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Iraq

Status Report

March 4, 2009



Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
U.S. Department of State



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HIGHLIGHTS – President Obama Announces New Iraq Policy



- **President Obama Announces Timetable for Military Drawdown:** President Obama announced February 27 the drawdown of U.S. combat troops from Iraq, declaring that by August 31, 2010, our combat mission in Iraq will end. 35,000 to 50,000 troops will remain to serve as a transitional force to train and advise Iraqi Security Forces, provide security to civilian agencies and conduct targeted anti-terrorism operations. All U.S. troops will be withdrawn by the end of 2011 as called for in the bilateral Security Agreement. The President called for strong political, diplomatic, and civilian efforts to build a foundation for long-term peace and security.
- **President Nominates New U.S. Ambassador to Iraq:** President Obama announced he will nominate Ambassador Chris Hill to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Iraq. The President stated, “From his time in the Peace Corps, to his work in Kosovo and Korea, Ambassador Hill has been tested, and he has shown the pragmatism and skill that we need right now. He will be supported by the courageous and capable work of so many American diplomats and aid workers who are serving in Iraq.” Ambassador Hill currently serves as the State Department’s Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.
- **Secretary Gates Discusses New Mission:** During an interview with the media March 1, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said the U.S. military will conduct a “very different mission” in Iraq once combat troops are withdrawn in August 2010. He said the residual force of 35,000 to 50,000 soldiers would have a limited counterinsurgency mission, but would focus primarily on training Iraqi Security Forces, as combat brigades are replaced by “advisory and assistance brigades.” The Secretary called the move from a combat force to a transition force a step toward fulfilling the terms of the exit strategy established in the Security Agreement.

President Obama’s Speech: “Responsibly Ending the War in Iraq”

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-of-President-Barack-Obama-Responsibly-Ending-the-War-in-Iraq/

POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation



Rule of law advances in Iraq

Chemical Ali Receives Third Death Sentence:

- **Ali Hassan al-Majeed, also known as Chemical Ali, received his third death sentence March 2 for helping to kill and uproot Shi'a Muslims in 1999. Previously, he was sentenced for his role in a 1980s campaign against the Kurds and for aiding in the murder of thousands of Shi'a during the 1991 uprising. Of the 14 defendants in the most recent case, two were sentenced to death and four received life in prison.**

Tariq Aziz Acquitted of Crimes Against Humanity:

- **The Iraqi High Tribunal acquitted Tariq Aziz March 2 of crimes against humanity against Shi'a protesters following the 1999 assassination of the Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadeq al-Sadr. Aziz served as foreign minister (1983-1991) and deputy prime minister (1997-2003) to Saddam Hussein. Aziz remains in custody on charges that he was involved in the 1983 Kurdish massacre.**



POLITICAL – Government of Iraq

Coalition Affiliation (at time of appointment)
United Iraq Alliance
Kurdistani Alliance
Iraqi Accord Front
Iraqi National List
Other / Independent

(F) = Female

***Formerly Iraqiya

Prime Minister
Nuri Kamil al-Maliki

President
Jalal Talabani
Deputy President
Tariq al-Hashimi
Deputy President
Adil Abd al-Mahdi

Deputy Prime Minister
Rafi Hiad Jiad al-Issawi

Deputy Prime Minister
Dr. Barham Ahmed Salih

Minister of Agriculture
Ali Husayn Kadhum al-Bahadili

Minister of Communications
Faruq Abd al-Qadir Abd al-Rahman

Minister of Culture
Mahir Dilli Ibrahim al-Hadithi

Minister of Defense
Abd al-Qadir Muhammad Jasim al-Aubaidi

Minister of Displacement & Migration
Dr. Abd al-Samad Rahman Sultan

Minister of Electricity
Dr. Karim Wahid al-Hasan

Minister of Education
Dr. Khudayr Mousa Jaffar al-Khuzai

Minister of Environment
Dr. Nermin Othman Hassan (F)

Minister of Finance
Bayan Jabr

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hoshiyar Mahmud Zebari

Minister of Health
Dr. Salih Mahdi Mutlab al-Hasnawi

Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Abid Dhiyab al-Ujayli

Minister of Human Rights
Eng. Wijdan Mikhail Salim (F)

Minister of Industry & Minerals
Fawzi Fransu Hariri

Minister of Interior
Jawad Kadhum Eidan al-Bulani

Minister of Justice
Dara Nur al-Din

Minister of Housing & Construction
Bayan Dizayee (F)

Minister of Labor & Social Affairs
Eng. Mahmud Muhammad Jawad al-Radi

Minister of Oil
Dr. Husayn Ibrahim al-Shahristani

Minister of Planning
Ali Ghalib Baban

Minister of Trade
Dr. Abd al-Falah Hassan Hummadi al-Sudani

Minister of Science & Technology
Dr. Raid Jahid Fahmi

Minister of Municipalities & Public Works
Riyadh Abd al-Hamza Gharib

Minister of Transportation
Amir Abd al-Jabar Ismail

Minister of Water Resources
Dr. Abd al-Latif Jamal Rashid

Minister of Youth & Sports
Eng. Jasim Muhammad Jaffar

Minister of State for Civil Society Affairs
Dr. Thamer Jafar al-Zubaidi

Minister of State for National Dialogue
Dr. Akram Mousa Hadi al-Hakim

Minister of State for National Security
Eng. Shirwan Kamil al-Waili

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
Dr. Muhammad Munajid Aifan al-Dulaymi

Minister of State for Provinces Affairs
Dr. Khulud Sami Izzara al-Majun (F)

Minister of State for Tourism and Antiquities
Dr. Qahtan Abbas Numanal-Jabburi

Minister of State for Women's Affairs

Minister of State for CoR Affairs
Safa al-Din Muhammad al-Safi

Minister of State at Large
Muhammad Abbas Muhammad al-Uraybi

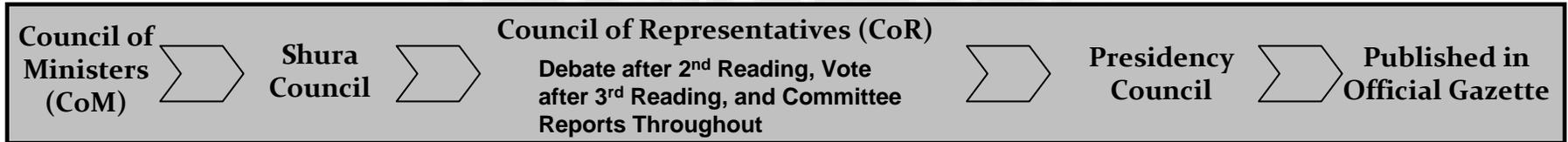
Minister of State at Large
Ali Muhammad Ahmad

Minister of State at Large
Hasan Radhi Kazim al-Sari

POLITICAL – Key Legislation



Legislative Process



- **Hydrocarbons Package:** The Framework Law was resubmitted to the Oil and Gas Committee on October 26 and then returned to the Council of Ministers. There has been no progress on the other three laws in the package.
- **Budget:** The Council of Representatives passed a budget on March 5. The budget must now be approved by the Presidency Council.

POLITICAL - Refugee Update



- **Regional governments report hosting as many as 2 million Iraqi refugees.**
- **The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that over 2.8 million Iraqis are displaced inside Iraq.**
- **In FY08, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration contributed \$287.08 million to international organizations and nongovernmental organizations to assist displaced Iraqis inside the country and in the region.**
- **The U.S. admitted 13,823 Iraqi refugees in FY08 (which ended September 30).**
- **Since the program's inception in FY07, 21,521 Iraqi refugees have been admitted for U.S. resettlement; in FY09 alone, the U.S. seeks to admit a minimum of 17,000 Iraqi refugees.**
- **In FY 2008, a total of 1,142 Special Immigrant Visa (SIVs) were issued for Afghan and Iraqi translators and interpreters (under the Section 1059 program).**
- **As of December 2008, a total of 1,311 SIVs have been issued in FY09 (under the Section 1244 program).**



ECONOMIC – Oil

Oil sector remains active despite absence of new federal laws.

Crude Oil Update:

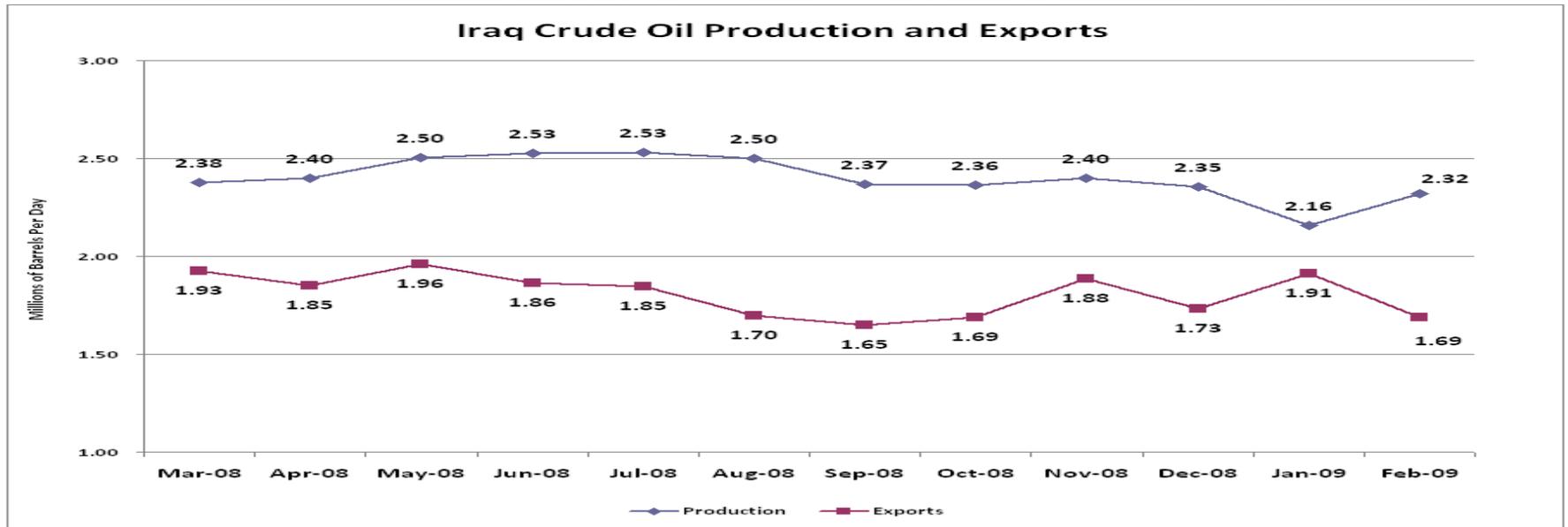
Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:

Basrah Light at \$38.96/barrel

Dated Brent at \$42.99/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$41.67/barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$42.52/barrel



Revenue estimates:

2007: \$41.0 Billion

2008: \$61.9 Billion *

2009 (ytd): \$2.31 Billion

* Estimate adjusted as a result of newly-available Iraqi data.

ECONOMIC – Oil



The Iraqi Government addresses dependence on oil revenue

Iraq's Prime Minister Discusses Diversifying from Oil:

- Prime Minister Maliki said Iraq's continued dependence on revenues from oil will make it more vulnerable to global financial crises. Speaking February 25 at a two-day economic conference in Baghdad, he added that Iraq will use funds from increased oil production to open new enterprises and diversify its sources of revenue.

Oil Official Reports Export Decline in February:

- The head of Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organization Falah al-Amiri reported that February oil exports fell to 1.8 million barrels per day (bdp) down from 1.9 million bpd in January. Amiri attributed the decline to weather and infrastructure problems. About 75% of Iraq's exports went through the Gulf while the remainder was sent north to the Turkish port of Ceyhan.

ECONOMIC – Oil



The Iraqi Government addresses dependence on oil revenue

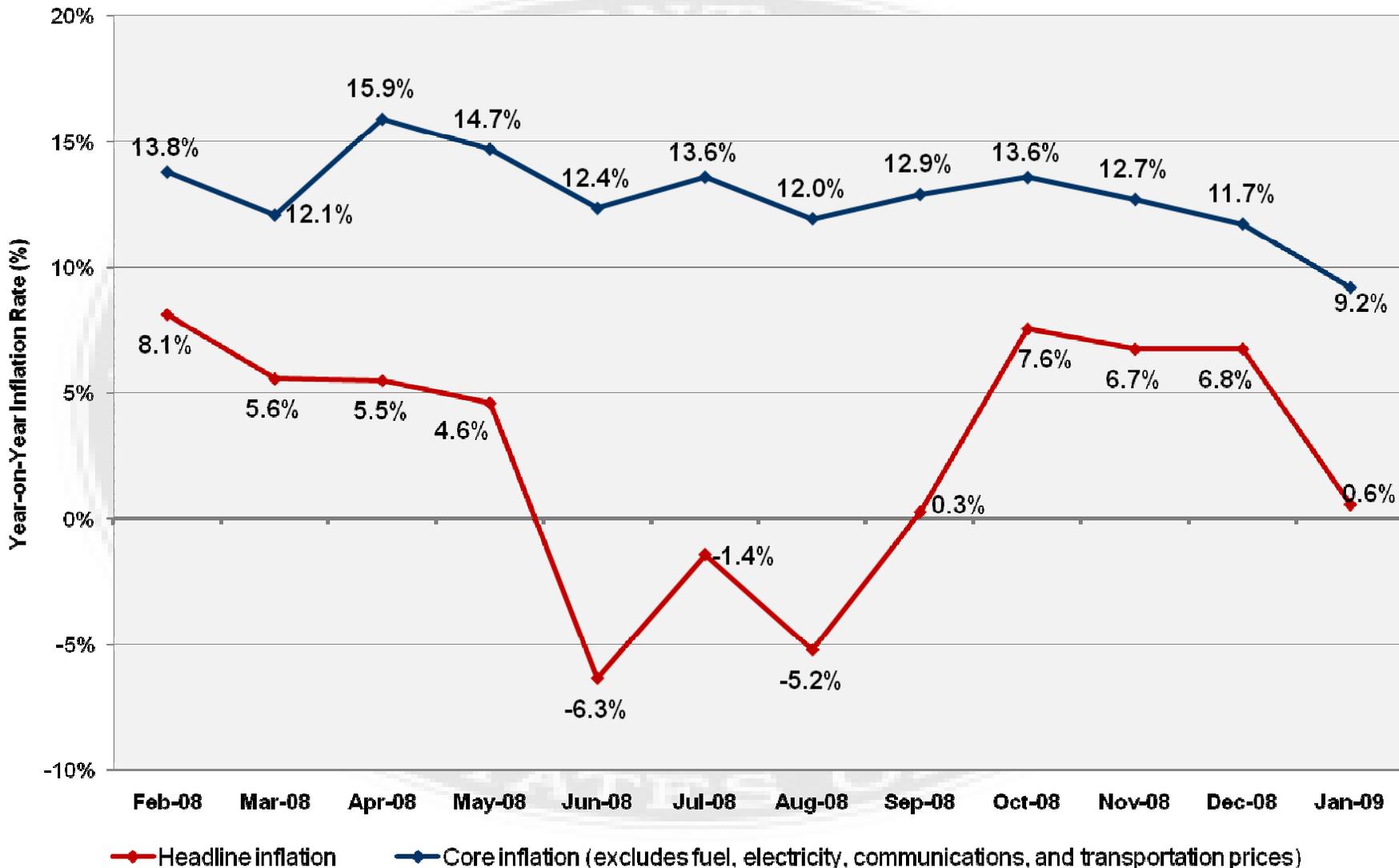
Mesopotamia Petroleum Signs Joint Venture Deal in Basrah:

- **The Ministry of Oil announced that the Iraqi Drilling Company has signed a joint venture agreement with the Mesopotamia Petroleum Company . The joint venture will operate drilling rigs for the Basrah-based South Oil Company. The joint venture is expected to drill up to 60 new wells per year to help increase production in the south. Mesopotamia Oil was founded in 2005 by two British-based companies: Ramco Energy and Midmar Energy.**

ECONOMIC - Fiscal and Monetary Affairs



Year-on-Year Inflation



ECONOMIC – Fiscal and Monetary Affairs



Iraq's budget remains under debate over low oil revenues

Economic Indicator	This Week	Last Week	Last Month	Last Year
Iraqi Commercial Bond Sales				
Price (USD)	\$44.48	\$43.94	\$44.89	\$66.08
Yield	14.40%	14.55%	14.29%	9.95%

Voting Delayed on 2009 Budget:

- **Iraq's parliament delayed voting on the 2009 budget February 28 and may need to cut its budget again due to lower-than-expected oil revenues. Ayad al-Samarraie, a Sunni parliamentarian, said he expected further cuts to the budget and urged lawmakers to examine all spending. He proposed putting more money into the electricity sector and other public projects while cutting spending in other areas. Lt. Gen. Frank Helmick, commander of Multi-National Security Transition Command, said in an interview with the Associated Press that the decrease in oil revenues will also force Iraq to cut its security budget, forcing decisions on whether to decrease spending on arms, patrol boats, or air power.**

ECONOMIC - Public Services



Improving Iraq's air transportation infrastructure will help reintegrate Iraq into the regional and international community

First Flight from UAE Arrives in Mosul:

- **Mosul International Airport received its first flight from the United Arab Emirates February 24. It was the first flight from the UAE to land in Mosul since the airport reopened in December 2008 following an 18-month closure for repairs. Iraqi Airways and Abu Dhabi-based charter carrier Jupiter Airlines signed a charter agreement to service this route. Since its reopening, the only international flights have been charter flights to Saudi Arabia for pilgrims attending the Hajj.**

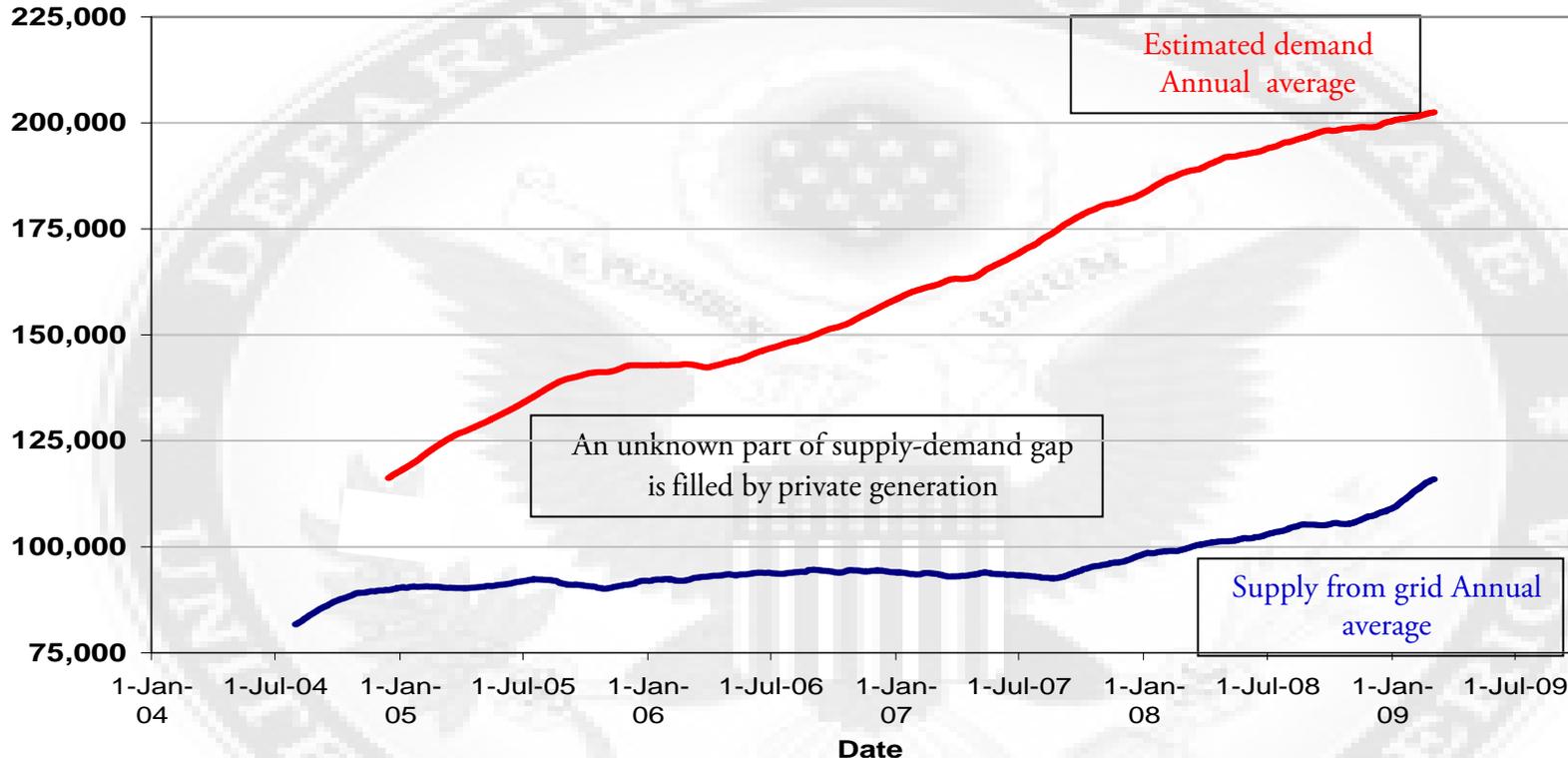
Development Plan for Baghdad International Airport Area Announced:

- **Iraq's Ministry of Transportation announced it has begun planning \$50 billion worth of development in the area surrounding Baghdad International Airport. The preliminary plan envisions 16 developments, including industrial and commercial sites. In the last year, the airport has undergone \$100 million-worth of rehabilitation.**



Public Services – Electricity

GOI needs to strengthen policy actions to manage demand and usage patterns



- Daily electricity supply from the grid February 25-March 3 was 31% above the year-earlier period and met 70% of demand, compared with 57% for the year-earlier period.
- Based on estimated demand, hours of power after meeting demand from essential services were Baghdad 16.0 and Iraq 15.3. Year-ago levels were Baghdad 8.9 and Iraq 11.1.

Beyond Baghdad



USG officials and provincial agricultural leaders at the MAAC inaugural meeting in Amara.

“...we will help Iraq's institutions strengthen their capacity to protect the rule of law, confront corruption, and deliver basic services.”

President Barack Obama

Recent Highlights

Maysan

Maysan Agricultural Advisory Committee (MAAC) was launched last month to bring GOI, provincial government leaders and US experts together to collectively develop long-term agriculture strategies by prioritizing projects, cooperatively identifying funding sources, and developing the necessary infrastructure and human capital to support these agricultural programs.

Kirkuk

PRT facilitated the creation of a provincial Drought Mitigation and Relief Task Force to address the impending summer drought. The TF includes seven local Director Generals (Water Resources, Wells, Distribution, Agriculture, Trade, Health, Environment) plus the Deputy Governor (Chairman) and the Provincial Council's Agricultural Committee (Dpty Chair). The inter-ethnic composition of the committee is an encouraging example of placing the interest of the people of the entire province over the interest of one's ethnic group.

Wasit

Last week, the Governor of Wasit province, Latif Hamad Tarfa, in conjunction with Wasit PRT, USAID Tijara project, and 41st Fires Brigade, opened a two-day economic fair in the provincial capitol of al-Kut to support infrastructure and develop the local economy. The event, organized by the Iraqi Businessmen Federation and the Center to Develop Business in Wasit, was the first economic fair of 2009 and included the participation of 50 Arab and foreign companies.

DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement



Foreign delegations continue to visit Baghdad, while Iraq strengthens diplomatic relations with Iran

EU Delegation Visits Baghdad:

- **Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari welcomed a delegation from the European Union to Baghdad February 25. The delegation arrived for the seventh round of discussions over a bilateral trade and cooperation agreement between Iraq and the EU. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Zebari discussed the recent visits by regional and foreign delegations to Iraq and affirmed the Iraqi government's commitment to expanding economic and trade cooperation with the European Union.**

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Visits Iraq:

- **In Kuwait's highest level visit to Iraq since the 1990 invasion, Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Sheikh Muhammad al-Sabah, traveled to Baghdad February 26. He met Prime Minister Maliki, Foreign Minister Zebari, and other high-ranking officials. Discussion focused on oilfields, maritime borders, and the consequences of the 1990-1991 war.**

DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement



Foreign delegations continue to visit Baghdad, while Iraq strengthens diplomatic relations with Iran

UK Foreign Secretary Makes Unannounced Visit to Iraq: :

- **British Foreign Secretary David Miliband visited Baghdad and Basrah February 26 and 27. He declared Iraq “open for business,” stating it was a good place for British firms to do business and that the UK was committed to investing in the country. Miliband met Prime Minister Maliki and Foreign Minister Zebari, as well as British troops currently stationed in Basrah. He told a press conference in Baghdad: “With the improving security situation ... our relationship becomes one defined not just by defense and security but also by politics, by economics, by culture and by education.”**

Foreign Ministries of Iraq and Iran Sign MOU:

- **On February 28, Iraqi Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Labeed Abbawi, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Iranian Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Ali Ahani. The agreement calls for cooperation between the two foreign ministries to establish reciprocal training courses and scholarship exchange programs for postgraduate studies. The Iranian Foreign Ministry said it would hold two diplomatic training courses for 15 Iraqi diplomats in Iran and offered to grant 100 scholarships for masters programs and Persian language training for Iraqi diplomats at Iranian universities.**

DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement



Foreign delegations continue to visit Baghdad, while Iraq strengthens diplomatic relations with Iran

Iran's Rafsanjani Visits Iraq:

- **The former President of Iran, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, traveled to Baghdad March 2 to meet President Talabani. This trip, by one of Iran's most influential clerics, followed Talabani's visit to Iran the previous week. During a televised press briefing Talabani said Rafsanjani would have talks with Iraqi officials on political, cultural, and economic matters.**

SECURITY - Situation Update



Sentencing of religious Shi'a extremists

28 Members of Messianic Cult Sentenced to Death:

- **An official from the Iraqi Federal Court in Dhi Qar announced the death sentence of 28 members of a Shi'a messianic cult devoted to the Mahdi February 26. They were convicted of brutal attacks on Shi'a pilgrims over the past two years. Another 19 members were sentenced to life imprisonment, and the court acquitted six others. The cult led a battle against U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces in Najaf in January 2007. In September 2007, ten leaders of the group were sentenced to death by an Iraqi court and dozens more received long prison terms.**

SECURITY – Security Transition



President Obama announces way ahead for U.S. involvement in Iraq as the GOI assumes additional responsibilities from Coalition Forces

Multiple Locations Handed Over to Iraqis In Anbar:

- **Multi-National Force-West (MNF-W) handed over responsibility of two observation posts and a patrol base to Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) during the month of February. Additionally, MNF-W closed two observation posts and one patrol base. The closings and transfers are a result of the ISF's responsibility to operate independently of Coalition Forces in accordance with the U.S.-Iraqi Security Agreement.**

Kirkuk's SOI Officially Transferred to GOI Control:

- **Multi-National Division-North Commanding General Robert Caslen and officials from the 12th Iraqi Army Division transferred responsibility of Kirkuk's Sons of Iraq to GOI control February 25. The transition will be finalized April 1 when the SOI receive their first payment from the GOI.**



SECURITY - Iraqi Security Forces

Iraq Security Forces as of Dec 31, 2008 ^a			
Component	Current Authorized Personnel ^b	Assigned Personnel ^c	Total Trained Personnel to date ^d
Ministry of Interior (MoI) Forces ^e			
Iraqi Police Service ^f	334,739	305,831	220,013
National Police	46,580	43,538	56,577
Border Enforcement ^g	45,550	40,976	38,846
Total MoI	426,869	390,345	315,436
Ministry of Defense (MoD) Forces ^h			
Army	174,805	196,127	240,058
Army Training and Support Forces ⁱ	22,345	19,990	22,930
Air Force	3,690	2,148	4,572
Navy	3,596	1,887	1,494
Total MoD	204,436	220,152	269,054
Counter Terrorism Bureau			
Special Operations ^j	6,190	4,209	4,564
Total Iraqi Security Forces	637,495	614,706	589,054

- Increase of 1.6K assigned and 8.5K trained since last report.

a. Numbers do not include ministry staffs.

b. Numbers reflect Government of Iraq (GOI) authorizations.

c. Numbers are based upon GOI payroll data and do not reflect present for duty totals.

d. Numbers reflect total Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) personnel trained to date, some of which are no longer assigned due to casualties, AWOL, and normal separation.

e. MoI strength excludes other services within Ministry Of Interior (MOI), including the MOI HQ, MOI Forensics, Facility Protection Services, and contracted guards.

f. The Iraqi Police Service consists of all provincial police forces (station, patrol, traffic, and special units) assigned to all 18 Iraqi provinces.

g. Data associated with Ports of Entry Directorate has been pulled out of the Directorate of Border Enforcement. Expect authorized and assigned strengths to fluctuate as the new PoED organization takes shape.

h. The Ministry Of Defense (MOD) authorized numbers are derived from Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTOEs).

i. The MoD Army Training and Support Forces include logistics units and training center cadre.

j. Does not include personnel assigned to Counterterrorism Bureau (CTB) or Counterterrorism Command (CTC) headquarters.

CONTACT INFORMATION



This brief draws from multiple sources. References are cited on the following pages.

For additional information, please see:

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<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/2207/c26517.htm>
- Department of State, Section 1227 Report on Iraq
<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/1227/c26862.htm>
- Department of Defense, Section 9010 Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq
http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/9010_Report_to_Congress_Dec_08.pdf

Please forward all questions and/or comments to:

NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov



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- Slide 15:
- Source for Stories: PRT Weekly Summary 20-28 February 2009; PRT Weekly Summary 8-14 February 2009
 - Source for President Obama's Quote: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-of-President-Barack-Obama-Responsibly-Ending-the-War-in-Iraq/



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- BBC News, February 26, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7912476.stm>
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