

Forum: General Assembly 1st Committee

Issue: The Question of Democracy and Reconciliation in Iraq

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Introduction

The question of democracy and reconciliation in Iraq is in reference to the Iraq War and its consequences and the presence of Isis which has led to a civil war in Iraq. The Iraq War began on the 20th of March 2003 after the air force of the United States of America dropped two bombs in Baghdad, Iraq's capital. The purpose of the bombing was to either kill or force Iraq's current president or more commonly known as dictator Saddam Hussein to surrender. On the very same day Saddam Hussein made an appearance on Iraq's national television saying that the military act performed by the US was 'criminal' and that the Iraqi army would take actions to prevent invasion and fight the enemy.¹ This was a clear response to the announcement held 18th of March by the president of the United States George W. Bush where he declared the following: "Saddam Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq within 48 hours. Their refusal to do so will result in a military conflict commenced at a time of our choosing". 20th of March was also the day the US troops together with their allies invaded Iraq.²

The Casus Belli or the reasoning of the Iraq War was mainly the belief that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and ties with al-Qaeda, a terrorist organization which had earlier been accused of the events of September 11th 2001³. After the events of 9/11 president Bush declared war against terror⁴ September 20th 2001. It is known that Bush's regime and his actions mainly revolved around the war against terror and defeating the "Axis of Evil"⁵. After the wars of Iraq-Iran and Persian Gulf the United States together with its allies felt necessary to bring democracy to Iraq and thus overthrow Saddam's regime in the

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1sYBfgl0VQ>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdTrSm-Fifo>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgyxysoET2c&t=275s>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSPbzitPL8>

⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/politics/100000004021075/the-axis-of-evil-speech.html>

country.⁶ United States sought for evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) but weren't capable of finding any concrete pieces of evidence. The US was clearly with the intention to show the rest of the world that Iraq had WMD's which can be seen in the famous presentation held by US Secretary of State Colin Powell in a United Nations' Security Council session concerning the Iraq War where he presented "evidence" on Iraq's WMD's and their locations. Despite the presentation held by Powell the Security Council did not vote in favor of the war and therefore it was illegal.⁷

The last troops were pulled out of Iraq December 2011 by the orders of president Barack Obama as he had promised to end the war in Iraq in his election campaign⁸. Although the "major combat operations in Iraq" had ended as stated by president Bush May 1st 2005 and thus declared the victory of the US and its allies the country was invaded for six more years. The soldiers took part in combatting a new threat which was the rise of al-Qaeda and jihadists and ruling a country that had for the last 24 years had an authoritarian dictator as their leader. The US decentralized the Iraqi administration and army which left many unemployed.

Iraq was left to deal with many problems caused by the war and the end of Saddam's regime. Basic human rights such as water, electricity and food were not provided for everyone. Country's critical infrastructure was in a bad condition and human rights' violations are still everyday.

The effects of the Arab Spring were also visible in Iraq as there were many political protests and conflicts.⁹ The inner conflicts between Shia and Sunni continued and also took place in the neighbouring country's Syria's civil war when both religious groups send their troops to fight in Syria. In 2014 Iraq found itself again in the middle of warfare. Isis invaded areas of Iraq such as the city of Mosul which led to escape of the citizens of those areas to safer cities in Iraq.¹⁰ This is when the Iraqi civil war began between the Iraqi Armed Forces and Isis and other anti-government groups. Iraqi Armed Forces were also greatly supported by Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR), an international military group led by the United States.¹¹ In December 2017 the Iraqi Prime Minister, the administration of Russia and the United States have stated that Isis has been defeated in

⁶ <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/05/the-right-and-wrong-questions-about-the-iraq-war/393497/>

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErIDSJHRVMA>

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhpKmQCCwB8>

⁹ <https://www.globalpolicy.org/humanitarian-issues-in-iraq/consequences-of-the-war-and-occupation-of-iraq.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=55525#.Wi5LclF7fq0>

¹¹ <http://www.inherentresolve.mil/About-Us/>

both Iraq and Syria which meant the victory and end of the Iraqi civil war and the Syrian civil war but the countries' governments still have powerful enemies such as the anti-government groups that participated in the war and fought for Isis.¹²

Definition of Key Terms

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD's)

Biological, chemical, radiological or nuclear weapons that are used with the intention of damaging or killing a large number of people.¹³

Axis of Evil

A term used specifically during Bush's administration referring to Iran, Iraq and North-Korea and later on also Syria, Libya and Cuba. These are the countries president Bush considered as enemies of the United States.¹⁴

Persian Gulf War

Persian Gulf War was a war that took place in 1990-91 when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait claiming that Kuwait was legally a part of Iraq.¹⁵ This was followed by a military intervention named 'Desert Storm' executed by the United Nations' troops consisting of countries such as the United States, France, Saudi-Arabia and Egypt. The intervention resolved into the liberation of Kuwait.¹⁶

Shia and Sunni

Shia and Sunni are branches of Islam. The main difference between the two religious group is that after prophet Muhammad's death the groups wanted different people to be granted leadership of the Islamic community.¹⁷ Today the Shia and Sunni have had great conflicts in the Middle East although there are about 90% of Sunni and the rest are Shia. During Saddam's regime in Iraq the Shia were oppressed despite being the majority compared to Sunni.¹⁸

¹² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42291985>

¹³ <https://www.britannica.com/technology/weapon-of-mass-destruction>

¹⁴ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/1988810.stm>

¹⁵ <http://www.history.com/topics/persian-gulf-war>

¹⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=75&v=IDZt6tZVSqc

¹⁷ <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000002738741.html>

¹⁸ <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/iraqs-oppressed-majority-95250996/>

Democracy

A government system where the people select with free elections their government or parliament to represent them.¹⁹ Iraq was not a democracy during the rule of Saddam Hussein but a dictatorship which is the opposite of democracy and thus it was on the United States' agenda to bring democracy in Iraq when it invaded Iraq.²⁰

Improvised Explosive Device (IED)

An IED or Improvised Explosive Device also more commonly known as a roadside bomb was a weapon used by the Iraqi insurgents who were against the invasion of the United States. IEDs are homemade explosives that contain small objects such as nails and bolts in order to harm the people it's targeted at. IEDs were the biggest cause of death to the US soldiers in Iraq.

Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)

Coalition Provisional Authority was a temporary administration established after the invasion of Iraq. It was led by the US and its administrators were Jay Garner and Paul Bremer. CPA had authority over judicial, executive and legislative matters. CPA was Iraq's administration from 2003 to 2004.²¹

Iraqi Governing Council (IGC)

CPA's unit which consisted of religious leaders and Kurds appointed by the US. Their tasks were for example to represent the different religious and ethnic groups of Iraq in the CPA and appoint interim ministers to Iraq's vacant cabinet. IGC occupied from 2003 to 2004.²²

Arab Spring

Uprisings in North-African and Middle Eastern countries against the reigning governments. Arab Spring started in 2010 from Tunisia and spread from there rapidly to other neighboring countries through social media. In Iraq the Arab Spring occurred as protests due to the worsened security situation. As a result of these protests the prime minister of Iraq at that

¹⁹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/democracy>

²⁰ <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/22/weekinreview/world-managing-freedom-iraq-america-brings-democracy-censor-now-vote-later.html>

²¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/22/weekinreview/world-managing-freedom-iraq-america-brings-democracy-censor-now-vote-later.html>

²² http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3062897.stm

time Nuri al-Malik promised not to run in the elections anymore and resigned in 2014 at the end of his term.²³

Iraqi Civil War

In 2013 the Sunni population of Iraq starts to strongly oppose the government and Iraq finds itself in a state of war again. Islamist fighters take over Fallujah and Ramadi after months of staying in the 'Islamic' province of Iraq, Anbar. United States, Kurdish forces and Iran help Iraq defend the attacks of the insurgents and Islamic fighter. In 2017 November allied forces including Iraq, Kurdistan and the US drive the Islamic State out of the country. Iraqi Prime Minister declares victory over Isis.

Background

During the Cold War in 1955 the kingdom of Iraq formed an alliance with Turkey, Pakistan, Iran and Great Britain named Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) or more commonly known as the Baghdad Pact. This alliance was created against the Soviet Union as Great Britain was a part of the Western World. Baghdad Pact's main goals were to limit the Soviet Union's power in the Middle East and it was similar with the Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Baghdad Pact was dismantled in 1979.²⁴

The Iraqi people were not satisfied with Iraq's form of government as it was a monarchy. In 1958 monarchy was overthrown by Abdul al-Karim Qasim who later became the prime minister of Iraq as the country was declared a republic. The new Iraqi government had the support of the Iraqi Communist Party. He also reinstated the diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Iraq which led to Soviet Union exporting arms in Iraq.

Saddam Hussein was the vice president of Iraq under Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr but influenced the regime greatly although his position was not yet the president. Saddam nationalized Iraq's oil before the energy crisis of 1973 which led to great growth in Iraq's GDP. Iraq's first chemical weapons were developed around the same time under Saddam's monitoring. President al-Bakr was planning the unification of Iraq and Syria and thus Saddam forced him to resign in 1979 since it would have limited his power significantly. During the first few years of his rule Saddam started political purges similar to Joseph Stalin's when he first rose to power. Violence and torture were common during his rule and many died because of it.

²³ <https://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000002873302.html>

²⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Central-Treaty-Organization>

Iran which lies above Iraq experienced an Islamic revolution in 1980 which worried Saddam deeply. Saddam as a Sunni muslim was afraid that a similar uprising might take place in Iraq since the Shia are the majority within religion in Iraq. Saddam commanded an invasion of Iran on September 22nd 1980 to a very oil-rich area, Khuzestan. The Western world was afraid of the spreading of Islamic extremism and thus supported Saddam in his invasion although it was against international law. This event is known as the Iran-Iraq war which lasted until 1988. Saddam committed many crimes against humanity in Iran but this was overlooked by the international community which included the significant powers of the world such as France, United Kingdom and the United States.²⁵

Iraq although it had earlier had great growth in GDP was economically and infrastructurally been damaged by the war. Saddam's next interest was neighbouring, oil-rich Kuwait which lies in the south of Iraq. On August 2nd 1990 he ordered an invasion which quickly led to the intervention of the international community. UN Security Council passed a resolution condemning the Iraqi invasion and opposing economical sanctions on the country and setting a deadline for leaving the country which Iraq ignored.²⁶ Because Iraq refused to leave Kuwait the United Nations took action and sent troops to free Kuwait. The troops consisted of countries such as the United States, France, Egypt and Saudi-Arabia and they were able to free Kuwait in six weeks. This conflict was known as the Persian Gulf War and it lasted from August 1990 to February 1991.²⁷

Although Saddam was highly protested the international community didn't act in the Middle East until the year 2003 in the fear of Islamic Radicalism and the Kurdish independence. After the events of 9/11 president Bush declared war on terror September 20th 2001. 2001-2002 were the years preceding the Iraq War in 2003. During that time one of the main issues on the agenda of the United States was to prove the rest of the world why it was reasonable to attack and free Iraq. The justification of the war was the belief that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and ties with al-Qaeda. The United States also wanted to bring democracy in Iraq since it had been led for over two decades by a dictator.

Although the numerous pieces of evidence which later were found groundless discovered by the US and presentations held in the UN Security Council the war was voted against and therefore it was illegal. Despite this the US bombed and later invaded Iraq March 20th 2003 with the help of for example Australian and British troops although the invasion was also opposed by western countries which are considered allies of the US such as France. The

²⁵ <https://www.biography.com/people/saddam-hussein-9347918>

²⁶ [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/660\(1990\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/660(1990))

²⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDZt6tZVSqc>

troops also found Saddam Hussein after five months of hiding at a farm and executed him by hanging. The US managed to invade the country within two years and president Bush declared the victory of the United States in 2005. The American troops however stayed in the country for six more years to fight Sunni insurgency and jihadists coming from Syria. In 2008 Iraq formed a security pact with the US that guaranteed the troops to leave the country by the end of 2011. In 2011 the United States left the country after six years of war, nearly half a million casualties and about \$1,1 trillion of debt.²⁸

In 2013 the Sunni insurgents begin to revolt against the regime of Iraq as they did in 2008. July 2013 is the time the country is officially in war again. In Autumn 2013 the Islamic State of Iraq (Isis) begin to bomb Kurdistan as a response to Kurds fighting islamists in Syria. The killing of Iraqi people is very rapid and thus October 2013 becomes “the deadliest month since April 2008” according to the government of Iraq. At the beginning of 2014 the islamists seek to invade cities of Fallujah and Ramadi after sowing terror mainly in Anbar, the province that was famous of being controlled by Isis. Ramadi is saved by the government forces but Isis manages to grow its territory with the city of Fallujah. In 2014 after a year of the Iraqi civil war the Sunni insurgents manage to capture Mosul and other crucial cities in Iraq and people of those cities flee the war to safer areas in Iraq. The United States introduce a new strategy to help the Iraqi army - air raids. In 2014 December Iraq strengthened its relations with Kurdistan by signing a deal where oil wealth and military forces are shared among the two area.²⁹

After a few years of the air raids and successful military acts the Iraqi forces and the CJTF-OIR are offensive against and driving the Islamic State out of the country. After multiple political and military conflicts the allied forces succeed in driving Isis out of the country. In November 2017 the Islamic State has only a few redoubts left in the country but already in December 2017 the Prime Minister of Iraq Haider al-Abadi declares victory against the Islamic State. At around the same time also the Russian Armed Forces announce that Isis has been defeated and driven out of Syria.³⁰

²⁸ <https://www.thebalance.com/cost-of-iraq-war-timeline-economic-impact-3306301>

²⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14546763>

³⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/09/world/middleeast/iraq-isis-haider-al-abadi.html>

Key member states and NGOs

Iraq

Iraq is naturally the most significant state when it comes to this matter. The country is facing the consequences of the Iraq war and the Isis' caliphate which are attempted to be resolved in the upcoming General Assembly sessions.

The United States of America

Being one of the most influential countries in the world the United States is often in some way a part of many international situations as they are with the question of Iraq. The US decentralized Iraq's old regime and executed their old leader and therefore took the first steps towards democracy. The United States is also responsible for many casualties and conditions of Iraq as a consequence of the war. The US also helped Iraq drive the Islamic State out of the country during the Iraqi Civil War.³¹

Syrian Arab Republic

Syrian Arab Republic is in a similar situation to Iraq's. The country was with the presence of Isis for a long period of time and is undergoing a civil war at the moment. Being the neighbouring country to Iraq many Iraqis were sent to fight in the Syrian civil war. When discussing the reconciliation in Iraq, Syria cannot be left out due to the Syria-Iraq relations and matters they have in common.³²

Russian Federation

Russian Federation was in fact the party that announced that Isis had been defeated alongside Iraq. Russia bombed Iraq and Syria heavily in order to destroy the headquarters of Isis. The country has interfered with the Syrian civil war and is a significant power in the Middle East as its interests in the oil reserves as do many other countries such as the US.³³

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Millions of refugees left Iraq and escaped to Syria during the US invasion of Iraq in 2007. Due to the grounds of Syrian civil war millions have now escaped from Syria to Europe

³¹ <https://www.cfr.org/interview/us-role-changing-mideast>

³² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034>

³³ <http://www.russia-direct.org/analysis/middle-east-riddle-and-russias-role-it>

which dealing with the biggest refugee crisis since World War II. UNHCR is crucial when discussing the resettlement of refugees which is a part of reconciliation in Iraq.³⁴

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA)

The work of UN ESCWA is focused on issues in Western Asia such as natural resources (oil), equality, economic development and governance and conflict issues. It would perhaps be helpful to hear the organization’s opinion when bringing democracy and trying to reconcile in Iraq.³⁵

Timeline of Events

This timeline includes the events from the United States decision to invade Iraq to this day.

20 March, 2003	The United States invade Iraq from Kuwait after giving Saddam Hussein a deadline to leave the country which he did not follow
July 2003,	The Iraqi Governing Council is established
August 2003	Suicide bomb damages UN Headquarters in Baghdad
3 December, 2003	Al-Qaeda’s car bomb attack in a police station, the capturing of Saddam Hussein
April-May, 2004	Abu Ghraib prison scandal which weakened the United States
December, 2006	Saddam Hussein is executed
September, 2008	US forces give control to the Iraqi government over western Anbar after fighting against jihadists
November, 2008	Security pact - US troops must leave Iraq latest the end of 2011
June, 2009	US troops leave Iraqi towns and cities
December, 2011	US troops leave Iraq
March, 2012	An Arab League summit conference held in Baghdad
November, 2012	Iraqi government cancels an arm trade deal with Russia
April, 2013	Sunni insurgents start conflicts and protest the government
July, 2013	The country is in a state of war again after two years
September, 2013	Isis bombs Kurdistan’s capital Arbil
October, 2013	“The deadliest month since April 2008”
January, 2014	Fallujah and Ramadi are invaded by Isis
June, 2014	The Islamists leave Anbar to capture other cities such as Mosul
September, 2014	A broad based government is formed including Kurds and

³⁴ <http://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do.html>

³⁵ <https://www.unescwa.org/our-work/natural-resources>

Sunni	December, 2014	Kurdistan's and Iraq's deal on oil wealth and military force
	2015-2016	Government fights the Islamic state on the control of Anbar province and Tikrit
	2017 November	Iraqi Armed Forces together with allies have driven almost every islamist out of the cities and areas of Iraq
	2017 December	The Prime Minister of Iraq declares victory over the Islamic State ³⁶

UN Involvement and Relevant Resolutions

- S/RES/677 This resolution condemns Iraq's invasion in Kuwait and sets a time limit which if Iraq decides to not follow a military intervention will take place
- United Nations' military intervention during the Persian Gulf War
- United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) 2003
- United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan announces the Iraq War illegal
- S/RES/1483 Resolution recognizes UK-US as occupying powers in Iraq and lifts the economic sanctions ordered during the Persian Gulf War
- S/RES/2169 Resolution recognizes the presence of the Islamic State in Iraq and other problems occurring in the country
- S/RES/2233 This resolution decides to extend the UNAMI (United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq) due to the presence of the Islamic State in Iraq
- S/RES/2299 The resolution reaffirms the situation of Iraq and the ways it can be improved
- S/RES/2390 This resolution refers to earlier resolutions concerning Iraq and reaffirms them³⁷

Possible Solutions

Since the situation of Iraq has greatly improved because of the defeating of the Islamic State in the country it is possible to negotiate for democracy and equality. It is clear that the differences between the Shia and Sunni drove the country into many conflicts and that is the place where Iraq must start. Although the majority of people are Shia it shall not act as a favoring factor when it comes to decision making. Iraq and its administration should make

³⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14546763>

³⁷ <http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/>

sure that the regime is equal and fair to all parties. The negotiations should take place in Iraq with mostly Iraqi presence but not excluding the international community and especially the strong powers who took part in freeing Iraq from the Islamic State.

Democracy is based on equality between everyone which is not visible in Iraq in any way. Through the help of NGO's and other parties the Iraqi administration should make sure that the efforts in order to decrease income differences and equality between genders to name a few are made. This can be done by for example implementing other countries' systems in order to increase equality and by using the guidance of other UN member states.

Islamic extremism is a very significant threat and actions in order to diminish this threat should be taken. A strong security system with the ability to inform possible upcoming threats should be established. Also the early stages of possible radicalism should be informed of so citizens have the knowledge to inform supervisors of these threats.

Precautionary methods should also be used such as educating the people on the threats and consequences which come with radicalism. Islamic extremism must also be separated from Islam among the international community.

The critical infrastructure of Iraq has suffered severe damage throughout the fifteen-year-old situation it has had. By rebuilding damaged roads, buildings and others jobs are created for the citizens of Iraq. Working infrastructure can also diminish the anti-government attitudes amongst the Iraqi people.

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