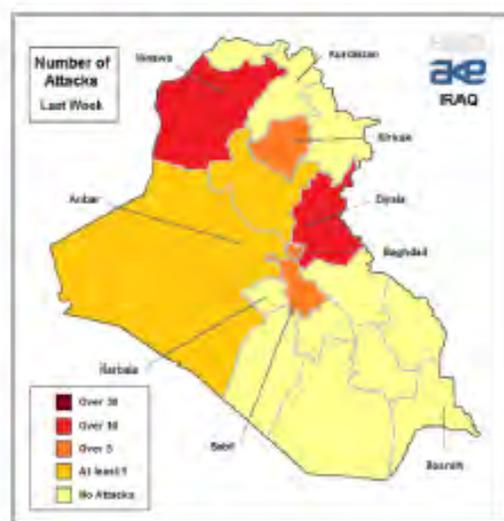
Weekly Security Update 13 January



Weekly Security Update 18 January



Weekly Security Update 26 January

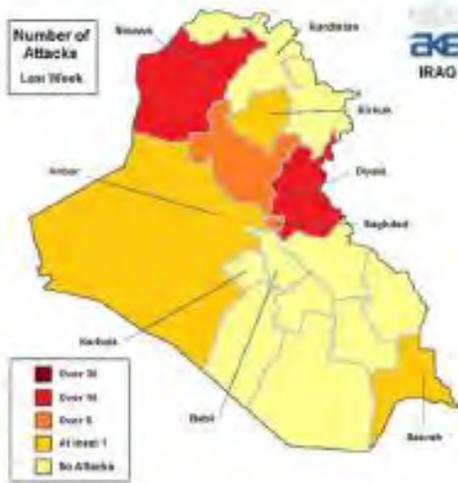


Source: [Iraq Business News](#)

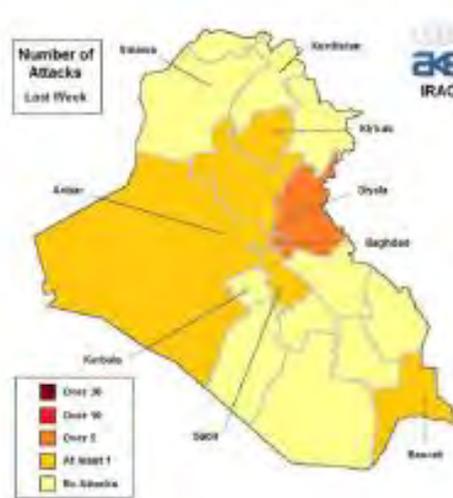
Figure Twelve– Part 2: AKE Estimates of Patterns of Violence By Quarter
Incidents During February 2012

Below is a weekly reporting by AKE of attacks occurring within Iraq by province. AKE considers an attack a bombing, shooting, rocket/mortar attack, kidnap or stabbing.

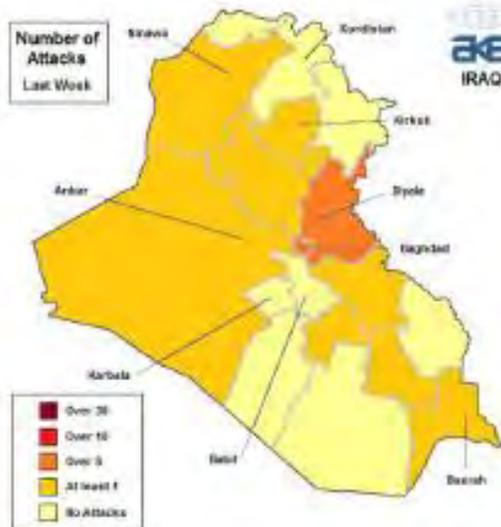
Weekly Security Update 09 Feb



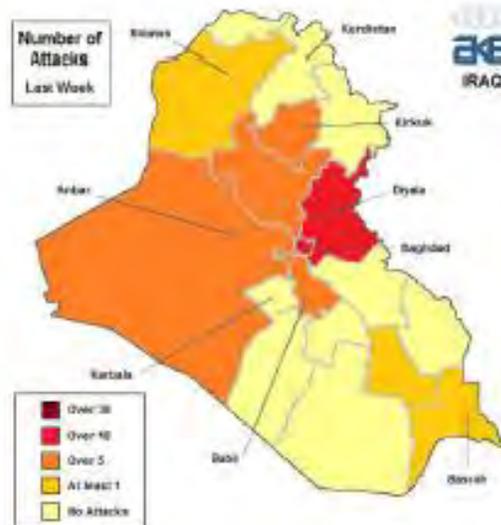
Weekly Security Update 15 Feb



Weekly Security Update 22 Feb

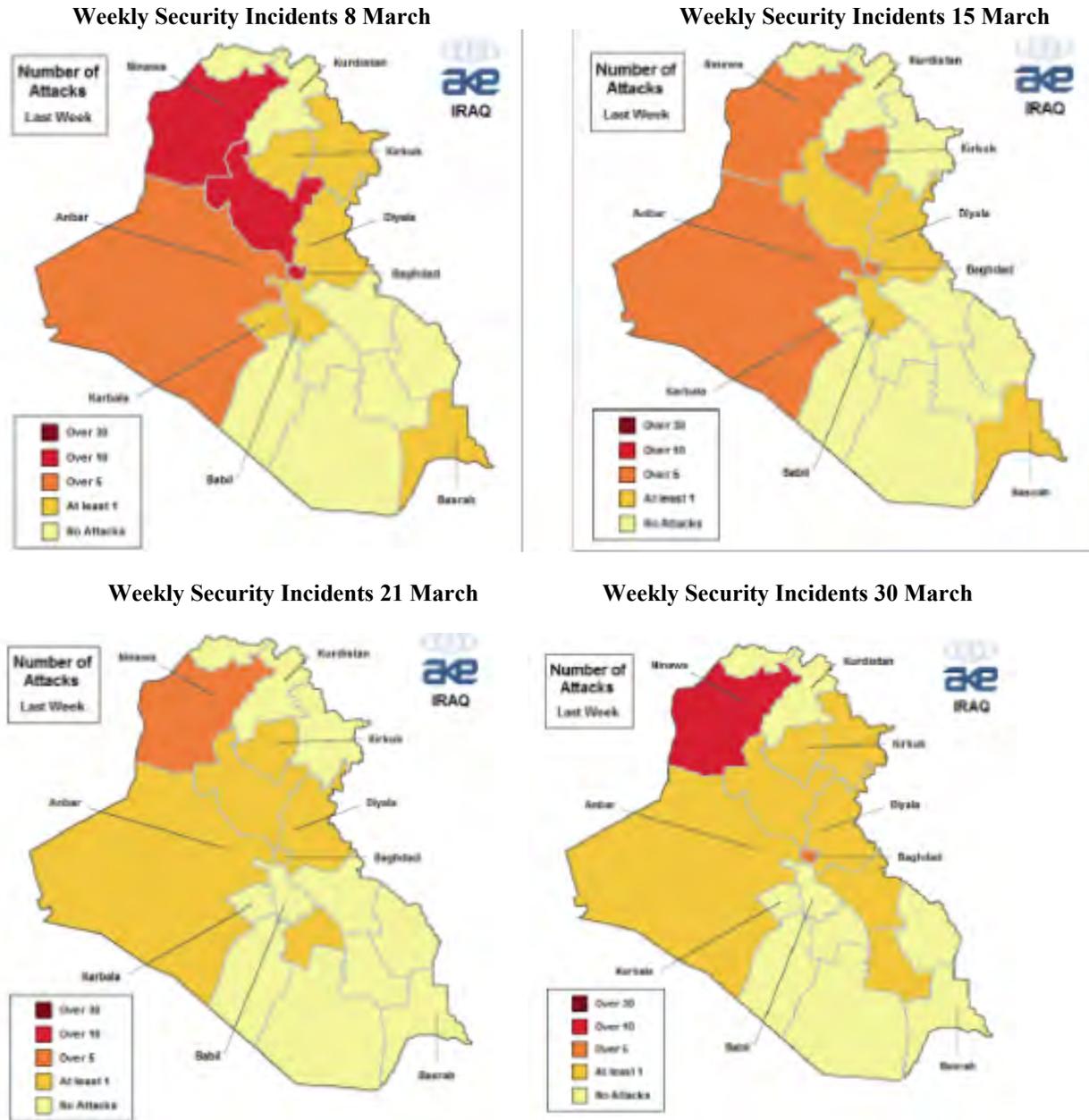


Weekly Security Update 01 Mar



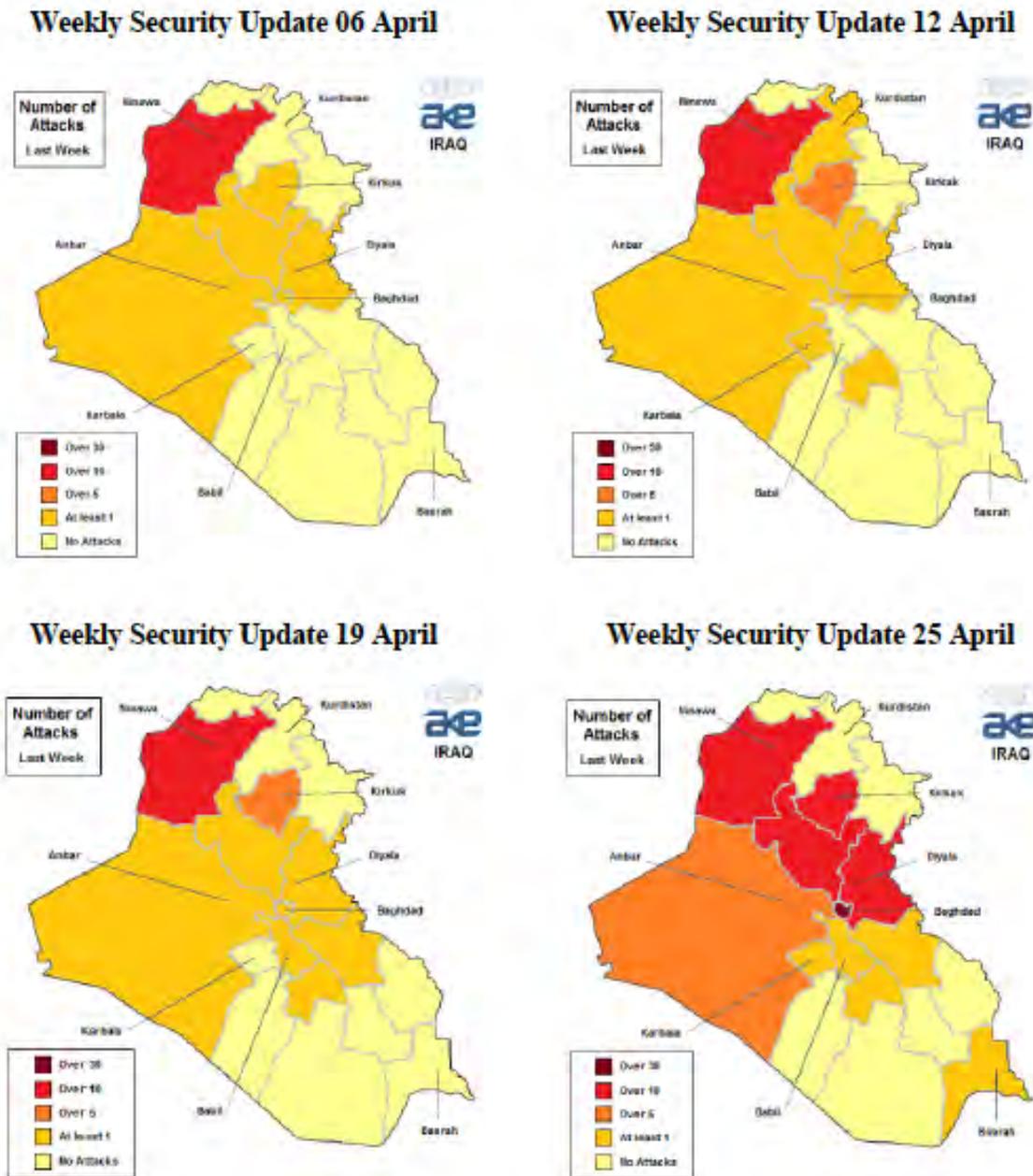
Source: Civil-Military Fusion Center, Iraq: A Month in Review, February 2012, p. 1

**Figure Twelve– Part 3: AKE Estimates of Patterns of Violence By Quarter
Incidents During March 2012**



Source: Civil-Military Fusion Center, Iraq: A Month in Review, March 2012, p. 1

Figure Twelve– Part 4: AKE Estimates of Patterns of Violence By Quarter
Incidents During April 2012

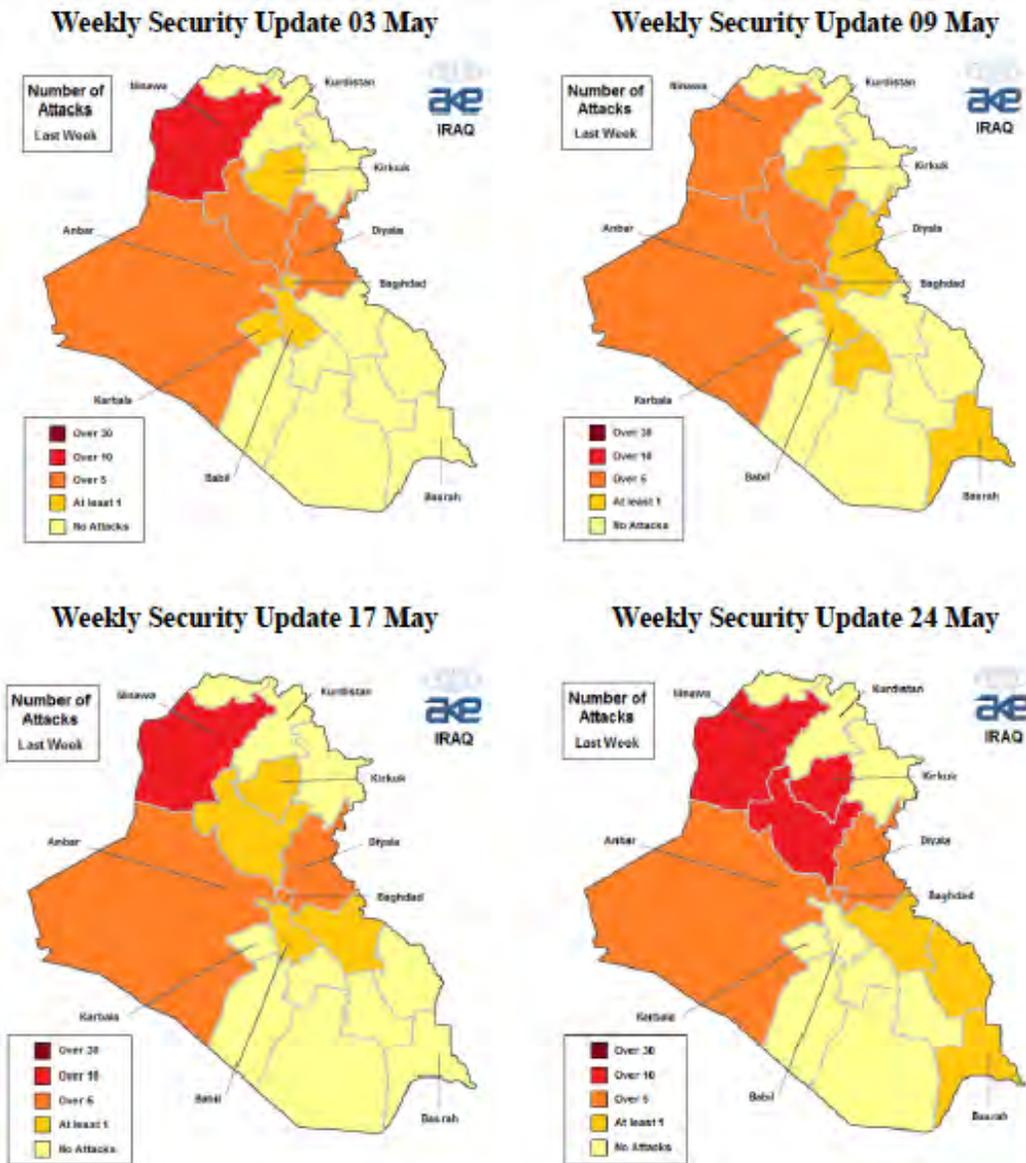


Source: [Iraq Business News](#)

The above, is a weekly reporting by [AKE](#) of attacks occurring within Iraq. The map is organized by province. An attack constitutes a bombing, shooting, rocket/mortar attack, kidnap or stabbing.

Source: Civil-Military Fusion Center, Iraq: A Month in Review, April 2012, p. 1

**Figure Twelve– Part 5: AKE Estimates of Patterns of Violence By Quarter
Incidents During May 2012**



Source: [Iraq Business News](#)

The above, is a weekly reporting by [AKE](#) of attacks occurring within Iraq. The map is organized by province. An attack constitutes a bombing, shooting, rocket/mortar attack, kidnap or stabbing.

Source: Civil-Military Fusion Center, Iraq: A Month in Review, May 2012, p. 1

Figure Thirteen: Iraqi Body Count Estimates of Patterns of Violence by Province in 2012

Province	Deaths in 2012	per 100,000	Population	Capital of Province
Diyala	561	38.87	1,443,173	Baqubah
Salah al-Din	518	36.79	1,408,174	Tikrit
Anbar	505	32.34	1,561,407	Ramadi
Ninewa	859	26.27	3,270,422	Mosul
Tameem	296	21.21	1,395,614	Kirkuk
Babylon	337	18.51	1,820,673	Hillah
Baghdad	1,099	15.58	7,055,196	Baghdad
Wassit	63	5.20	1,210,591	Kut
Qadissiya	52	4.58	1,134,313	Diwaniyah
Basrah	102	4.03	2,531,997	Basra
Thi-Qar	65	3.54	1,836,181	Nasiriyah
Kerbala	33	3.09	1,066,567	Kerbala
Missan	20 22..	2.06	971,448	Amarah
Sulaymaniyah	37	1.97	1,878,764	Sulaymaniyah
Erbil	10	0.62	1,612,692	Erbil
Dahuk	6	0.53	1,128,745	Dahuk
Najaf	6	0.47	1,285,484	Najaf
Muthanna	1	0.14	719,069	Samawah

Source: adapted from Iraqi Body Count, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/analysis/numbers/2012/>

The 2013 Surge in Violence

All of these issues and uncertainties are important in considering a surge of violence that has taken place in 2013 that is still sharply limited compared to late 2004 through mid-2009, but has delivered the bloodiest fighting in over half a decade. This rise in violence has not yet led to a broad popular response among the Shi'ite portion of Iraq's population, or anything like the rise in violence that took place between 2004-2006, but it is a warning that a combination of internal tensions in Iraq and the impact of outside forces like the Syrian civil war are now reemerging as a major threat. It also has led to an increasing focus by the Iraqi central government and security forces on Sunni areas and factions, further polarizing already polarized political conflicts within the Iraqi government and national politics.

This trend began to emerge in May 2013. Over 1,000 people were killed in May. The UN envoy in Iraq, Martin Kobler warned that, "This is a sad record," and as the following data show, his warning proved to be all too accurate in the months that followed. In July 2013, the *Economist* wrote that the "nightmare" has returned.¹⁵ The Brookings Institute's Kenneth Pollack offered that "Iraq has been rekindled...the fire is burning again."¹⁶ The spike in violence in Iraq results from a mix of factors, from disdain over Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's centralization of power, to spillover from the Syrian conflict that has contributed to the rise in violence, to ongoing tensions with the Kurds over hydrocarbons, and "crude for blood" battles over Iraq's energy resources.¹⁷ Together, this confluence of factors has led to political stalemate, government inability to deliver services, growing public agitation, and ethnic strife that has spilled over into bloodshed and sectarian war.¹⁸

The reporting on the global patterns in terrorism by the State Department shown in **Figure Fourteen** helps put these trends in perspective by showing that the level of Iraqi violence caused by terrorism was already high enough in 2012 to rank second in the world. While such State Department reporting does have serious problems in terms of definition and absolute numbers, it is consistent enough to provide a warning of the seriousness of what is taking place.

Much does depends on what is counted and when. The Iraq Body Count data in **Figure Twenty-Three** do not show a major rise over 2009-2012 during the period covered in 2013 – but this is the a result of the fact that the data only include the initial months of 2013 and only cover killed.

As **Figure Twenty-Four** shows, more recent UNAMI data – that cover a longer period in 2013 – do indicate that sectarian violence and limited ethnic violence have increased very significantly over the course of 2013. At least during some months, they approached levels not experienced since 2006 and 2007, when Iraq plunged to the brink of full-scale civil war. Other sources like the New York Times reported in August that key indicators like the number of serious suicide bombings had rising from 5 to 10 per month in 2011 and 2012 to an average of thirty per month.

US Secretary of State John Kerry stated during a visit by Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari that, "Sunni and Shia extremists on both sides of the sectarian divide throughout the region have an ability to be able to threaten Iraq's stability if they're not checked."¹⁹ He also warned that, "Al Qaeda, as we have seen, has launched a horrific series of assaults on innocent Iraqis," He was referring to an [attack on Sunday that killed more than 60 people](#) during the holiday that marked the end of Ramadan, but that same day, a series of car bombs were detonated in Baghdad killing over 30 people and wounding more than 60.²⁰

UNAMI summarized the trends as of July 2013 as follows:²¹

According to casualty figures released today by UNAMI, a total of 1,057 Iraqis were killed and another 2,326 were wounded in acts of terrorism and violence in July. The number of civilians killed was 928 (including 204 civilian police), while the number of civilians injured was 2,109 (including 338 civilian police). A further 129 members of the Iraqi Security Forces were killed and 217 were injured.

Baghdad was the worst-affected governorate in July with 957 civilian casualties (238 killed and 719 injured), followed by Salahuddin, Ninewa, Diyala, Kirkuk and Anbar (triple-digit figures). Babil, Wasit and Basra also reported casualties (double-digit figures).

The impact of violence on civilians remains disturbingly high, with at least 4,137 civilians killed and 9,865 injured since the beginning of 2013," the Acting Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. Gyorgy Busztin, warned. "We haven't seen such numbers in more than five years, when the blind rage of sectarian strife that inflicted such deep wounds upon this country was finally abating. I reiterate my urgent call on Iraq's political leaders to take immediate and decisive action to stop the senseless bloodshed, and to prevent these dark days from returning."

While the Secretary General of the UN was able to report some positive developments in Iraq, his report to the UN Security Council on July 11, 2013 focused on the growing sectarian and ethnic divisions in Iraqi politics and on the rise in violence in the first half of 2013:²²

Rising inter-sectarian tensions are posing a major threat to stability and security in Iraq. During the reporting period, two main issues dominated internal political developments in the country: the continuing political crisis exacerbated by the widespread demonstrations in the predominantly Sunni governorates; and the governorate council elections, which were held on 20 April in 12 governorates and on 20 June in Anbar and Ninewa governorates.

...The human rights situation in Iraq has been marked by an upsurge in violence and terrorist acts that have targeted mainly civilians and civilian infrastructure, resulting in high civilian casualties at levels not seen since 2008.

... 35. Minorities in Iraq also continued to be targeted in acts of violence, including murder and kidnapping for ransom. In a particularly vicious attack on 16 May, a group of 10 Yazidi shopkeepers in Baghdad were gathered, collectively shot and their liquor stores burned. On 28 April, the leader of the black Iraqi community, Jalal Thiyab, was assassinated in Basra. He had worked tirelessly to promote and protect the rights of his community, which remains one of the poorest in Iraq. The repeated attacks on Turkmens and Christians are of particular concern.

...the security environment in Iraq remained volatile. In April, 712 Iraqis were killed and 1,633 wounded, while 1,045 were killed and 2,397 wounded in May, the highest casualty figures since March 2008.

The risk of increased sectarian violence is high, exacerbated by the presence of myriad armed opposition groups. Some have been operating in Iraq for a long time, such as Al-Qaida in Iraq and the Islamic State of Iraq. There are, however, also newly created or reactivated groups, including militias in the Sunni-dominated governorates and groups such as Asaib Ahl al-Haq and Kata'ib Hizbullah on the Shia side. Sunni armed opposition groups have demonstrated their capability to adapt their tactics and techniques to sustain a constant stream of attacks at a high operational tempo, maintaining constant pressure on the Iraqi security forces, testing their capabilities and rendering difficult the conduct of counter-insurgency operations.

In this context, the United Nations offices in Iraq remain exposed to intermittent indirect fire attacks. On 26 April and 27 May, two attacks affected a Guard Unit accommodation block and support facilities of the United Nations compound in, Kirkuk.

...56. The scale of renewed violence in Iraq during the reporting period is alarming. I again urge political leaders from all sides to intensify their efforts to resolve the continuing political stalemate in accordance with the Constitution, through serious dialogue and with a spirit of compromise, so that no space is left to those who seek to exploit the situation through violence and terror.

...It is becoming increasingly clear that the events in the region cannot be separated. I continue to note with much concern the impact of the tragic conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic on neighboring countries, including Iraq. The sectarian aspects of the Syrian conflict are now affecting the region adversely. The Syrian conflict has affected Iraq not only in terms of the number of refugees that the country has welcomed, but also in terms of its security and political stability.

There are no easy ways to judge the seriousness of the trends through July 2013. The data now available indicate that Iraq was not undergoing a major civil war as much as a rise in Sunni-driven extremist violence against Shi'ites, much of it driven by Al Qa'ida in Mesopotamia –which has been renamed “The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” as Al Qa'ida in Mesopotamia – and by the spillover of sectarian conflict and Al Qa'ida operations in Syria. At the same time, virtually all sources agree that the violence and casualties have the potential to grow much worse and consistently affect the perceptions of all Iraqis and Iraqi factions. There clearly is a serious risk of a return to either Iraq's past history of violent state-driven repression, or to the more recent pattern of civil war in the mid-2000s.

Figure Fourteen: The US State Department Estimates that Iraq Ranks Second Among the Top Ten Centers of Terrorist Activity in 2012

Ten countries with the most terrorist attacks, 2012

Country	Total Attacks	Total Killed	Total Wounded	Average Number Killed per Attack	Average Number Wounded per Attack
Pakistan	1404	1848	3643	1.32	2.59
Iraq	1271	2436	6641	1.92	5.23
Afghanistan	1023	2632	3715	2.57	3.63
India	557	231	559	0.41	1.00
Nigeria	546	1386	1019	2.54	1.87
Thailand	222	174	897	0.78	4.04
Yemen	203	365	427	1.80	2.10
Somalia	185	323	397	1.75	2.15
Philippines	141	109	270	0.77	1.91
Syria ^[2]	133	657	1787	4.94	13.44

• Although terrorist attacks occurred in 85 different countries in 2012, they were heavily concentrated geographically. Over half of all attacks (55%), fatalities (62%), and injuries (65%) occurred in just three countries: Pakistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

• The highest number of fatalities occurred in Afghanistan (2,632); however the country with the most injuries due to terrorist attacks was Iraq (6,641).

• The average lethality of terrorist attacks in Nigeria (2.54 deaths per attack) is more than 50 percent higher than the global average of 1.64. The average lethality of terrorist attacks in Syria (4.94 deaths per attack) is more than 200 percent higher than the global average.

• The average number of people wounded per terrorist attack was especially high in Syria, where 1,787 people were reportedly wounded in 133 attacks, including four attacks that caused 670 injuries.

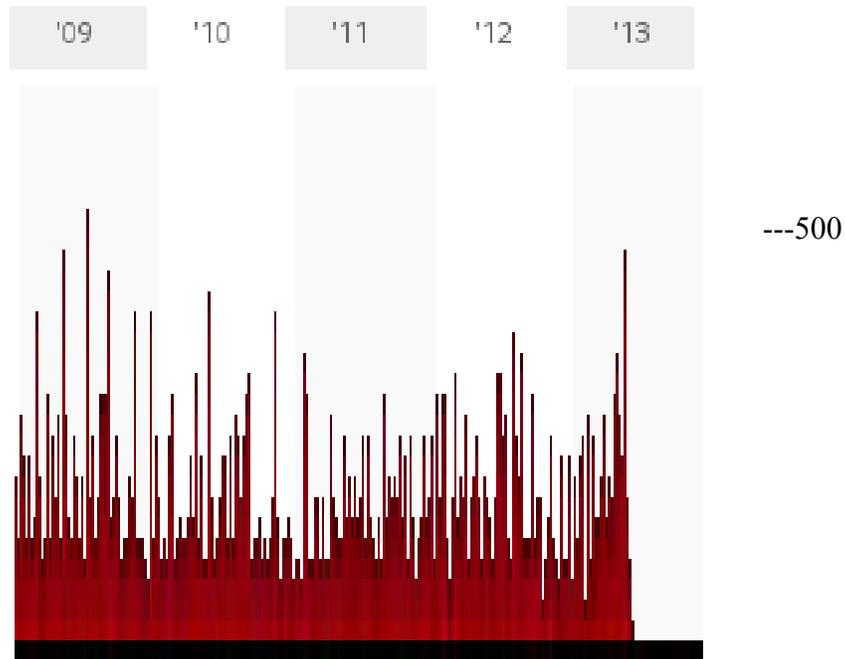
• In contrast, the rates of lethality for India (0.42 deaths per attack), the Philippines (0.77 deaths per attack), and Thailand (0.78 deaths per attack) were relatively low among the countries with the most attacks.

Ten perpetrator groups with the most attacks worldwide, 2012

Perpetrator Group Name	Total Attacks	Total Killed	Average Number Killed per Attack
Taliban	525	1842	3.51
Boko Haram	364	1132	3.11
Al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI)/Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)	249	892	3.58
Maoists (India)/ Communist Party of India-Maoist	204	131	0.64
Al-Shabaab	121	278	2.30
Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	108	282	2.61
Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)	103	510	4.95
Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)	80	83	1.04
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)	71	122	1.72
Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC)	58	0	0.00

• Information about perpetrators was reported in source materials for 38 percent of terrorist attacks in 2012. More than 160 organizations were named as perpetrators of terrorist attacks. Of the attacks for which perpetrator information was reported, 20 percent were attributed to the Taliban, operating primarily in Afghanistan.

Source US State Department, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism: Annex of Statistical Information, Country Reports on Terrorism 2012, [ile:///Users/anthony/Desktop/Country%20Reports%20on%20Terrorism%202012National%20Consortium%20for%20the%20Study%20of%20Terrorism%20and%20Responses%20to%20Terrorism_%20Annex%20of%20Statistical%20Information.html](file:///Users/anthony/Desktop/Country%20Reports%20on%20Terrorism%202012National%20Consortium%20for%20the%20Study%20of%20Terrorism%20and%20Responses%20to%20Terrorism_%20Annex%20of%20Statistical%20Information.html).

Figure Fifteen: Iraqi Body Count Estimate of Trends in Casualties: 2010-2013**Weekly Graph****Monthly Table**

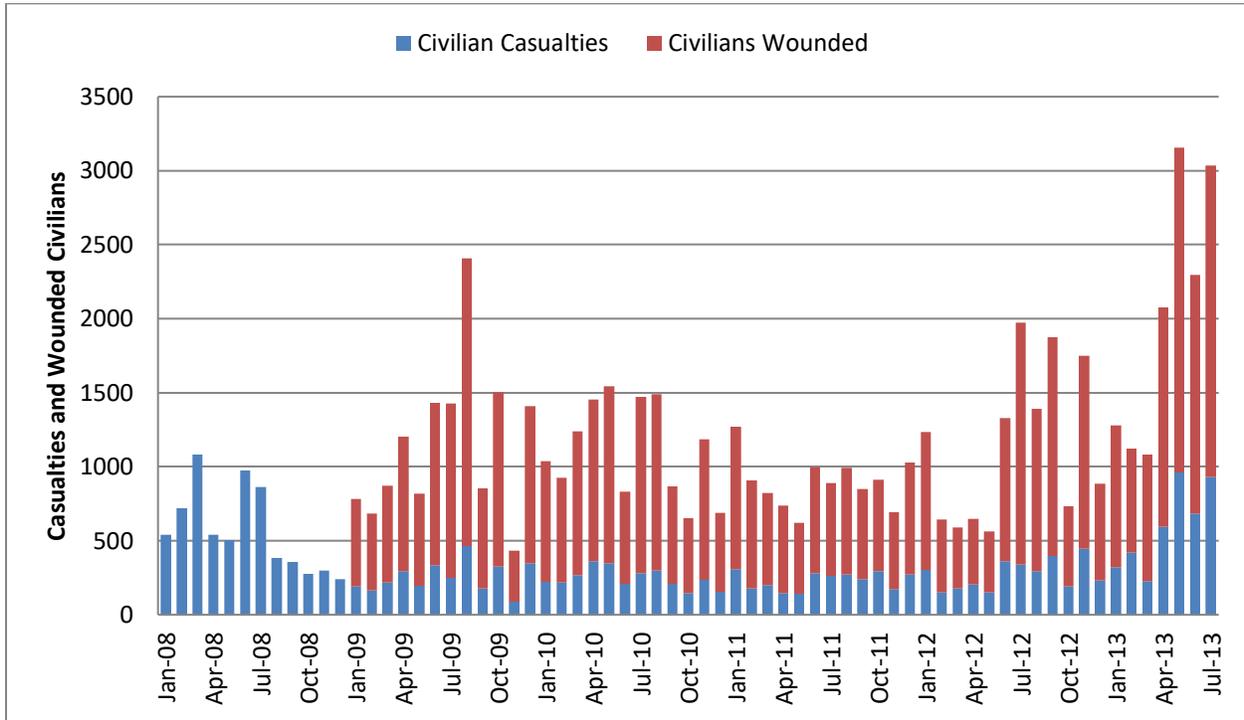
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Jan	366	263	389	524	357
Feb	402	304	252	356	358
Mar	426	336	311	377	394
Apr	565	385	289	392	544
May	387	387	381	304	527
Jun	498	385	386	529	
Jul	407	443	308	469	
Aug	615	516	401	422	
Sep	332	254	397	396	
Oct	435	312	366	290	
Nov	226	307	279	240	
Dec	475	217	388	275	
	5,134	4,109	4,147	4,574	2,180

Iraq Body Count estimates a total of 113,876 – 124,698 documented civilian deaths from violence through June 3, 2013, and states that further analysis of the WikiLeaks' Iraq War Logs may add 11,000 civilian deaths. Its data are based on 32,864 database entries from the beginning of the war to 3 Jun 2013. The most recent weeks are always in the process of compilation and rise further. The current range contains 11,234–11,663 deaths (9.9%–9.4%, a portion which may rise or fall over time) based on single-sourced reports. Graphs are based on the higher number in our totals. Gaps in recording and reporting suggest that even our highest totals to date may be missing many civilian deaths from violence.

Source: Iraq Body Count. Accessed August 12, 2013, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/>.

Figure Sixteen: UNAMI Estimate of Iraqi Killed and Injured November 2012-July 2013 – Part One

Broad Pattern from End of surge in 2008 to July 2013



Rising Trend from Early 2012 to August 2013

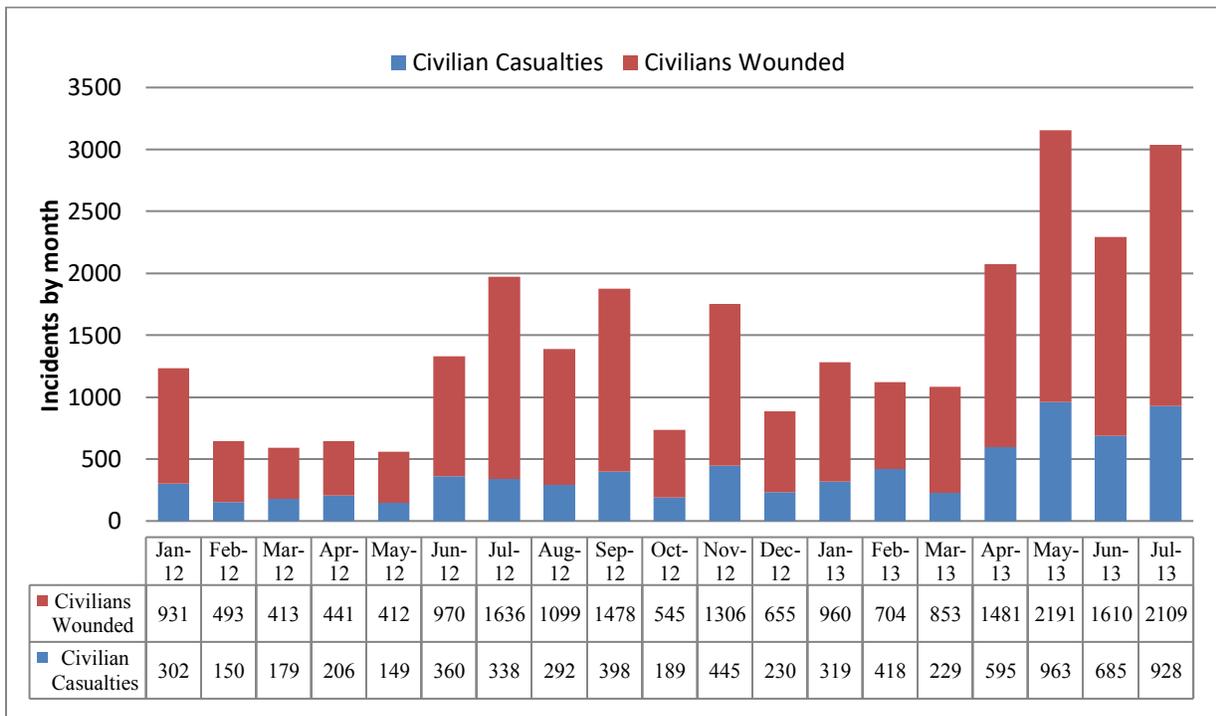
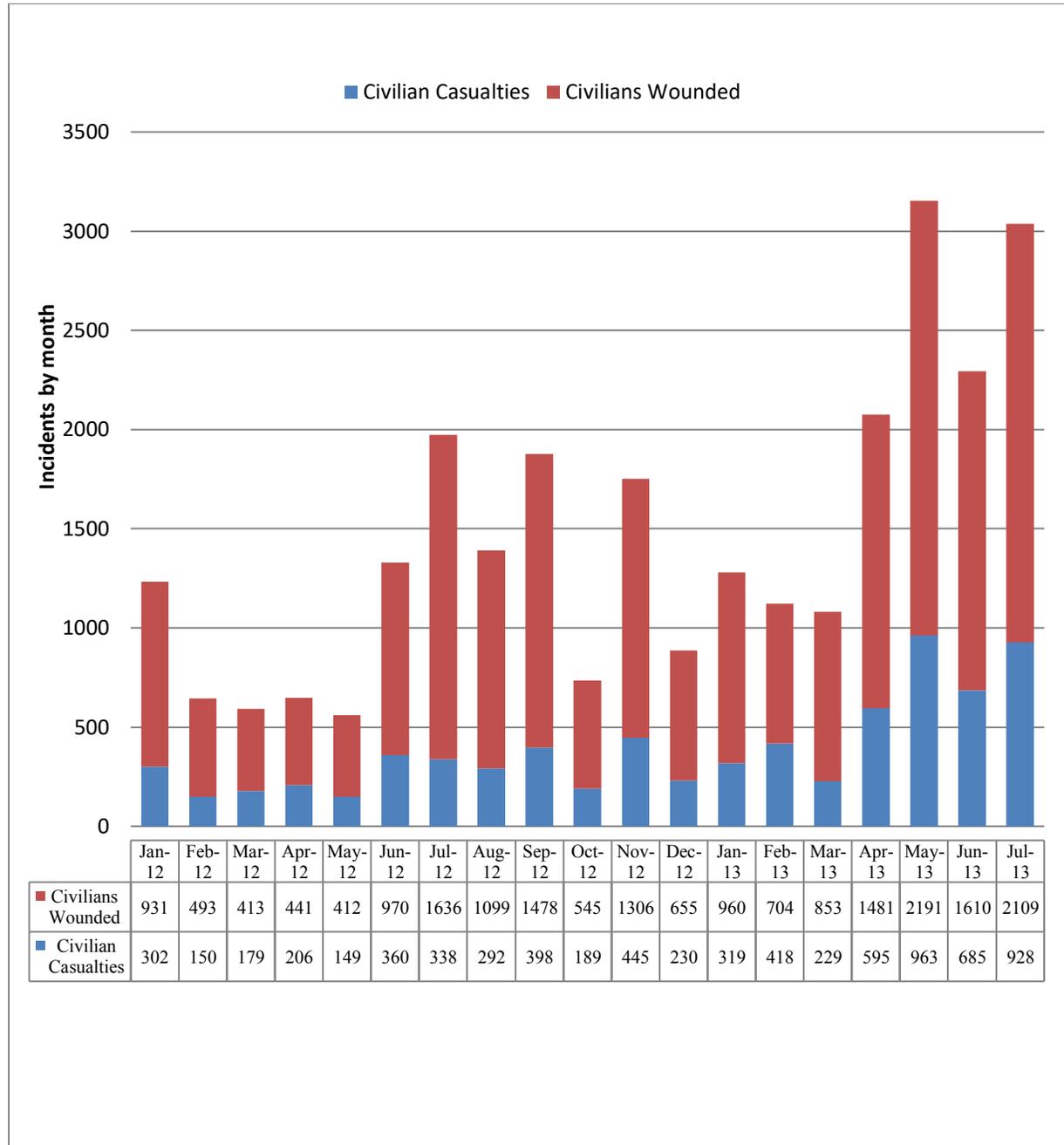


Figure Sixteen: UNAMI Estimate of Iraqi Killed and Injured November 2012-July 2013 – Part Two

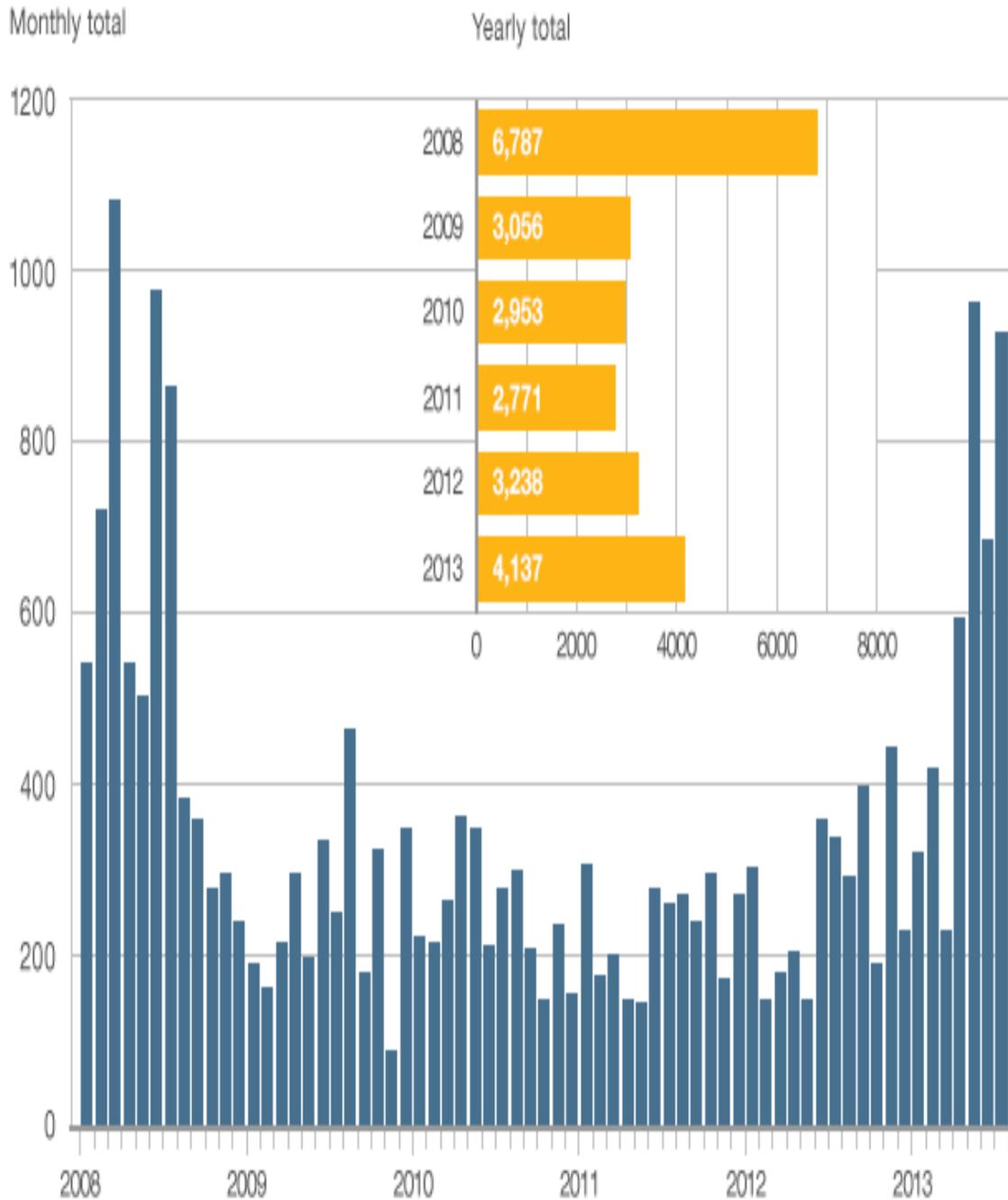
Highlighting the Rising Trend from Early 2012 to August 2013



Source: UNAMI Civilian Casualty Figures, accessed August 8, 2013, <http://unami.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=5397&language=en-US>, and data provided directly by UNAMI.

Figure Sixteen: UNAMI Estimate of Iraqi Killed and Injured November 2012-July 2013 – Part Three

Civilian deaths in Iraq 2008-2013



Source: UN Assistance Mission to Iraq

Source: UNAMI, Adapted from BBC, 23.98.13. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-23820795>.

UNAMI.

STATE ABUSES OF POWER VERSUS THE CONTINUING ROLE OF VIOLENT EXTREMIST GROUPS

It is often difficult to assign responsibility for given aspects of the rise in violence during 2012-2013. Far fewer reliable data are now available on violent extremist groups in Iraq than was the case during the time when US forces were present and provided extensive unclassified analysis. There are no reliable sources that can be used to clearly distinguish between the violence triggered by given extremist groups or to assess the problems caused by Iraqi security forces.

The sources that are available rarely provide a clear picture of the cause of casualties by group, sect, or ethnicity; or identify the victims by group, sect, or ethnicity. There is no way to distinguish what elements of the Iraqi security forces are involved, or whether the non-state actor is a Sunni extremist group or a Shi'ite militia.

What is clear is that both Iraq's current level of violence, and the risk they may sharply increase if major new fighting takes place between Arab Sunni and Arab Shiite, or if Arab and Kurdish tensions explode into active violence, are not driven by extremists alone but by a combination of Iraqi political power struggles, an increasing drift toward authoritarianism and the equivalent of state terrorism, and extremist groups at the margin of Iraqi politics. Iraq's political leaders are at least as much to blame.

This is clear from both unclassified US State Department reports and reporting by UNAMI, as well as studies of the detailed patterns in such violence by the Institute for the Study of War, the Crisis Group, WINEP, and the Long War Journal. They all show the complexity of the situation on the ground, and that responsibility has a broad range of causes, and such sources continue to warn that a failure to focus on the Iraqi central government and Kurdish tensions in terms of incident counts presents another problem.

At the same time, the tendency of various media and analysts to attribute most violence to Sunnis – and Al Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Levant in particular – ignores significant Shi'ite inspired violence. This is clear from both day-to-day media reporting from Iraq, and studies like the work of Jessica Lewis, Ahmed Ali, and Kimberly Kagan of the Institute for the Study of War, which addressed the threat from Sunni extremist groups, but also warned in May 2013 that,²³

... reports from Baghdad and Diyala also indicate that Shi'a militant groups, including the Iranian-backed Sadrist splinter group Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq, have begun to mobilize in Iraq to establish checkpoints in Baghdad and to conduct extra-judicial killings (EJKs) against Sunnis. Extra-judicial killings reportedly carried out by militias also occurred in the city of Hilla in central Iraq. AAH, along with Lebanese Hezbollah and Kata'ib Hezbollah, publically acknowledged its military involvement in Syria in April 2013.... Lebanese Hezbollah has mobilized in Syria throughout May. This regional military activation, as well as the elevated threat to the Iraqi Shi'a population posed by AQI, lends greater credibility to the reports that Iraqi Shi'a militant groups have mobilized to conduct intimidation and violence against Sunni in the name of defending Shi'a population.

Iraqi Politics and the Iraqi Government as a Cause of Violence

Terrorism, extremism and insurgency do not emerge in vacuum. They are empowered by the failures of politics, leaders, governments, and their opposition. They are shaped by failures in security and economics, and the depth of the inequities and division within the state. In Iraq's case, Iraq's political leaders not only face all the challenges imposed by Iraq's past, but have failed the Iraqi people by creating a polarized struggle for power. It is a structure with deep divisions and by

a current power structure centered around Shi'ite factions, a Prime Minister who has concentrated power in the face of constant challenges, and the way the government and security forces operate.

The Department of State's Annual Human Rights Report -- released in the spring of 2013 -- highlights the impact of terrorist attacks carried out by groups such as Al-Qaida in Iraq, but it also shows the US government recognizes the extent to which Iraqi violence is driven by the problems created by Iraqi politics and their impact on the conduct of the government and security services. The report shows that divisions between key Iraq political factions and the ethnic and sectarian tensions within the leadership of the Iraqi central government and KRG have also been a key source of Iraqi violence.²⁴

Iraq is a constitutional parliamentary republic. Prime Minister Nouri Kamal al-Maliki secured a second term following free and fair elections in March 2010. While all major political parties participated in the government, significant unresolved problems continued to hamper its operation. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) reported to civilian authorities, but continuing violence, corruption, and organizational dysfunction undermined effective protection of human rights.

Chronic human rights problems in the country persisted. The three most important were politically motivated sectarian and ethnic violence, including by al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) terrorists, which deepened societal divisions and weakened the government; torture and abuses by government actors and illegal armed groups; and a lack of governmental transparency, exacerbated by widespread corruption at all levels of government and society.

During the year the following other significant human rights problems were also reported: arbitrary or unlawful deprivation of life; disappearances; torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; harsh and life-threatening conditions in detention and prison facilities; arbitrary arrest and lengthy pretrial detention, sometimes incommunicado; continued impunity for security forces; denial of fair public trials; insufficient judicial institutional capacity; ineffective implementation of civil judicial procedures and remedies; delays in resolving property restitution claims; arbitrary interference with privacy and home; limits on freedoms of speech, press, and assembly; violence against and harassment of journalists; limits on religious freedom due to extremist threats and violence; restrictions on freedom of movement; large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees; constraints on international organizations and nongovernmental organizations' (NGO) investigations of alleged violations of human rights; discrimination against and societal abuses of women and ethnic, religious, and racial minorities; trafficking in persons; societal discrimination and violence against individuals based on perceived sexual orientation and gender identity; and limited exercise of labor rights.

A culture of impunity largely protected members of the security services, as well as those elsewhere in the government, from investigation and successful prosecution for human rights violations.

...There were multiple reports that government officials conducted extrajudicial killings, but confirmation was rare. Members of the security forces tortured detainees to death, according to reports from multiple government officials; one government official told the press that families sometimes received the bodies of their relatives who died in government custody only days after their arrest. Official investigations were infrequent, and the outcomes of investigations were often unpublished, unknown, or incomplete, and rarely credible in high-profile cases.

Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi's bodyguard, Amir Sarbut Zaidan al-Batawi, died in custody three months after being arrested in December 2011 on terrorism charges. After receiving his body on March 20, Batawi's family reported that the body displayed signs of torture, including burn marks and various wounds. Hashemi and many of his supporters claimed that Batawi and others were tortured to force confessions implicating Hashemi and to coerce statements linking other political figures to the Hashemi case (see section 1.e.). Authorities denied allegations of torture and stated that Batawi died of kidney failure and other complications after refusing treatment while in detention.

...The constitution expressly prohibits torture in all its forms under all circumstances, as well as cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Nonetheless, government officials as well as local and international human rights organizations documented instances of torture and other abuses by government agents and similar

abuses by illegal armed groups. Police throughout the country continued to use abusive and coerced confessions as methods of investigation.

...Five separate entities--the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Defense, Labor, and Social Affairs, plus the Prime Minister's Counterterrorism Service--operated prisons, detention centers, and temporary holding facilities. Conditions at some facilities were harsh and life threatening, and there were unexplained deaths, riots, hunger strikes, and escapes....There were also documented cases of abuse and torture in some facilities. Government officials and local and international human rights organizations alleged that both the government and the KRG operated secret prisons and detention facilities.

...In Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Dahuk, the three Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) provinces referred to as the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR), there were press reports and credible accounts that KRG security forces committed arbitrary or unlawful killings. On February 16, an Arab resident of Kirkuk was kidnapped, and his body was found the following day. Arab residents of Kirkuk and local media claimed that elements of the Kurdish internal security organization, the Asayish, were responsible for the kidnapping and killing. Kurdish authorities denied the accusations.

...The ISF consists of internal security forces administratively organized within the MOI and external security forces under the control of the MOD. The MOI's responsibilities include domestic law enforcement and maintenance of order. Conventional military forces in the MOD are responsible for external defense but cooperate regularly in internal security missions with the MOI.

Human rights violations committed by ISF personnel were rarely investigated, and perpetrators were seldom punished. For example, on October 21, the ISF injured four protesters demonstrating against poor government services and delayed reconstruction projects in al-Salam in Maysan Province. The protesters, who had closed a key highway between Dhi Qar and Maysan, became violent when security forces attempted to disperse the crowd, inciting Iraqi Army (IA) soldiers to fire above the crowd, wounding four protesters in the process. On October 22, the Maysan Provincial Council questioned the governor and his deputies regarding the protest and accompanying IA response. The provincial council formed an investigative committee to examine the IA shootings, but there were no results at year's end.

There were continued accounts of torture and abuse throughout the country in many MOI police stations and MOD facilities, reportedly primarily during interrogation. The MOI did not release the number of officers punished during the year, and there were no known court convictions for abuse. The government did not take widespread action to reform security forces to improve human rights protection.

Problems persisted with the police regarding sectarian divisions, corruption, ties to tribes, and unwillingness to serve outside the areas from which they were recruited. The army and federal police recruited nationwide and deployed soldiers and police to various areas, reducing the likelihood of corruption related to personal ties to tribes or militants.

In some instances security forces failed to prevent or respond to societal violence. For example, security forces did not take sufficient measures to respond to threats of violence, some of which were carried out, against perceived lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals despite the public posting of targeted individuals' names (see section 6).

The two main Kurdish political parties, the KDP and PUK, maintained their own security apparatuses organized along military lines and dating from the struggle against the regime of Saddam Hussein and earlier. There were approximately 22 Peshmerga (Kurdish militia) brigades, all originally under the control of the two main Kurdish political parties. Under the constitution the KRG has the right to maintain regional guard brigades, supported financially by the central government but under KRG control. Accordingly, the KRG established a Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs. Four additional regional guard brigades were formed during the year, bringing the number of regional guard brigades under the authority of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs to 12, although most units maintained allegiance to either the KDP or the PUK. The central government did not financially support to Peshmerga units not a part of the regional guard brigades.

KRG security forces and intelligence services detained suspects in KRG-controlled areas. The poorly defined administrative boundaries between the IKR and the rest of the country resulted in continuing confusion about the jurisdiction of the security forces and the courts. The KDP maintained its own internal security unit, the Asayish, and its own intelligence service, the Parastin. The PUK maintained its own internal security unit,

also known as the Asayish, and its own intelligence service, the Zanyari. The PUK and the KDP took some steps during the year toward unifying their internal and external security organizations, but these organizations remained separate in practice and effectively controlled by political leaders through political party channels.

Reporting by the Secretary General to the UN Security Council raises many of the same issues. The Secretary General describes a long series of political divisions that help cause violence in his July 2013 report,²⁵

Rising inter-sectarian tensions are posing a major threat to stability and security in Iraq. During the reporting period, two main issues dominated internal political developments in the country: the continuing political crisis exacerbated by the widespread demonstrations in the predominantly Sunni governorates; and the governorate council elections, which were held on 20 April in 12 governorates and on 20 June in Anbar and Ninewa governorates.

...The demonstrations have entered their seventh month without an immediate solution in sight. The demonstrators and their demands have been highly politicized by some Sunni political leaders and parties. Central to many of these demands are calls for the amendment of the Anti-Terrorism Law (No. 13 of 2005), the release of detainees held without charge or trial, the release of female detainees or their transfer to detention facilities in their home governorates, the amendment of the Accountability and Justice Law (No. 10 of 2008) and the enactment of a general amnesty law.

...During the reporting period, UNAMI sought to create space for political dialogue in order to ease sectarian tensions and expedite the legislative processes relating to the demonstrators' demands. In this regard, my Special Representative held regular meetings with key State officials, including the Prime Minister, the Vice-President, the Deputy Prime Ministers and the Speaker, to discuss the political crisis, including the demonstrations, the postponement of elections in Anbar and Ninewa governorates and the dramatic increase in sectarian tensions and violence. He expressed concern that the country would be heading down a precarious path should decisive and effective measures not be taken immediately.

He has encouraged all Iraqi political, religious and tribal leaders to take bold initiatives and engage constructively in a broad-based national dialogue, in addition to stressing the importance of respecting human rights and the rule of law. In this regard, UNAMI continued to liaise with the focal point in the Office of Deputy Prime Minister al-Shahristani to assist in resolving human rights cases directly submitted to the Mission. UNAMI also interacted with a committee established by the Ministry of the Interior to obtain information on the detainees released.

Other UN reporting shows the impact of such problems in the Iraqi politics and government has been reinforced by the government's corruption and lack of integrity in dealing with its people. These problems are documented at length in a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) report entitled *Corruption and Integrity Challenges in the Public sector of Iraq: An Evidence Based Study* that was issued in September 2012.²⁶ The summary to the study notes that bribery alone was so common that the UNDOC states 11.6% of the population had bribed civil servants in 2011, and the rate of bribery was over 29% in urban areas like Baghdad.²⁷

A July 2013 report by the Crisis Group is even more critical of the role of Iraq's politics in moving Iraq' back towards violence, and provides an important additional perspective as to the role which Iraq's politics play in moving it back towards civil conflict:²⁸

The origins of the crisis run deep. Throughout his seven-year tenure, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has implemented a divide-and-conquer strategy that has neutered any credible Sunni Arab leadership. The authorities also have taken steps that reinforce perceptions of a sectarian agenda. Prominent officials – predominantly Sunni – have been cast aside pursuant to the Justice and Accountability Law on the basis of alleged senior-level affiliation to the former Baath party. Federal security forces have disproportionately deployed in Baghdad's Sunni neighbourhoods as well as Sunni-populated governorates (Anbar, Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Kirkuk and Diyala). Al-Iraqiya, the political movement to which Sunni Arabs most readily related,

slowly came apart due to internal rivalries even as Maliki resorted to both legal and extrajudicial means to consolidate power.

This past year has proved particularly damaging. As events in Syria nurtured their hopes for a political comeback, Sunni Arabs launched an unprecedented, peaceful protest movement in late 2012 in response to the arrest of bodyguards of Rafea al-Issawi, a prominent Iraqiya member. It too failed to provide answers to accumulated grievances. Instead, the demonstrations and the repression to which they gave rise further exacerbated the sense of exclusion and persecution among Sunnis.

... Belittled, demonised and increasingly subject to a central government crackdown, the popular movement is slowly mutating into an armed struggle. In this respect, the absence of a unified Sunni leadership – to which Baghdad's policies contributed and which Maliki might have perceived as an asset – has turned out to be a serious liability. In a showdown that is acquiring increasing sectarian undertones, the movement's proponents look westward to Syria as the arena in which the fight against the Iraqi government and its Shiite allies will play out and eastward toward Iran as the source of all their ills.

Under intensifying pressure from government forces and with dwindling faith in a political solution, many Sunni Arabs have concluded their only realistic option is a violent conflict increasingly framed in confessional terms. In turn, the government conveniently dismisses all opposition as a sectarian insurgency that warrants ever more stringent security measures. In the absence of a dramatic shift in approach, Iraq's fragile polity risks breaking down, a victim of the combustible mix of its longstanding flaws and growing regional tensions.

The Threat of Extremist Non-State Actors

That said, it is extremist actors outside the mainstream of Iraqi politics and society that play the key role in threatening Iraq's future and increasing the risk of a return to civil war. The US State Department Human Rights report describes Iraq's violent extremist groups as follows:²⁹

Illegally armed sectarian and ethnic groups, including terrorist groups such as the AQI, committed deadly, politically motivated acts of violence, utilizing suicide bombings, attacks with improvised explosive devices, drive-by shootings, killings, kidnappings, and other forms of violence. Militants and terrorists targeted fellow citizens--Shia, Sunni, as well as members of other religious groups or ethnicities--security forces, places of worship, religious pilgrims, schools, public spaces, economic infrastructure, and government officials. Certain militant organizations, such as those supported by Iran, also committed terrorist attacks, primarily against foreign embassies, foreign personnel, and foreign military forces.

Violence by illegal armed groups against the general population, security forces, government officials, and civilian infrastructure remained a significant problem during the year, and bombings, executions, and killings were regular occurrences throughout the country. On July 21, the AQI announced a new offensive to recover previous strongholds. Two days later, a wave of 28 coordinated attacks across 18 cities killed 113 persons and injured more than 250. The deadliest attack occurred in Taji in Baghdad Province, where a series of roadside bombs, a car bomb, and a suicide bombing targeting emergency personnel killed 42 persons.

Overall casualty estimates of violence during the year varied. For example, Agence France-Presse (AFP) reported that according to the Iraqi government 1,358 civilians, 440 police officers, and 376 soldiers were killed during the year, compared with 1,578 civilians, 609 police officers, and 458 soldiers in 2011. Direct monitoring by the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) indicated that at least 3,238 civilians were killed during the year. In 2011 UNAMI reported 2,771 civilian deaths.

... There were also regular incidents of the AQI's targeting Sunni tribal leaders and Sunnis cooperating with the government, including against the Sons of Iraq, also known as the Sahwa (Awakening) movement. On November 28 in Tarmiyah, in Baghdad Province, gunmen broke into the house of a Sahwa member and killed him and six members of his family, including three young children, while they were sleeping. According to AFP, at least 25 members of the Sahwa movement were killed throughout the country between July and the end of December, and at least another 13 were injured

SIGIR reports

Other US sources have focused more exclusively on the abuses of violent factions and extremist groups, and their role in shaping violence and causing casualties. The Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR) has ceased to function, but its final reports provide a useful summary of Iraq's extremist groups and how they divide between Sunni and Shi'ite. The following description of rival ethnic and sectarian factions dates back to late 2011, but these groups still account for most of Iraq's non-state actor-driven violence.³⁰

- **Al Qa'ida in Iraq:** Since 2010, terrorist attacks have primarily targeted Iraqi security forces and government officials, but they have also been aimed at stirring ethnic tensions. AQI has been operating primarily in regions with majority Sunni Arab populations, particularly focusing its efforts in and around Baghdad and Ninewa, but appears unable to command territory or population centers. The degradation of AQI's capacities is expected to continue under the pressure of an ISF now more capable of targeting, capturing, and detaining terrorists and disrupting their networks. However, according to DoS, AQI has adapted to the changing security conditions and remains capable of coordinated mass-casualty attacks and assassinations. AQI will likely attempt to exploit widening political rifts that occur along sectarian lines.
- Other Sunni terrorist groups remain active as well. **Ansar al-Islam**, with both Kurd and Arab membership, operates in northern Iraq. The group has claimed responsibility for the second-largest number of Sunni terrorist attacks in Iraq (behind only AQI). Another group operating in northern and central Iraq, the **Jayish Rijal al Tariq al-Naqshabandi**, emphasizes what it claims to be the religious justifications for its attacks. Shi'a extremist groups – backed by Iranian funding, training, and weapons – also present a threat to Iraqi and US military forces. DoS reported that attacks by these groups have decreased this year, but their Iranian-supported networks continued to operate throughout Iraq's southern provinces.
- Shi'a militias in Iraq **Jayish al-Mahdi (JAM)** and its successor, the **Promised Day Brigade**, are the militant arm of the Sadrism movement led by cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. Since the militia's inception in 2003, JAM has engaged in countless attacks on US forces, Iraqi forces, and Sunni civilians. The group was responsible for some of the most gruesome sectarian violence in Iraq. Early in 2007, at the beginning of the US military surge, al-Sadr ordered his followers to stand down, and shortly thereafter, he left for Iran. Following the military campaign in Basra, Sadr City, and al Amarah in the spring of 2008, al-Sadr disbanded his militia. Several months later, he announced the transition of his movement into a non-violent organization called the Munahidoon, but he maintained a small group of Iranian-supported militants called the Promised Day Brigade.
- **Assaib Ahl al Haq (AAH, or League of the Righteous):** Having emerged in 2006, AAH is led by Qais Khazali, who broke with al-Sadr and was officially named the leader of the Iranian backed AAH. Khazali's fighters traveled to Iran for special training by the Revolutionary Guards and members of the Lebanese Hezbollah. They received four to six weeks of training in the camps in the use of mortars, rockets, sniper tactics, intelligence gathering, kidnapping operations, and explosively formed penetrators. AAH conducted attacks on Coalition forces from as early as the summer of 2006 and continues intermittently, also engaging in kidnappings and sectarian attacks. In early 2012, Maliki allowed AAH into the political arena, stating they had renounced violence and were therefore welcome. AAH also serves as a potential counter weight to a loss in confidence of Maliki across the political spectrum.
- **Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH, or the Hezbollah Brigades)** Active in Iraq since 2007, KH operates mainly in Shi'a areas of Baghdad, such as Sadr City, and throughout southern Iraq. Like AAH and the Promise Day Brigade, it is supported by Iran. KH is independent from Muqtada al-Sadr and has operated separately since its inception, albeit with some cooperation and operational overlap. Since 2007, KH members have conducted multiple attacks against US forces using rocket-propelled grenades and improvised rocket-assisted mortars. Since the beginning of 2011, the majority of Iranian-backed attacks have occurred in southern Iraq, with sporadic incidents taking place in northern provinces and in Baghdad. Toward the end of the quarter, Iran-sponsored attacks in northern provinces appeared to be subsiding, although USF-I officials reported that these networks still possess the capacity to conduct operations
- **The Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)** is an umbrella organization of a number Iraqi insurgency groups established on October 15 2006. The group is composed of and supported by a variety of insurgency groups, including its predecessor, the Mujahideen Shura Council, Al-Qaeda, Jeish al-Fatiheen, Jund al-Sahaba, Katbiyan Ansar

Al-Tawhid wal Sunnah, Jeish al-Taiifa al-Mansoura, and other Sunni groups. It aims to establish a caliphate in the Sunni dominated regions of Iraq. It claims a presence in the governorates of Baghdad, Al Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Salah ad Din, Ninawa, and parts of Babil and Wasit, etc. It initially claimed Baqubah as its capita.³¹

US State Department Annual Report on Terrorism, and the Annual calendar of the US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC).

The US State Department Annual Report on Terrorism, and the annual calendar of the US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) both provide more current reporting on key groups like Al-Qa'ida. The US State Department Country Report on Terrorism for 2012 summarizes the overall situation in Iraq as follows:³²

Iraqi security forces made progress combating al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) and other Sunni insurgent organizations in 2012. While there has been clear and measurable success against AQI over the years, the group still remains a dangerous threat to the Iraqi people. In 2012, there were no significant attacks on U.S. interests or U.S. fatalities. The Iraqi government succeeded in securing multiple large public religious gatherings and government events – most notably the Arab League Summit in late March and P5+1 talks in May in Baghdad – but terrorist bombings and other attacks continued to occur.

The Government of Iraq concentrated its counterterrorism efforts against AQI and other Sunni-affiliated terrorist organizations. AQI remained capable of large-scale coordinated attacks and conducted numerous high-profile suicide and car bombings on government and civilian targets, aiming to increase tensions among Iraqi sectarian groups and ethnic minorities, and undercut public perceptions of the government's capacity to provide security. Jaysh Rijal al-Tariqah al-Naqshabandiyah (JRTN), a Sunni nationalist insurgent group with links to the former Baath Party, also continued attacks during the year. JRTN largely targeted Iraqi and U.S. interests in northern Iraq. Shia militant groups Kata'ib Hizballah, Asa'ib Ahl Haqq, and the Sadrist Promised Day Brigades adhered to the cease-fire they declared in the latter half of 2011 and early 2012. Some former Shia militant leaders began engaging in the political process and competing for political influence.

Terrorist tactics and weapons remained largely unchanged from 2011, as AQI and other terrorists relied predominantly on suicide bombings and car and roadside bombs and to a lesser extent on gunmen using assault rifles or silenced weapons to assassinate government and security officials.

Iraq-U.S. counterterrorism cooperation remained strong, particularly in training, advisory, and intelligence-sharing programs.

The Iraqi Security Forces proved capable of working together to find, arrest, and charge terrorism suspects. In November, the Iraqi Police, Federal Police, and Iraqi Army – at times working together – arrested over 350 people on terrorism charges and seized several weapon and rocket caches, as part of a major counterterrorism operation. Iraq's Counterterrorism Services (CTS) also conducted approximately 1,600 terrorism related arrests in 2012.

2012 Terrorist Incidents: Terrorist groups conducted numerous attacks throughout the country. The deadliest attacks involved suicide bombings that targeted security forces, government buildings, and religious gatherings...

...Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Government of Iraq took several steps to improve border security. Iraq, with U.S. support, continued to install, repair, and improve inspection equipment at ports of entry. The government also expanded the number of ports of entry with biometric data capture, but continued to face challenges linking border security systems together. Iraq is also incorporating non-intrusive inspection equipment at its land border crossings to scan for contraband, is improving roads along the borders, and received three littoral patrol ships in March.

Iraq's major counterterrorism organizations made progress in investigating cases and arresting terrorists, but continued to suffer from a lack of interagency coordination and inadequate cooperation between investigators, prosecutors, and the judiciary. While the Federal Intelligence and Investigations Agency (FIIA) arrested a significant number of terrorist suspects in 2012, Iraqi federal law enforcement and intelligence entities continued to struggle with intelligence analysis and targeting efforts relating to terrorist organizations

and often resorted to rounding up locals to elicit intelligence information. The Major Crimes Task Force (MCTF), a collaborative task force involving U.S. federal law enforcement officers and FIIA investigators, targeted counterterrorism, organized crime, and government corruption cases from 2005 through late 2011. In 2012, the MCTF functioned as an Iraqi-only investigative element focusing on terrorist groups. However, like many other law enforcement entities, the MCTF operated independent of other Iraqi agencies working terrorism matters to include the Counterterrorism Organized Crime General Directorate.

Iraq continued to face significant challenges investigating and moving criminal cases from arrest to trial due to resource limitations, inadequate training, poor interagency coordination, and at times, limited political will. Prosecution of sectarian crimes carries a significant political risk. Separately, many among Iraq's Sunni community believed that the government used terrorism laws to unfairly target the Sunni population. Iraqi law enforcement officials, with U.S. training support, continued to improve investigative skills such as forensic evidence collection.

In 2011, the Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCCI) convicted a former Iraqi Army sergeant and suspected AQI member of the murder of two U.S. soldiers in 2007 and sentenced him to life in prison. In the spring of 2012, however, the Federal Court of Cassation (FCC) overturned this decision on appeal and dismissed the charges. Even though substantial evidence was presented, the FCC determined that critical forensic evidence was of limited reliability and probative value. The U.S. government requested that the FCC correct and reverse this decision, but this request was formally denied on October 8. Subsequent to the spring 2012 FCC decision dismissing the charges in the above case, a companion case against the same defendant before the CCCI for other soldiers wounded in the attack resulted in the dismissal of similar terrorism charges on similar evidentiary grounds. On October 21, the CCCI convicted a suspected Shia Jaysh al-Mahdi member on terrorism charges stemming from an attack that killed one U.S. soldier and wounded three others, and sentenced him to 15 years in prison. It is anticipated that this case will be subject to review on appeal by the FCC.

On November 16, citing a lack of a legal basis to continue holding him, Iraq also released Lebanese Hizballah member Ali Musa Daquq, who was accused of involvement in a 2007 attack that killed five U.S. soldiers. The CCCI had dismissed the charges against Daquq in May citing insufficient reliable evidence, a decision that was upheld on appeal in June by the FCC.

Judicial security continued to be a challenge. Judges investigating and adjudicating terrorism cases continued to face threats to their personal safety and that of their families:

- In April, terrorists targeted the Chief Judge of Karkh Appellate Court (Najim Abdallah Ahamd al-Mashhadani) with a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device at an intersection about 50 meters from the judge's vehicle.
- In June, terrorists again targeted Judge Najim, this time by a suicide bomber on a bicycle. The explosion killed one bystander.
- In October, terrorists assassinated Dr. Talib Al Shraa' of the Iraqi Ministry of Justice (MOJ). Dr. Talib was MOJ's liaison to the National Center for State Courts, a U.S.-partner assisting the MOJ in its strategic planning and budgeting.

At year's end, the Security and Defense Committee of the Council of Representatives was still working on draft legislation to codify the mission and authorities of the CTS. This effort has remained stalled since 2009.

Iraq remained an important partner nation in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program, which focused on helping the Government of Iraq build capacity in law enforcement investigations, critical incident management, and border security.

Countering Terrorist Finance: In 2012, the Iraqi government underwent its first-ever mutual evaluation to review compliance with international anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) standards by the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force-style regional body. This important step affirmed Iraq's commitment to interrupt terrorist finance domestically. Although Iraq's Mutual Evaluation Report found the country to be non-compliant in most areas, the engagement of the Iraqi government, including at the MENAFATF plenary in November, served as an indicator of Iraq's commitment to address the AML/CFT challenges it faces. The

United States provided subject matter expertise to assist Iraq in preparing for the mutual evaluation, post-evaluation follow-up, and in drafting a new AML/CFT statute.

The Prime Minister has approved the formation of a committee, or task force, to coordinate cases involving asset recovery, including the recovery of assets illegally taken outside of Iraq by members of the former regime, and tracing funds used to support terrorism. The committee will include representatives from the Ministry of Interior Economic Crimes Section, the Federal Investigation Information, and the Commission of Integrity. The Prime Minister's legal advisor announced the formation of the task force the week of October 21.

The Acting Governor of the Central Bank has agreed to move the Iraqi Financial Intelligence Unit (formerly the Money Laundering Reporting Office, now referred to as the Anti-Money Laundering Unit, or AMLU) into a secure space with dependable utilities, to facilitate the work of the unit.

...**Regional and International Cooperation:** Iraq is increasingly engaging with its neighbors through the Arab League. Iraq hosted the Arab League Summit in March of this year. Iraq, Turkey, and the United States continued a trilateral security dialogue as part of ongoing efforts to counter the Kurdistan Workers' Party.

The U.S.-supported NATO Transition Cell in Iraq assisted over 70 Iraqi officials in receiving NATO training abroad on various topics, including counterterrorism. CTS also partnered with Jordan, sending nearly 40 of its soldiers to the Jordanian Counterterrorism Academy for training. In April, CTS sent observers to a U.S.-Jordanian joint counterterrorism exercise.

Countering Radicalization and Violent Extremism: Iraqi leaders routinely denounced terrorism and countered terrorist propaganda in public statements. The Iraqi government took steps to bring certain violent extremist groups into the political process, and made limited attempts to foster broader reconciliation between sectarian groups.

The State Department and US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) also provide data on ket extremist threats. The do cover all of the various extremist and terrorist groups in and around Iraq, but do provide the more up-to-date descriptions of key extremist groups and their activities in 2013 shown in **Figure Seventeen**.³³

Figure Seventeen: US Official State Department and NCTC reports on Terrorist Threats and State Sponsors of Terrorism in or Near Iraq:

AL-QA'IDA IN IRAQ

State Department

aka al-Qa'ida Group of Jihad in Iraq; al-Qa'ida Group of Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers; al-Qa'ida in Mesopotamia; al-Qa'ida in the Land of the Two Rivers; al-Qa'ida of Jihad in Iraq; al-Qa'ida of Jihad Organization in the Land of The Two Rivers; al-Qa'ida of the Jihad in the Land of the Two Rivers; al-Tawhid; Jam'at al-Tawhid Wa'al-Jihad; Tanzeem Qa'idat al Jihad/Bilad al Raafidaini; Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn; The Monotheism and Jihad Group; The Organization Base of Jihad/Country of the Two Rivers; The Organization Base of Jihad/Mesopotamia; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base in Iraq; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base in the Land of the Two Rivers; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in Iraq; The Organization of al-Jihad's Base of Operations in the Land of the Two Rivers; The Organization of Jihad's Base in the Country of the Two Rivers; al-Zarqawi Network; Islamic State of Iraq; al-Nusrah Front; Jabhat al-Nusrah; Jabhet al-Nusrah; The Victory Front; al-Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant

Description: Al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on December 17, 2004. In the 1990s, Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian-born militant, organized a terrorist group called al-Tawhid wal-Jihad to oppose the presence of U.S. and Western military forces in the Islamic world and the West's support for and the existence of Israel. In late 2004, he joined al-Qa'ida (AQ) and pledged allegiance to Usama bin Laden. After this, al-Tawhid wal-Jihad became known as AQI. Zarqawi traveled to Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom and led his group

against U.S. and Coalition Forces until his death in June 2006. In October 2006, AQI publicly re-named itself the Islamic State of Iraq and has since used that name in its public statements. In 2012, AQI was led by Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri, aka Abu Du'a, who was designated by the Department of State under Executive Order 13224 on October 4.

Since late 2011, AQI has also participated in the Syrian conflict through its alias, al-Nusrah Front, which has sought to portray itself as part of the legitimate Syrian opposition. A number of al-Nusrah Front's leaders have been members of AQI and its facilitation network that operated in Syria and Iraq from 2004-2011. [In mid-April 2013, al-Nusrah leader Muhammad al-Jawlani publicly pledged al-Nusrah's fealty to AQ and its leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri.] Al-Nusrah works with other U.S. designated terrorist organizations, such as Lebanon based Fatah al-Islam. Al-Nusrah Front's base of operations is probably Damascus, but the group mirrors the organizational structure of AQI in Iraq, with regional military, administrative, and local media efforts. On December 11, the Department of State amended AQI's designation to include al-Nusrah Front as an alias.

Activities: Since its founding, AQI has conducted high profile attacks, including improvised explosive device (IED) attacks against U.S. military personnel and Iraqi infrastructure; videotaped beheadings of Americans Nicholas Berg (May 11, 2004), Jack Armstrong (September 22, 2004), and Jack Hensley (September 21, 2004); suicide bomber attacks against both military and civilian targets; and rocket attacks. AQI perpetrates the majority of suicide and mass casualty bombings in Iraq using foreign and Iraqi operatives.

Since November 2011, al-Nusrah Front has claimed nearly 600 attacks, ranging from more than 40 suicide attacks to small arms and IED operations in major city centers including Damascus, Aleppo, Hamah, Dara, Homs, Idlib, and Dayr al-Zawr. For example, on September 28, 2012, al-Nusrah Front claimed responsibility for two suicide car bombs at a military complex in Damascus that killed four and wounded 14, including civilians. On October 3, 2012, the group claimed responsibility for four bombings in Aleppo, including two suicide attacks that killed more than 50 people. Al-Nusrah Front followed up those attacks with an October 9 suicide bomb attack on a Syrian Air Force Intelligence compound in a Damascus suburb that killed and wounded at least 100, including civilians.

AQI was also active in Iraq in 2012. In a series of coordinated attacks in March, AQI struck Shia pilgrims in the city of Karbala, set cars on fire near a police headquarters in Kirkuk, and targeted security forces and government officials in Baghdad. In all, AQI struck eight cities in just under six hours, killing 46 people and wounding 200. July was the bloodiest month of AQI attacks in two years, with 325 people killed over the span of multiple bombings and attacks. In August, the Islamic State of Iraq, AQI's political front, released a video detailing a sophisticated attack in March on five locations in Haditha and neighboring Barwana that included dozens of fighters dressed as police commandos. During the raid, AQI fighters killed 27 Iraqi policemen, including two police commanders. In November, at least 166 Iraqi civilians, police, and soldiers were killed in violence across the country, according to the Government of Iraq.

Strength: In Iraq, membership is estimated between 1,000 and 2,000, making it the largest Sunni extremist group in Iraq. Membership in Syria is unknown, though it is likely a small force within the larger Syrian armed opposition.

Location/Area of Operation: AQI's operations are predominately Iraq-based, but it has perpetrated attacks in Jordan. In Syria, al-Nusrah Front has claimed attacks in several major city centers. The group maintains a logistical network throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Iran, South Asia, and Europe.

Funding and External Aid: AQI receives most of its funding from a variety of businesses and criminal activities within Iraq.

NCTC

Al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI)—also known as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)—was established in April 2004 by long-time Sunni extremist Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, who the same year pledged his group's allegiance to Usama Bin Laden. Targeting Coalition forces and civilians by such tactics as vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), suicide bombers, and executions of hostages by beheading and other means, AQI attempted to pressure countries and foreign companies to leave Iraq, push Iraqis to stop supporting the United States and the Iraqi Government, and attract additional cadre to its ranks.

AQI expanded its targeting outside of Iraq in August 2005 by attempting a rocket attack on a US Navy ship in the Port of Aqaba, Jordan, and in November 2005 with the bombing of three hotels in Amman that left 67 dead and more than 150 injured. Al-Zarqawi was killed in a US airstrike on 7 June 2006. The new leader of AQI, Abu Ayyub al-Masri, announced in October 2006 the formation of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), led by Iraqi national Abu Umar al-Baghdadi, in an attempt to politicize AQI's terrorist activities and place an "Iraqi face" on their efforts.

In 2007 AQI's continued targeting and repression of Sunni civilians caused a widespread backlash—known as the Sunni Awakening—against the group. The development of the Awakening Councils—composed primarily of Sunni tribal and local community leaders—coincided with a surge in Coalition forces and Iraqi Government operations that denied AQI its safehavens, restricting the organization's freedom of movement and resulting in a decreased attack tempo beginning in mid-2007.

High-profile attacks in 2009 and 2010 demonstrated the group's relevance in the wake of the Coalition withdrawal from Iraqi cities in 2009 and efforts to posture itself to take advantage of the changing security environment, although Abu Ayyub al-Masri and Abu Umar al-Baghdadi were killed in April 2010, marking a significant loss for the organization.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became AQI's next leader, and the group has continued conducting high-profile attacks in Iraq and participating in global violent extremism. The most violent day of attacks claimed by AQI in more than a year occurred on 5 January 2012, when terrorists employing suicide bombers and car bombs killed at least 72 people and wounded at least 147. The group's official spokesperson in January 2012 made vague threats against Americans everywhere.

AQI reaffirmed its support for al-Qa'ida and Ayman al-Zawahiri following Usama Bin Laden's death in May 2011. The arrests the same month of two AQI-affiliated Iraqi refugees in Kentucky highlight the potential threat inside the United States from people associated with AQI.

SYRIA

Designated in 1979 as a State Sponsor of Terrorism, Syria continued its political support to a variety of terrorist groups affecting the stability of the region and beyond, even amid significant internal unrest. Syria provided political and weapons support to Lebanese Hizballah and continued to allow Iran to re-arm the terrorist organization. The Syrian regime's relationship with Hizballah and Iran appears to have gotten stronger over the course of the conflict in Syria. President Bashar al-Asad continued to be a staunch defender of Iran's policies while Iran exhibited equally energetic support for Syrian regime efforts to put down the growing protest movement within Syria. Statements supporting terrorist groups, particularly Hizballah, were often in Syrian government speeches and press statements.

President Asad continued to express public support for Palestinian terrorist groups as elements of the resistance against Israel. Damascus provided safe haven in Syria for exiled individuals, although the Palestinian groups were subject to the same level of insecurity as the rest of the Syrian population and fighting has fractured their alliances with the Syrian regime. As part of a broader strategy during the year, the regime has attempted to portray Syria itself as a victim of terrorism, characterizing all its armed opponents as "terrorists."

Syria continued to generate significant concern regarding the role it plays in terrorist financing.

Industry experts reported that 60 percent of all business transactions were conducted in cash and that nearly 80 percent of all Syrians did not use formal banking services. Despite Syrian legislation that required money-changers to be licensed by the end of 2007, many money-changers continued to operate illegally in Syria's vast black market, estimated to be as large as Syria's formal economy. Regional *hawala* networks remained intertwined with smuggling and trade-based money laundering and were facilitated by notoriously corrupt customs and immigration officials. This raised significant concerns that some members of the Syrian government and the business elite were complicit in terrorist finance schemes conducted through these institutions.

Syria is a member of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a Financial Action Task Force (FATF)-style regional body. Since February 2010, Syria has been publicly identified by the FATF as a jurisdiction with strategic anti-money laundering/combatting the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) deficiencies for which it has developed an action plan with the FATF to address these weaknesses. Since then, Syria has made limited progress on its AML/CFT regime. In February 2012, Syria was named in the FATF Public Statement for its lack of progress in implementing its action plan, including its need to address the deficiencies by providing sufficient legal basis for implementing its S/RES/1373 obligations and implementing adequate procedures for identifying and freezing terrorist assets, and ensuring that appropriate laws and procedures are in place to provide mutual legal assistance.

In 2012, we continued to closely monitor Syria's proliferation-sensitive materials and facilities, including Syria's significant stockpile of chemical weapons, which we assess remains under the Asad regime's control. There is significant concern, given the instability in Syria, that these materials could find their way to terrorist organizations. We are coordinating closely with a number of like-minded nations and partners to prevent Syria's stockpiles of chemical and advanced conventional weapons from falling into the hands of violent extremists.

ABDALLAH AZZAM BRIGADES

State Department

aka Abdullah Azzam Brigades; Ziyad al-Jarrah Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades; Yusuf al-'Uyayri Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades

Description: The Abdallah Azzam Brigades (AAB) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on May 30, 2012. AAB formally announced its establishment in a July 2009 video statement claiming responsibility for a February 2009 rocket attack against Israel. The group is divided into two branches: the Arabian Peninsula-based Yusuf al-'Uyayri Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades, named after the now-deceased founder of al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula; and the Lebanon-based Ziyad al-Jarrah Battalions of the Abdallah Azzam Brigades, named after Ziad al Jarrah, a Lebanese citizen who was one of the masterminds of the September 11 attacks on the United States. In a June 2012 video statement, the group named its leader as Majid bin Muhammad al Majid, a Saudi citizen who is on the Saudi government's list of 85 Most Wanted Terrorists for his links to al-Qa'ida.

Activities: AAB has relied primarily on rocket attacks against Israeli civilians, and is responsible for numerous rocket attacks fired into Israeli territory from Lebanon. These attacks have targeted population centers in Israel and have included incidents such as the September 11, 2009 double rocket attack on Nahariya and an April 2011 rocket attack on Ashkelon. In addition to rocket attacks, AAB carried out a July 2010 suicide bombing attack against the Japanese-owned oil tanker M/V M. Star in the Strait of Hormuz. According to a statement released online, AAB claimed that the attack was carried out by its Arabian Peninsula Branch. AAB has repeatedly articulated its intent to carry out attacks against Western interests in the Middle East. In 2010, for example, the group expressed an interest in kidnapping U.S. and British tourists in the Arabian Peninsula.

Strength: Unknown

Location/Area of Operation: AAB is based in both Lebanon and the Arabian Peninsula.

Funding and External Aid: Unknown

ANSAR AL-ISLAM

State Department

aka Ansar al-Sunna; Ansar al-Sunna Army; Devotees of Islam; Followers of Islam in Kurdistan; Helpers of Islam; Jaish Ansar al-Sunna; Jund al-Islam; Kurdish Taliban; Kurdistan Supporters of Islam; Partisans of Islam; Soldiers of God; Soldiers of Islam; Supporters of Islam in Kurdistan

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on March 22, 2004, Ansar al-Islam's (AI's) goals include expelling western interests from Iraq and establishing an independent Iraqi state based on Sharia law. AI was established in 2001 in Iraqi Kurdistan with the merger of two Kurdish extremist factions that traced their roots to the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan. On May 4, 2010, Abu Abdullah al-Shafi'i, Ansar al-Islam's leader, was captured by U.S. forces in Baghdad and remains in prison. On December 15, 2011 AI announced a new leader, Abu Hashim Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman al Ibrahim.

Mullah Krekar (aka Najmuddin Faraj Ahmad), an Iraqi citizen and the founder of Ansar al-Islam, continued to reside in Norway on a long-term residence permit. In March 2012, a trial court convicted Krekar of issuing threats and inciting terrorism, and sentenced him to six years in prison. Krekar appealed, and in December an appeals court

affirmed his convictions for issuing threats and intimidating witnesses, but reversed his conviction for "inciting terrorism." The appeals court reduced his sentence to two years and 10 months in prison.

Activities: AI has conducted attacks against a wide range of targets including Iraqi government and security forces, and U.S. and Coalition Forces. AI has conducted numerous kidnappings, executions, and assassinations of Iraqi citizens and politicians. The group has either claimed responsibility or is believed to be responsible for attacks in 2011 that killed 24 and wounded 147.

Strength: Though precise numbers are unknown, AI is considered one of the largest Sunni terrorist groups in Iraq.

Location/Area of Operation: Primarily northern Iraq, but also maintains a presence in western and central Iraq.

Funding and External Aid: AI receives assistance from a loose network of associates in Europe and the Middle East.

IRAN

State Department

Designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism in 1984, Iran increased its terrorist-related activity, including attacks or attempted attacks in India, Thailand, Georgia, and Kenya. Iran provided financial, material, and logistical support for terrorist and militant groups in the Middle East and Central Asia. Iran used the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) and militant groups to implement foreign policy goals, provide cover for intelligence operations, and stir up instability in the Middle East. The IRGC-QF is the regime's primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorists abroad.

In 2012, Iran was implicated in planned attacks in India, Thailand, Georgia, and Kenya. On February 13, in New Delhi, India, a magnetic bomb placed under the vehicle of an Israeli diplomat's wife exploded, seriously injuring her and three Indian nationals. On February 14, a similar device was discovered under a vehicle belonging to the Israeli embassy in Tbilisi, Georgia, and safely defused. Also on February 14, Thai police arrested three Iranian nationals in connection with explosions in a Bangkok private residence that revealed bomb-making materials and makeshift grenades intended for use in attacks against Israeli targets. On June 19, Kenyan authorities arrested two Iranian nationals in connection with explosives stockpiled for a suspected terrorist attack. According to press reports, the individuals were members of the IRGC-QF.

On October 17, Iranian-born U.S. dual-national Mansour Arbabsiar was arrested by U.S. authorities and pled guilty in a New York court to participating in a 2011 plot to murder the Saudi ambassador to the United States. Arbabsiar held several meetings with an associate whom Iranian officials believed was a narcotics cartel member. This associate, in fact, was a confidential source for U.S. law enforcement. Arbabsiar admitted to working on behalf of the IRGC-QF to carry out the plot. An IRGC-QF officer who remains at large was also indicted. The thwarted plot demonstrated Iran's interest in using international terrorism – including in the United States – to further its foreign policy goals.

In 2012, the IRGC-QF trained Taliban elements on small unit tactics, small arms, explosives, and indirect fire weapons, such as mortars, artillery, and rockets. Since 2006, Iran has arranged arms shipments to select Taliban members, including small arms and associated ammunition, rocket propelled grenades, mortar rounds, 107mm rockets, and plastic explosives. Iran has shipped a large number of weapons to Kandahar, Afghanistan, aiming to increase its influence in this key province.

Despite its pledge to support Iraq's stabilization, Iran trained, funded, and provided guidance to Iraqi Shia militant groups. The IRGC-QF, in concert with Lebanese Hezbollah, provided training outside of Iraq as well as advisors inside Iraq for Shia militants in the construction and use of sophisticated improvised explosive device technology and other advanced weaponry.

Regarding Syria, Iran provided extensive support, including weapons, funds, and training to assist the Assad regime in its brutal crackdown that has resulted in the death of more than 70,000 civilians. Iran provided weapons, training, and

funding to Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist groups, including the Palestine Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. Since the end of the 2006 Israeli-Hizbullah conflict, Iran has assisted in rearming Hizbullah, in direct violation of UNSCR 1701. Iran has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in support of Hizbullah in Lebanon and has trained thousands of Hizbullah fighters at camps in Iran.

Iran actively supported members of the Houthi tribe in northern Yemen, including activities intended to build military capabilities, which could pose a greater threat to security and stability in Yemen and the surrounding region. In July 2012, the Yemeni Interior Ministry arrested members of an alleged Iranian spy ring, headed by a former member of the IRGC.

Iran remained unwilling to bring to justice senior al-Qa'ida (AQ) members it continued to detain, and refused to publicly identify those senior members in its custody. Iran allowed AQ facilitators Muhsin al-Fadhli and Adel Radi Saqr al-Wahabi al-Harbi to operate a core facilitation pipeline through Iran, enabling AQ to move funds and fighters to South Asia and to Syria. Al-Fadhli is a veteran AQ operative who has been active for years. Al-Fadhli began working with the Iran-based AQ facilitation network in 2009 and was later arrested by Iranian authorities. He was released in 2011 and assumed leadership of the Iran-based AQ facilitation network.

Since 2009, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has called for its members and the international community to institute countermeasures to protect their respective financial sectors and the global financial system from the risks – in particular the terrorist financing threat – posed by Iran. In October 2012, the FATF strengthened its language and again called for countermeasures against Iran. Iran has had some limited engagement regarding anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism and has responded to overtures by multilateral entities such as the UN's Global Programme against Money Laundering, but it has failed to criminalize terrorist financing and require that financial institutions and other obliged entities file suspicious transaction reports. Iran has not engaged with FATF and was not a member of a FATF-style regional body.

Iran remains a state of proliferation concern. Despite multiple UNSCRs requiring Iran to suspend its sensitive nuclear proliferation activities, Iran continues to violate its international obligations regarding its nuclear program. For further information, see the Report to Congress on Iran-related Multilateral Sanctions Regime Efforts (February 2013), and the Report on the Status of Bilateral and Multilateral Efforts Aimed at Curtailing the Pursuit of Iran of Nuclear Weapons Technology (September 2012).

KATA'IB HIZBALLAH

State Department

aka Hizballah Brigades; Hizballah Brigades in Iraq; Hizballah Brigades-Iraq; Kata'ib Hezbollah; Khata'ib Hezbollah; Khata'ib Hizballah; Khattab Hezbollah; Hizballah Brigades-Iraq of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq; Islamic Resistance in Iraq; Kata'ib Hizballah Fi al-Iraq; Katibat Abu Fathel al-A'abas; Katibat Zayd Ebin Ali; Katibut Karbalah

Description: Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on July 2, 2009, Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) was formed in 2006 and is a radical Shia Islamist group with an anti-Western outlook and extremist ideology that has conducted attacks against Iraqi, U.S., and Coalition targets in Iraq. KH has threatened the lives of Iraqi politicians and civilians that support the legitimate political process in Iraq. The group is notable for its extensive use of media operations and

propaganda by filming and releasing videos of attacks. KH has ideological ties to Lebanese Hizballah and receives support from that group and its sponsor, Iran.

Activities: KH has been responsible for numerous terrorist attacks since 2007, including improvised explosive device bombings, rocket propelled grenade attacks, and sniper operations. In 2007, KH gained notoriety with attacks on U.S. and Coalition Forces in Iraq. KH was particularly active in summer 2008, recording and distributing video footage of its attacks.

In June 2011, five U.S. soldiers were killed in a rocket attack in Baghdad, Iraq, when KH assailants fired between three and five rockets at U.S. military base Camp Victory. The group remained active in 2012, but has not conducted an attack on U.S. interests since July 2011.

Strength: Membership is estimated at 400 individuals.

Location/Area of Operation: KH's operations are predominately Iraq-based. In 2011, KH conducted the majority of its operations in Baghdad but was active in other areas of Iraq, including Kurdish areas such as Mosul. KH militants were reportedly in Syria, protecting Shia shrines and fighting alongside Syrian President Asad's troops against Syrian opposition forces.

Funding and External Aid: KH is almost entirely dependent on support from Iran and Lebanese Hizballah.

KURDISTAN WORKERS' PARTY

State Department

aka the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress; the Freedom and Democracy Congress of Kurdistan; KADEK; Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan; the People's Defense Force; Halu Mesru Savunma Kuvveti; Kurdistan People's Congress; People's Congress of Kurdistan; KONGRA-GEL

Description: Founded by Abdullah Ocalan in 1978 as a Marxist-Leninist separatist organization, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997. The group, composed primarily of Turkish Kurds, launched a campaign of violence in 1984. The PKK's original goal was to establish an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey, but in recent years it has spoken more often about autonomy within a Turkish state that guarantees Kurdish cultural and linguistic rights.

Activities: In the early 1990s, the PKK moved beyond rural-based insurgent activities to include urban terrorism. In the 1990s, southeastern Anatolia was the scene of significant violence; some estimates placed casualties at some 30,000 persons. Following his capture in 1999, Ocalan announced a "peace initiative," ordering members to refrain from violence and requesting dialogue with Ankara on Kurdish issues. Ocalan's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment; he remains the symbolic leader of the group. The group foreswore violence until June 2004, when the group's hard-line militant wing took control and renounced the self-imposed cease-fire of the previous five years. Striking over the border from bases within Iraq, the PKK has engaged in terrorist attacks in eastern and western Turkey. In 2009 the Turkish government and the PKK resumed peace negotiations. However, talks broke down after a PKK initiated attack on July 14, 2011, that left 13 Turkish soldiers dead. Violence in 2011 and 2012 has marked one of the most deadly time periods in the almost 30 year conflict. Widely publicized peace talks between Ocalan and the Turkish government to resolve the conflict began at the end of 2012.

Primary targets have been Turkish government security forces, local Turkish officials, and villagers who oppose the organization in Turkey. The PKK remained active in 2012: on August 20, a car bomb in the southeastern Turkish city of Gaziantep killed nine people, including four children, and wounded in excess of 70. Similar car bombings occurred in both Hakkari province in January, killing one and injuring 28, and Kayseri province in May, injuring 18.

Strength: Approximately 4,000 to 5,000 members; 3,000 to 3,500 are located in northern Iraq.

Location/Area of Operation: The PKK operate primarily in Turkey, Iraq, and Europe.

Funding and External Aid: The PKK receives financial support from the large Kurdish diaspora in Europe and from criminal activity.

KONGRA-GEL (KGK) - formerly the Kurdistan Worker's Party, PKK

NCTC

The Kurdistan People's Congress (KGK, formerly the Kurdistan Worker's Party, PKK) is a Kurdish separatist group primarily active in part of northern Iraq and southeastern Turkey. Composed mostly of Turkish Kurds, the group in 1984 began a campaign of armed violence, including terrorism, which has resulted in over 45,000 deaths. Historically, KGK directed operatives to target Turkish security forces, government offices, and villagers who opposed the group. KGK's imprisoned leader, Abdullah Ocalan, in 2006 publicly called for a KGK "unilateral cease-fire," which in practice meant stopping terrorist attacks and limiting violence to "defensive" attacks against Turkish soldiers and security forces patrolling areas that the KGK considered theirs.

The KGK wages a seasonal insurgency, and has declared cease-fires that coincide with the group's typical drawdown during the winter months, during which time KGK members regroup and train. The KGK urban terrorism wing, the Kurdistan Freedom Hawks (TAK), in 2005 began using terrorist tactics—including suicide bombings—to target Turkish tourist destinations in order to damage the Turkish economy and provide the KGK with plausible deniability for the attacks.

In November 2009, the Turkish Government announced its plan to grant social and economic rights to Turkey's Kurdish population, largely to undercut support for the KGK. This initiative faltered, however, due to public and political opposition. The KGK since 2010 has continued to take an active defense posture against Turkish military operations in southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq, while TAK claimed responsibility for a 2010 attack on a military bus, killing five, and a suicide bombing the same year that wounded 32 in Istanbul. The US Treasury Department in April 2011 designated five KGK leaders under the Kingpin Act, freezing any assets they may have under US jurisdiction and prohibiting US persons from conducting financial or commercial transactions with them.

In July 2011, a clash between Turkish forces and the KGK in Diyarbakir Province resulted in the deaths of thirteen Turkish soldiers, and TAK in September 2011 killed three people in a car bombing in Ankara. A KGK attack in October 2011 killed 24 Turkish troops and was the deadliest incident since 1993. Attacks persisted in 2012, with KGK's armed wing, the People's Defense Force (HPG), killing eight Turkish soldiers and wounding 16 in coordinated attacks in June. KGK also stepped up its kidnapping campaign against Turkish state employees and soldiers, which included the unprecedented abduction of a Turkish parliamentary deputy in August. In addition to its stronghold in northern Iraq, the KGK's Syrian affiliate, the Democratic Union Party (PYD), has increased its presence in northern Syria along the border with Turkey by establishing control in Kurdish areas, resulting in concerns of a heightened threat to Turkey and increased tensions along the border.

Source: State Department reporting is excerpted from US State Department, "Chapter 2, Country reports," *Country Reports on Terrorism 2012*, May 30, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2012/>. NCTC data are excerpted from "Counterterrorism Calendar 2013," US National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), <http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/aqap.html>, and <http://www.nctc.gov/site/other/fto.html>, accessed August 8, 2013.

Syrian Spillover & al Qa'ida's Iraqi-Syrian Merger

It is also clear that Al Qa'ida in Iraq plays the main role in a stream of attacks on Shi'ite and Kurdish targets and that the "Islamic State of Iraq" has grown stronger both because of the marginalization of Sunnis in Iraqi politics and the impact of the Syrian civil war. The flow of Sunni money and volunteers into Syria has interacted with Iraq's domestic politics to move money and volunteers into Iraq as well as into Syria.^{34 35},

The civil war in Syria has contributed to the rise in violence in Iraq because of both the flow of Iraqi and foreign Shi'ite volunteers to Assad's side and the flow of Iraqi Sunni volunteers to the Sunni side in Syria plus the flow of Sunni foreign volunteers that enter Syria through Iraq. It also led to a somewhat tentative merger of Al Qa'ida's Syrian and Iraqi branches. Al Qa'ida in Iraq

announced a merger with Syria's Nusra Front, an offshoot of al Qaeda's Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) in April 2013.^{36 37} These ties to the Nusra Front were particularly important because the Front has carried out several high-profile bombings against Assad forces in Damascus and Aleppo relatively early in the Syrian uprising, gaining it prominence, and with it the ability to recruit more easily as it spearheads the rebellion against Assad.³⁸

This merger has been uncertain and unstable. It was initiated by the head of al Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi (also known as Abu Dua), but was rejected by some elements of the Nusra Front like its leader, Abu Mohammed al Julani. Al Julani viewed the merger as an attempt to dilute his forces and subordinate his command.³⁹ This led the leader of Al Qaeda central, Ayman al-Zawahri, to intervene by calling on both parties to "stop arguing in this dispute" and restore the Nusra Front's independence.⁴⁰ Zawahri is reported to have said that, "*The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* is canceled, and work continues under the name the *Islamic State of Iraq*," adding, "The Nusra Front for the People of the Levant is an independent branch".⁴¹

Nevertheless, sources like the *Long War Journal* report that militants from al Qaeda's Iraqi and Syrian wings were still fighting together against Assad's Alawite troops in Syria in July 2013.⁴² The Islamic State of Iraq also continued to operate under this expanded banner.⁴³ Moreover, *The New York Times* reported on August 15, 2013 that, "The leader of Al Qaeda's Iraq affiliate, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and other senior members of the group are operating from Syria, according to the State Department."⁴⁴

An example of al Qaeda's success in coordinating its efforts in Syria occurred in early August 2013 when anti-Assad rebels "dominated" by al Qaeda seized a critical military airport in northern Syria, effectively cutting off one of Assad's main supply lines. The Syrian Opposition Coalition announced the airport was "liberated" by a coalition of rebel groups, including the al Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State of Iraq and the Nusra Front.⁴⁵

Al Qaeda in Iraq had clearly regained some of the losses it suffered under the US occupation of Iraq. It has rebounded with coordinated attacks and suicide bombings, including an attack that killed 48 Syrian troops that had sought refuge across the border.⁴⁶

THE SITUATION IN AUGUST 2013

The situation as of August 2013 had not improved over the trends described earlier. There were no clear numbers, but high profile violent attacks continued and it was far from clear that the Iraqi government was capable of dealing with them. **Figure Eighteen** shows the number of new bombings and attacks during the first weeks in August. They produced at least 481 civilian deaths, and had clearly gone from a pattern of few isolated high profile events to a pattern of continuing attacks in multiple cities

While reporting often did not state the identity of the bomber or the sect and ethnicity of the target, most attacks seemed to be Sunni attacks linked to al Qaeda and targeted against Iraqi officials and security forces, Shi'ite civilians, and elements of the Sunni Sons of Iraq or Sahwa (Awakening) that still supported the central government.

Some may well have been the result of Shi'ite actions or reprisal, but none were tied in unclassified reporting to specific Shi'ite militias and groups like the Asai'b Ahl Al-Haq (AAH) and new groups like the Army of the Chosen (Jaysh al-Mokhtar), some of whose actions may have been linked to Iran. Similarly, some other attacks may have been by former elements of the Sahwa that had turned against the government, but none were reported as such.⁴⁷

The Iraqi security forces (ISF) often seemed to respond by conducting broad sweeps and arrests of as many as 300 Sunnis with little evidence they had adequate intelligence to make such sweeps or were able to attack key figures and key targets. The extensive grid of checkpoints in Baghdad seems to have limited some aspects of bombings, but note, target attacks, and similar security networks did not exist in many other Iraqi cities and security in towns was limited. Some reporting indicates that the regular Iraqi police had become more cautious and reactive and that military and elite security units had to bear most of the burden while other units increasingly suffered from the fact that positions and promotions were political or sold.

The reporting on such activities also indicated that the security forces focused on Sunni targets, although there was little public reporting on exactly what the Iraqi security forces were doing in Sunni areas in the West, and almost no reporting identifying actions against Sunnis by the Iraqi government. A report in mid-August 2013 by the Crisis Group may put too much of the blame on Prime Minister and too little blame on his opponents, but is most certainly correct in providing the following warnings,⁴⁸

Throughout his seven-year tenure, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has implemented a divide-and-conquer strategy that has neutered any credible Sunni Arab leadership. The authorities also have taken steps that reinforce perceptions of a sectarian agenda. Prominent officials – predominantly Sunni – have been cast aside pursuant to the Justice and Accountability Law on the basis of alleged senior-level affiliation to the former Baath party. Federal security forces have disproportionately deployed in Baghdad's Sunni neighbourhoods as well as Sunni-populated governorates (Anbar, Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Kirkuk and Diyala). Al-Iraqiya, the political movement to which Sunni Arabs most readily related, slowly came apart due to internal rivalries even as Maliki resorted to both legal and extrajudicial means to consolidate power.

This past year has proved particularly damaging. As events in Syria nurtured their hopes for a political comeback, Sunni Arabs launched an unprecedented, peaceful protest movement in late 2012 in response to the arrest of bodyguards of Rafea al-Issawi, a prominent Iraqiya member. It too failed to provide answers to accumulated grievances. Instead, the demonstrations and the repression to which they gave rise further exacerbated the sense of exclusion and persecution among Sunnis.

The government initially chose a lacklustre, technical response, forming committees to unilaterally address protesters' demands, shunning direct negotiations and tightening security measures in Sunni-populated areas. Half-hearted, belated concessions exacerbated distrust and empowered more radical factions. After a four-month stalemate, the crisis escalated. On 23 April, government forces raided a protest camp in the city of Hawija, in Kirkuk province, killing over 50 and injuring 110. This sparked a wave of violence exceeding anything witnessed for five years. Attacks against security forces and, more ominously, civilians have revived fears of a return to all-out civil strife. The Islamic State of Iraq, al-Qaeda's local expression, is resurgent. Shiite militias have responded against Sunnis. The government's seeming intent to address a chiefly political issue – Sunni Arab representation in Baghdad – through tougher security measures has every chance of worsening the situation.

Belittled, demonised and increasingly subject to a central government crackdown, the popular movement is slowly mutating into an armed struggle. In this respect, the absence of a unified Sunni leadership – to which Baghdad's policies contributed and which Maliki might have perceived as an asset – has turned out to be a serious liability. In a showdown that is acquiring increasing sectarian undertones, the movement's proponents look westward to Syria as the arena in which the fight against the Iraqi government and its Shiite allies will play out and eastward toward Iran as the source of all their ills.

Under intensifying pressure from government forces and with dwindling faith in a political solution, many Sunni Arabs have concluded their only realistic option is a violent conflict increasingly framed in confessional terms. In turn, the government conveniently dismisses all opposition as a sectarian insurgency that warrants ever more stringent security measures. In the absence of a dramatic shift in approach, Iraq's fragile polity risks breaking down, a victim of the combustible mix of its longstanding flaws and growing regional tensions.

These top level political divisions made it increasingly impossible to distinguish the effects of Iraq's political struggles between Prime Minister Maliki and his rivals. Sunni-Shi'ite violence was being shaped by incidents like Maliki's actions that drove Iraq's Sunni Vice President Tareq al-Hashimi out of the country in December 2011 and then sentencing him to death, and having the security forces storm the home of Rafea al-Issawi, Iraq's Finance Minister and arrest part of his security detachment on December 20, 2012. As the Crisis Group reports this latter incident led to serious popular protests among Sunnis,⁴⁹

Protests swiftly broke out in Issawi's hometown of Falluja, in Anbar province...Within days, they had spread to Ramadi, where thousands reportedly poured into the streets, blocking the highway linking Baghdad to Syria and Jordan, then to adjacent, predominantly Sunni provinces of Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Kirkuk and Diyala, as well as Baghdad's Sunni's neighbourhoods.³ Demonstrations remained mostly confined to Sunni areas; in the Shiite-populated central and southern provinces, small gatherings were organised in support of the prime minister.⁴ As protests grew in size, the government dispatched security forces in an attempt to cut off Anbar province and ensure Baghdad remained immune..

What was clear was that further clashes took place between the ISF and Sunni protestors in Fallujah, Mosul, and Baghdad in March, that more clashes took place in April, including a major ISF raid on a Sunni sit in at Hawija, that other incidents occurred in Anbar, more elements of Sunni tribes turned against the government, that the ISF continued to prevent or suppress Sunni protests from May onwards, and that Sunni clerics began to support such protests. Moreover, Iraq had carried out 67 executions by August, of which 17 took place on 19 August alone, most of which executed Sunnis and were tied to terrorism and which independent observers felt lacked proper trials and legal procedures.⁵⁰

These actions pushed Sunnis who did not support Al Qaeda to support Sunni ethnic factions in Iraq's politics like the Iraqi Islamic Party -- as well as drive at least some other Sunnis to support the Islamic Front in Iraq and Al Qaeda. The Iraqi Security forces -- and its political direction -- did seem to overreact and tie counterterrorism to Iraq's political feuds -- sometimes aiding Sunni extremist efforts to push Iraq back towards a high level of civil conflict in the process.

They may also help explain part of the growing sophistication of Al Qaeda's attacks. This sophistication is illustrated by the fact the Interpol sent out a notice on July 30th warning about mass prison breaks from al Qaeda attacks in three counties: Iraq, Pakistan, and Libya. In the case of Iraq, Interpol noted that Al Qaeda had claimed it had carried out two prison breaks in Iraq including a night attack on Abu Gharib prison on July 22nd, where some 500 convicts escaped including several senior al Qaeda leaders. A smaller operation took place at the Taji prison, near Baghdad. According to Reuters, the attacks were sophisticated and involved substantial forces,⁵¹

They used mortars to pin down Iraqi forces and suicide bombers to punch holes in their defenses followed by an assault force to free the inmates. Some of the fighters were disguised as policemen and used a megaphone as they broke open cells to call out the names of specific prisoners and shouted "God is great" and "Long live the Taliban", according to security officials.... The attacks were allegedly carried out after months of preparations on behalf of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, which is a merger between Al-Qaeda's affiliates in Syria and Iraq.

...Between 500 to 1,000 prisoners have escaped as a result of the attack, "*most of them were convicted senior members of Al-Qaeda and had received death sentences,*" said Hakim Zamili, a senior member of the security and defense committee in parliament. Suicide bombers drove cars with explosives into the gates of the prison on the outskirts of Baghdad on Sunday night, while gunmen attacked guards with mortar fire as well as rocket propelled grenades. ...Other militants held the main road, fighting off security reinforcements sent from Baghdad, as several insurgents wearing suicide vests entered Abu Ghraib on foot to help free the

inmates...Ten policemen and four militants were killed in the fighting, which continued until early Monday, when military helicopters arrived to help regain control. ...By that time, hundreds of inmates had succeeded in fleeing Abu Ghraib. The security forces arrested some of them, the rest are still free, Zamili commented.

All these developments marked a disturbing further increase in violence during the spring and summer of 2013. They also took place at time the divisions between Alewite and Sunni in Syria continued to grow, as well as between Syrian rebel moderates and Sunni extremist groups. Iraqi Kurds also made it clear that they might support Syrian Kurds against the Syrian government.

More Iraqi Shi'ites volunteered to fight with Assad forces in Syria while more Sunnis supported the rebels. In addition, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that Syrian refugees, largely Kurds and Sunni Arabs, continued to flow in to Iraq creating new pressures in both Sunni Arab areas and the KRG. The counts were uncertain, particularly in the Arab Sunni areas of Iraq, but UNHCR estimated in August that around 1,295,000 Syrians had fled to the KRG, and were coming at levels as high as 5,700 to 7,700 per day.⁵²

At the same time, the violence in Iraq was still limited compared to the mid-2000s. There were no reports of major popular Shi'ite reprisals against Sunnis, or popular fighting between Sunni and Shiite -- although this may have been because the security services focused on Sunni targets and because of the increased de facto segregation of Arab Sunnis from Arab Shi'ites.

There also were no new reports of potential clashes between Arab and Kurdish although exchanges of visits by Prime Minister Maliki to President Massoud Barzani of the KRG in July 2013 were at best a potential start in reconciling the different goals and demands of the central government and KRG. The Oil and Gas Law, the level of independence of the Pesh Merga, and the level of autonomy and control of disputed cities, areas, and petroleum resources remained key sources of tension.

Bad as things had become there was still at least some hope for compromise, and for a national election in 2014 that could bring national unity if Iraqis chose that course of action versus division and violence. Iraq's high levels of oil wealth also gave it a unique opportunity to transform such a move towards national unity into the ability to meet its deeper structural challenges.

Figure 17: IBC Estimate of Iraq Bombings and Attacks between August 1-18, 2013

Sunday 18 August: 16 killed

Baghdad: 4 by IEDs.
 Mosul: 4 by gunfire.
 Samarra: 4 policemen in clashes.
 Kirkuk: 2 by gunfire, 1 body.
 Muqdadiya: 1 by IED.
 August casualties so far: 481 civilians killed.

Saturday 17 August: 17 killed

Mosul: 3 by gunfire, IED.
 Qayyarah: 3 policemen by IED.
 Tikrit: 4 policemen by gunfire.
 Sulaimaniya: 1 body.
 Shirqat: 3 by IED.
 Buhriz: 1 by IED.
 Muqdadiya: 2 by gunfire.

Friday 16 August: 16 killed

Baghdad: 8 by IEDs, gunfire.
 Habbaniya: 1 by suicide bomber.
 Mosul: 4 by gunfire, IED.
 Muqdadiya: 2 by gunfire.
 Buhriz: 1 by IED.

Thursday 15 August: 42 civilians killed.

Baghdad: 33 in bomb attacks.
 Buhruz: 3 by IEDs.
 Dujail: 2 by AED.
 Mishahda: 2 by IED.
 Shirqat: 1 policeman by IED.
 Aldawayah: 1 by gunfire.

Wednesday 14 August: 26 killed

Al-Mafraq: 11 by bomb in cafe.
 Baquba: 4 by IED.
 Siniya: 3 by gunfire.
 Baghdad: 2 by IED.
 Hamam Al-Aleel: 2 policemen by IED.
 Falluja: 3 by IED.
 Dujail: 1 by IED.

Tuesday 13 August: 24 killed.

Madaen: 5 by car bomb.
 Kirkuk: 3 policemen by IED.
 Beiji: 2 by IED.
 Mosul: 3 by gunfire.
 Ramadi: 1 by car bomb.
 Sirin: 2 by mortars.
 Suqour: 1 by AED.
 Tikrit: 4 by IEDs.
 Basra: 1 by gunfire.
 Al-Qanater: 2 by IEDs.

Monday 12 August: 37 killed

Balad: 23 by suicide bomber.
 Muqdadiya: 6 by IED.
 Baquba: 5 by IEDs.
 Falluja: 2 by gunfire.
 Al-Sheikh Hamad: 1 policeman in clashes.

Sunday 11 August: 8 killed

Mosul: 3 by gunfire, IED.
 Balad: 2 by gunfire.
 Buhriz: 2 Sahwa members by gunfire.
 Baghdad: 1 by gunfire.

Saturday 10 August: 94 killed

Baghdad: 52 killed in bomb attacks.
 Tuz Khurmato: 11 by suicide bomber.
 Karbala: 5 by car bomb.
 Nasiriya: 4 by car bomb.
 Kirkuk: 1 by car bomb.
 Mosul: 8 in bomb attacks.
 Hilla: 9 by gunfire.
 Dujail: 2 by gunfire.
 Falluja: 1 by AED.
 Muqdadiya: 1 by IED.

Friday 9 August: 6 killed

Tikrit: 3 by AED, gunfire.
 Baghdad: 2 by gunfire.
 Falluja: 2 policemen by suicide bomber.
 August casualties so far: 201 civilians killed.
 Thursday 8 August: 5 killed
 Baghdad: 1 by IED.
 Ramadi: 1 by IED.
 Balad: 1 policeman by gunfire.
 Tikrit: 2 by gunfire.

Wednesday 7 August: 34 killed

Tikrit: 18 killed by gunfire, IED, car bomb.
 Ramadi: 2 women by IED.
 Falluja: 1 by gunfire.
 Mussayab: 1 by AED.
 Mosul: 3 by IEDs.
 Dhuluiya: 3 policemen by IED.
 Shirqat: 1 by AED.
 Baquba: 2 by gunfire.
 Diyala: 1 body in river.
 Karma: 1 by gunfire.
 Qadisiya: 1 by IED.

Tuesday 6 August: 50 killed.

Baghdad: 31 in bombings.
 Anhakiya: 10 by car bomb.
 Mosul: 1 policeman by gunfire.
 Falluja: 1 by gunfire.
 Khanaqin: 2 by IED.
 Samarra: 1 by gunfire.
 Himreen: 2 by IED.
 Qatoun: 1 by IED.
 Ramadi: 1 body.

¹ Matt Bradley, “Kurd Troop Advance Overshadows Iraq Talks”, The Wall Street Journal, April 30, 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323798104578454892714029924.html>

² Barry Malone, Iraq calls Turkey "hostile state" as relations dim”, Reuters, April 20, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/21/us-iraq-turkey-idUSBRE83K00120120421>

³ Abdel Wahed Tohmeh, Oil and Gas Law Key to Resolving Issues Between Baghdad, Erbil, Al Monitor, July 12, 2013, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2013/07/oil-gas-law-key-baghdad-erbil-dispute.html>

⁴ EIA, OPEC Revenues Fact Sheet, July 22, 2013, <http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=OPEC>.

⁵ Liz Sly, “US commander, Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, predicts turbulence in Iraq,” The Washington Post, November 22, 2011.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/us-commander-predicts-turbulence-ahead-in-iraq/2011/11/21/gIQAPVE4hN_story.html

⁶ Some of the problems involved are addressed at an unclassified level in work by Hannah Fischer of the Congressional Research Service. See *Iraq Casualties: U.S. Military Forces and Iraqi Civilians, Police, and Security Forces*, CRS R40824, October 7, 2010, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R40824.pdf>. There are many critiques on NGO efforts like the Lancet study in clduign the work of Iraq Body Count. See IBC response to the Lancet study estimating "100,000" Iraqi deaths, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/analysis/beyond/lancet100000/>. The IBC does a god job of covering a range of problems in the data in varous reports available at <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/analysis/>.

⁷ For an exception, see Madelyn Hsiao-Rei Hicks, Hamit Dardagan, Gabriela Guerrero Serdán, Peter M. Bagnall, John A. Sloboda,, and Michael Spagat, “Violent Deaths of Iraqi Civilians, 2003–2008: Analysis by Perpetrator, Weapon, Time, and Location,” PLOS Medicine, <http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.1000415>. The study could not compensate for the lack of original data, however, and concluded that, “Most Iraqi civilian violent deaths during 2003–2008 of the Iraq war were inflicted by Unknown perpetrators, primarily through extrajudicial executions that disproportionately increased in regions with greater numbers of violent deaths. Unknown perpetrators using suicide bombs, vehicle bombs, and mortars had highly lethal and indiscriminate effects on the Iraqi civilians they targeted. Deaths caused by Coalition forces of Iraqi civilians, women, and children peaked during the invasion period, with relatively indiscriminate effects from aerial weapons.”

⁸ It is worth noting that according the January 30, 2012 SIGIR report, the 2011 Iraqi death toll of 2,645 marks a decrease of approximately 1,000 from the preceding year.

⁹ “*Quarterly Report and Semiannual Report to the US Congress*”, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), January 30, 2012.

¹⁰ Council on Foreign Relations, “*Renewed Violence in Iraq*,” Douglas A. Ollivant, August 2012, p. 1.

¹¹ “A Violent New Year in Iraq”, Michael Knights, The National Interest, February 16, 2012. Available at: <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/violent-new-year-iraq-6517>

¹² Sources: these quates are excerpted from SIGIR, Quarterly Report, April 30, 2012, pp. 77-79, http://www.sigir.mil/files/quarterlyreports/April2012/Section4_-_April_2012.pdf#view=fit

¹³ UNAMI Human Rights Office/OHCHR, *Report on Human Rights in Iraq: 2011*, May 2012, Baghdad, pp. 2-8; <http://unami.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2790&ctl=Details&mid=5079&ItemID=304088&language=en-US>. Baghdad The UN also reported that, “The total figure of 4,649 includes 1,052 members of the Iraqi Security Forces who were killed, 50 foreign workers, 52 Iraqi officials, 164 civil defence force members. 247 recorded deaths were unidentified, 267 members of armed opposition groups were killed, and 46 members of the United States Forces in Iraq were killed. Figures were compiled by UNAMI from direct monitoring, media and official government sources. Also wounded, according to UNAMI figures, were 2,596 members of the Iraqi Security Forces, 403 foreign workers, 33 Iraqi officials, 185 civil defence force members, 50 members of armed opposition groups. “

¹⁴ Source: National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) Worldwide Incident Tracking System (WITS) data, accessed January 18, 2012. Available at: <https://wits.nctc.gov/FederalDiscoverWITS/index.do?N=0>.

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- ¹⁵ The Economist, “Violence in Iraq: The Nightmare Returns,” July 17, 2013, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/pomegranate/2013/07/violence-iraq>
- ¹⁶ Kenneth Pollack, “The Fall and Rise and Fall of Iraq”, The Saban Center at the Brookings Institution, July 2013, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2013/07/30%20fall%20rise%20fall%20iraq%20pollack/pollack_iraq.pdf
- ¹⁷ Ahmed Rasheed, Ziad al-Sanjary and Alex Lawler, ““Crude for blood”: return of sectarian war hits Iraq’s oil exports”, Reuters Middle East, July 26, 2013, <http://en-maktoob.news.yahoo.com/crude-blood-return-sectarian-war-hits-iraqs-oil-053000164.html>
- ¹⁸ Lincoln Archer, “Iraq Violence: Why the death toll is rising”, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, August 1, 2013, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-07-05/iraq-spike-background/4799520>
- ¹⁹ Michael R, Gordon and Tim Arango, “Syrian War Fueling Attacks by Al Qaeda in Iraq, Officials Say,” New York Times, August 15, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/16/world/middleeast/syrian-war-fueling-attacks-by-al-qaeda-in-iraq-officials-say.html?_r=0&pagewanted=print.
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- ²² Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2061 (2012), July 11, 2013, S/2013.408, <http://unami.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2837&language=en-US>.
- ²³ For example, see Jessica Lewis, Ahmed Ali, and Kimberly Kagan, IRAQ’S SECTARIAN CRISIS REIGNITES AS SHI’A MILITIASEXECUTE CIVILIANS AND REMOBILIZE , Institute for the Study of War, May 31, 2013.
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- ²⁷ <http://www.iq.undp.org/Items/Publications/248/Documents/Corruption%20and%20integrity%20challenges%20In%20the%20public%20sector%20of%20.pdf>, pp. 9.10.
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- ²⁹ “Iraq Country Report,” *US Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, released April 2013. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/204572.pdf>. The full report is available at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper>.
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There more than 684,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon, 516,000 in Jordan, 434,000 in Turkey, 154,000 in Iraq, and 107,000 in Egypt.