

## Iraq

Iraq made progress toward regaining full responsibility over its territory during 2009. At the end of June, Iraqi military and police took over as the primary providers of security across the country as US forces in the Multinational Force in Iraq (MNF-I) redeployed from cities and villages to bases. While it was anticipated that the handover would be tested by a surge in violence, the overall security situation in Iraq continued to show improvement. Despite continued and often large-scale bomb attacks, by November civilian casualties had dropped to under 300 per month, down from a height of over 3,000 per month in 2006, and attacks on Iraqi security forces had reached new lows. Nevertheless, Iraq remains extremely fragile, as political reconciliation among ethnic Kurd, Sunni, and Shi'a parties has been slow-moving. This is an area of particular concern for the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), with gains in security highlighting the need for more progress in the political arena especially as preparations for national elections planned for March 2010 proceeded.

The Coalition Provisional Authority, led by the United States, began governing Iraq following the removal of Saddam Hussein and his regime. Iraq's sovereignty was partially restored with the establishment of an interim government on 28 June 2004. The Multinational Force in Iraq, which succeeded the coalition forces, was initially deployed at the request of the Iraqi government and authorized by Security Council Resolution 1546 (2004). In November 2008—and in advance of the MNF-I's mandate expiration—Iraq and the United States negotiated a security agreement detailing the terms of continued US presence, the gradual transfer of

<b>Multinational Force in Iraq (MNF-I)</b>	
• Authorization Date	16 October 2003 (UNSC Res. 1511), 8 June 2004 (UNSC Res. 1546)
• Start Date	November 2003
• Force Commander	General Raymond Odierno
• Budget	\$93,525.1 million (1 October 2008–30 September 2009)
• Strength as of 30 September 2009	Troops: 130,000

<b>NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I)</b>	
• Authorization Date	8 June 2004 (UNSC Res. 1546), 30 July 2004 (establishment of NATO Training Implementation Mission in Iraq [NTM-I]), 16 December 2004 (modified into full-fledged training mission)
• Start Date	August 2004
• Force Commander	Lt. General Frank Helmick (United States)
• Budget	\$24.8 million (1 October 2008–30 September 2009)
• Strength as of 30 September 2009	Troops: 200

security responsibilities to Iraqi authorities, and the withdrawal of US forces by the end of 2011. Under the agreement, the MNF-I's primary objectives are to support Iraqi security structures in maintaining stability and combating terrorist groups—including through military operations—and to continue training and equipping Iraqi

### UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI)

• Authorization and Start Date	14 August 2003 (UNSC Res. 1500), expanded 8 June 2004 (UNSC Res. 1546)
• Head of Mission	Ad Melkert (Netherlands)
• Strength as of 31 October 2009	Troops: 221 Military Observers: 10 International Civilian Staff: 321 Local Civilian Staff: 456

*For detailed mission information see p. 250*

security forces. Australian, British, and Romanian contingents withdrew from Iraq in July 2009, leaving the United States, with 130,000 troops, as the sole foreign military presence. To reflect this change, the US command was renamed the US Force in Iraq (USF-I) as of 1 January 2010.

The UN Assistance Mission in Iraq was established in 2003. Following an August 2003 bomb attack on its headquarters that killed Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello and twenty-one staff members, the remaining staff relocated to Amman, Jordan, until 2004, after which it returned to Baghdad headquarters to resume its mandated task of supporting the Iraqi people in the formation of new governing structures. During 2007, the Security Council enhanced UNAMI's mandate to involve greater advisement and assistance in political facilitation, and the promotion of regional cooperation between Iraq and the countries of the region.

Elections in 2005 led to the selection of Nouri al-Maliki as prime minister. While it was hoped that consensus around an agenda for national reconciliation would follow, such hopes were dashed as security deteriorated. In the face of a dire situation in early 2007, then-US president George W. Bush announced a change in the MNF-I's approach. Otherwise known as "the surge," the plan enlarged the US military commitment by approximately 40,000 troops, bringing the total number of US forces to a

height of over 170,000 and allowing for increases in counterinsurgency operations and an overall heightened presence in and around Baghdad.

This enlargement, combined with the development of Iraqi security forces, political reconciliation with insurgent leaders, and the alignment of "awakening councils" with MNF-I operational priorities, yielded positive security results in 2008 that continued into 2009. Improved security allowed the MNF-I to gradually hand over security operations to the Iraqi army and police. At the end of 2009, over 660,000 Iraqi forces had reached operational readiness through training provided by the MNF-I and the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I).

Gains in security, however, will be sustained only with genuine progress in political reconciliation between Iraq's Kurd, Sunni, and Shi'a communities. With this in mind, UNAMI has continued to assist Iraqi authorities in building their capacity for governing and assisting negotiations. UNAMI supported successful provincial elections in January 2009 and then turned its operational focus to two priorities: preparing for national elections planned for the first months of 2010, and resolving disputes over ethnically contested internal border areas.

Preparations for the national elections did see some progress. Electoral legislation, essential to the holding of polls in 2010, proved to be a divisive issue that threatened the unity of the Iraqi government on multiple occasions. Nevertheless, through UNAMI's assistance, and with added pressure from the US administration, the legislation finally passed in December. The election law authorizes the creation of a 325-seat Iraqi parliament; voters are to cast ballots for individual candidates rather than voting only for a political party, as was the case for the previous two elections in 2005. Further, the Iraqi diaspora will be able to cast absentee ballots that will be counted in their home provinces.

Resolving the disputed internal border areas remained an impediment to political reconciliation throughout the year, and more broadly

reflects the challenges facing both Iraq and the international presences there. As tensions between Kurds, Sunni, and Shi'a regarding these issues heightened, the importance of achieving a political solution that capitalizes on the security

gains became ever more apparent. Iraq is at a critical point in its postconflict recovery and much could be lost if the country's leaders are unable to overcome differences and take on the full responsibilities of sovereignty.