SETA

The New Iraq,
The Middle East and Turkey:
A Turkish View

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Legend

- ✪ National capital
- ◉ Governorate capital
- ○ Town, village
- ✈ Airport
- International boundary
- Governorate boundary
- Expressway
- Main road
- Secondary road
- Railroad

IRAQ

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300 km

0 50 100 150 200 mi

I. Introduction

The new era ushered in by the invasion of Iraq on March 20, 2003 continues to have a ripple effect on Iraq and the Middle East. The short-lived war brought the Baath regime to an end and a new post-Saddam period begun. For the United States, the invasion of Iraq was a matter of regime change. The events that unfolded after the end of the major combat turned it into a costly invasion and a difficult process of state building. While overthrowing Saddam Hussein was the easy part, building stability and starting a new political process in Iraq proved to be extremely complicated and difficult. In the aftermath of the war, the state mechanism in Iraq collapsed and a huge vacuum of power emerged.

The developments since May 1st, 2003 when the US President George W. Bush declared the end of 'major combat' indicate that people of Iraq, countries in the region and Turkey are entering a difficult period in the post-invasion era. Due to a number of unforeseen factors, developments in Iraq will have far reaching consequences for the region's future. This report will discuss these developments and their consequences for Iraq, its neighbors and Turkey.

Iraq is like a miniature of the Middle East with its population structure and social characteristics. Each domestic actor in Iraq has relations with ethnic and religious groups in the neighboring countries. The Kurds in northern Iraq have links with the Kurds in Syria, Turkey and Iran; the Shia Arabs have relations with Arab and non-Arab Shias in Iran, Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia; the Sunni Arabs have relations with the Sunni Arabs in Syria and Jordan and Islamic movements in the Arab world; and the Turcomans have relations with Turkey. All of the neighboring and regional countries have also interest in and relations with these groups and actors in Iraq. Therefore the future developments in Iraq will affect neighboring countries while policies pursued by its neighbors will inevitably have an impact on Iraq.

This report will first analyze the current situation and then examine the various factors that shape Iraq's today. The factors that are also expected to shape its future will be examined after discussing the mistakes of the occupying administration and role of the unforeseen elements in Iraq's domestic structure. These factors will be discussed under four main categories i.e., security, politics, law and economy. The consequences of positive and negative developments stemming from these interrelated factors will be evaluated. Their impact on the region and Turkey will also be analyzed.

A. The New Era in Iraq

Before the beginning of war, it was assumed that the Shia Arabs who make up about 60-65 percent of the population would have a decisive influence on the future of Iraq. The Shia Arabs, who were deprived of state power and pushed to the margins until the war, were expected to seize the most effective position when a democratic regime was established in Iraq. Moreover, the Kurds were also expected to achieve important political gains after the war as the closest ally of the US. It was also argued that the Kurds would be in a position to opt for a federation or an independent state depending on the outcome of the war and its aftermath.

It is obvious that all of these factors would have an impact on the regional and international balance of power in Iraq and the broader Middle East. They can be summarized as follows:

- In case the Kurds establish an independent state, the Shia percentage would rise to 80-85 percent and Iraq would become a Shia-majority state. The US is opposed to the establishment of an independent Kurdish state to preempt this possibility, and tries to bring the Kurds to a moderate position in the framework of a formula for a federation.

- Establishment of an independent Kurdish state would lead to instability in Syria, Iran and Turkey and consolidate ethnic-sectarian politics in the region.

- Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries would not accept the establishment of a second Shia or Shia-dominated state in the region in addition to Iran. These countries are also concerned about an Arab Shia state in southern Iraq, given that they have significant Shia minorities in their nearby provinces.

- Before the war, the US had contacts with liberal and pro-western Shia Arab leaders in exile and it expected that these groups would be effective in post-war Iraq. Contrary to the American expectations, however, pro-Iranian and anti-West groups attained prominence.

- Some Arab countries see Iraq as part of Arab nation and oppose the establishment of a Kurdish state in Iraq as well as the policy of turning Iraq into a Shia country, which could easily fall under the direct or indirect influence of Iran. It is not unlikely that some Arab countries would support instability in Iraq to prevent the realization of such scenarios.
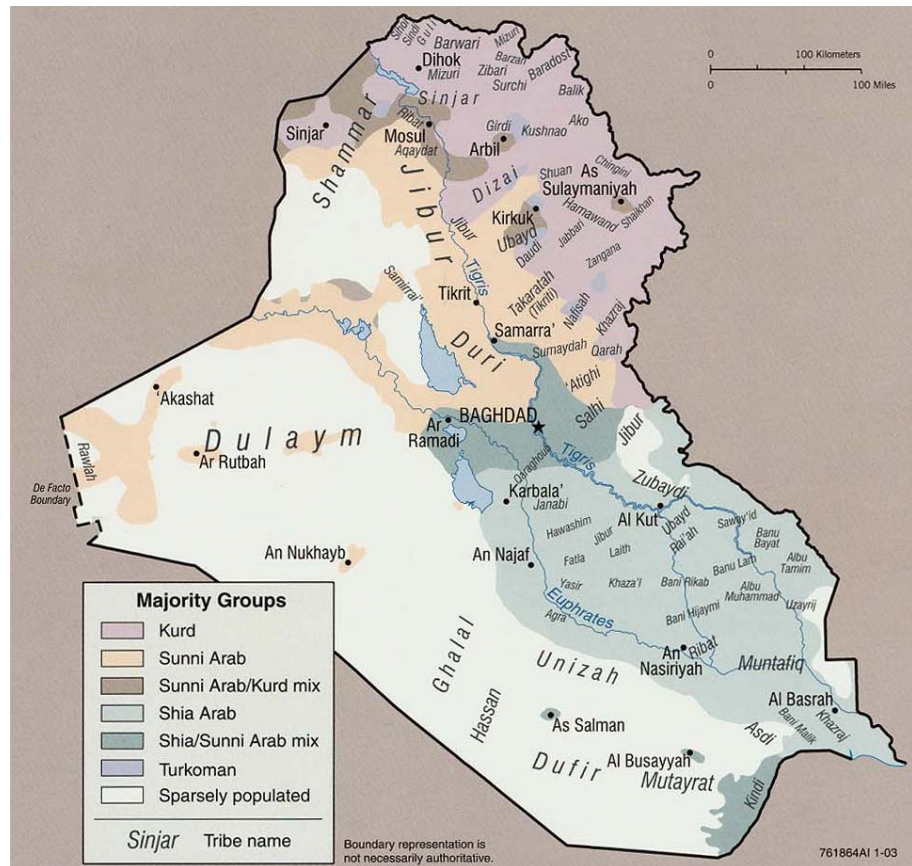
The new developments which emerged soon after the outbreak of war have complicated the process of achieving stability. As it will be discussed in detail later on, preserving the integrity of Iraq, achieving political stability and transition to democratic governance depend on many variables. In this context, the developments in Iraq would affect regional dynamics while possible or unforseen events in the region would have a strong influence on the process of restructuring in Iraq.

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B. Turkey and the New Iraq

The events before and after the war in Iraq concern Turkey directly. The establishment of a federative Kurdish region in northern Iraq, political position of Turcomans in the new Iraq, participation of Sunni Arabs in the political process are among the factors that profoundly influence relations between the two countries as well as Turkey's policy towards Iraq. The position of Kurds and Turcomans and the new equilibrium that they have created in Iraq indicate the beginning of a new era for Turkey's own Kurdish population as well as its policy towards Iraq and the region. This issue will be discussed in the third part of the report. Now, we can examine the factors that shape Turkey's policy on Iraq in the new era with a special reference to history, geography, population, economic relations and regional policy.

- Turkey has had **historical and geographic** relations with Iraq for over four hundred years since the Ottoman period. These close political, social and economic relations have continued during the Republican era. The geopolitics of Iraq with a border of 352 kilometers with Turkey has a critical importance for the security of Turkey. Regardless of the regimes in Iraq, the integrity and stability of Iraq has always been important for Turkey.

- **The Kurds and the Turcomans** have always been considered important factors by Turkey. From 1920s to early 1990s, Turkey's main perspective on Iraq has been through the lenses of Iraqi Kurds and security. As a result of the post-1990 developments, Turkey's policy towards Iraq assumed an ethnicity-based character because of the Kurds who were seen as related to the Kurdish population in Turkey on the one hand, and the Turcomans who played a central role in Turkey's policy towards Iraq on the other.

- Turkey, which closely monitors the developments in Northern Iraq because of the **PKK** terrorism, opposes a Kurdish state and a Federal Kurdish Region. Regardless of the nature of political formation in this zone, however, northern Iraq will become a centre of attraction in the future for all Kurds living in the region.

- Turkey's relations with the **Turcomans** constitute the other part of the equation. The 'Turcoman factor', which emerged as a political instrument in northern Iraq after 1991, has become an element which limits the policy maneuvers of Turkey towards Iraq and the region. The shortcomings of Iraqi Turcoman policies based on the Iraqi Turcoman Front (ITF) model can easily be seen in post-Saddam Iraq and in the picture that emerged after the elections in 2005. (See the "Social and Political Analysis of Turcomans")

- Turkey's **economic relations** with Iraq are important for both countries. Turkey participated in the embargo against Iraq which the United Nations (UN) announced with the efforts of US during the first Gulf War. Turkey suspended the border trade with Iraq during this period. Turkey's total economic loss is estimated between 30 to

80 billion US dollars because of the sanctions in the post-1991 period. Oil prices, border trade, regional relations and terror costs are the main items of this loss for Turkish economy. Today, the Turkish-Iraqi economic relations have a great potential for compensating these losses.

- The future developments in Iraq are likely to cause ruptures in Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East. Although Turkey wanted to see the preservation of the unitary state system in Iraq, it was forced to accept the new federative structure. This situation requires the establishment and improvement of new relations with the Kurds in northern Iraq and the Shia and Sunni actors in Baghdad. Turkey should formulate a new policy concerning the Shia Arab power which is on the rise in Iraq, and develop flexible strategies towards a possible 'Shia crescent'.

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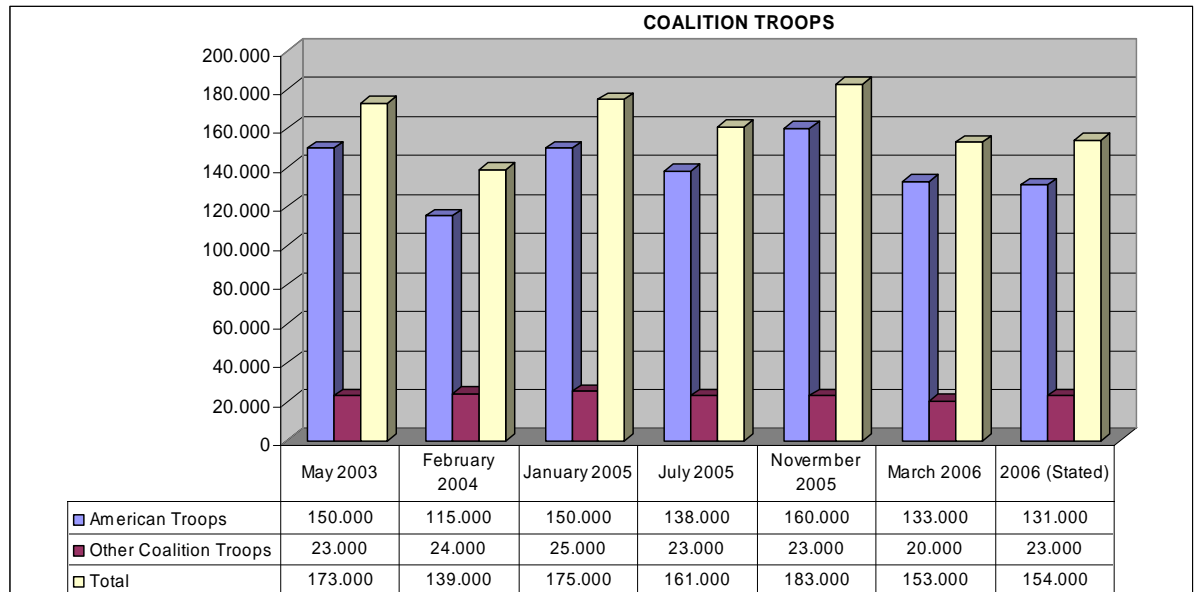
II. Iraq's Today

A. SECURITY: The Cycle of Violence, New Iraqi Army and the US Withdrawal Plan

The most serious problem with regard to the establishment of stability in Iraq is the security vacuum or what we might call the 'cycle of violence'. The authority vacuum which emerged during and after the invasion of Iraq is at the forefront of factors that lead to cycle of violence and problem of security in the country. The mistakes made during the invasion of Iraq and Iraq's internal dynamics may elevate the concerns of security and violence to an insoluble crisis. These factors can be described as follows:

- **Invasion of Iraq with a relatively small armed force**: It is clear that it was impossible to conduct a successful military operation with a minimum number of armed forces. The US Defense Secretary Ronald Rumsfeld and his advisors had intended to conduct a high-tech war with 'smart bombs' as they were expecting a domestic rebellion. The opponents of the Baath regime in Iraq such as Ahmad Chalabi and Kenan Makiya also aired the possibility of rebellion, which influenced Rumsfeld and his advisors. Under the influence of the civil wing of the Pentagon, the US decided to send some 150 thousand armed forces for the operation. Both the US military sources and independent analysts, however, predicted that at least 300 thousand and ideally 400-500 thousand armed forces were needed to establish security and public order in Iraq.

- **Absence of planning for the post-war period:** According to a common scenario, the US forces were supposed to be welcomed with flowers and then would transfer the power to Iraqi politicians in exile such as Ahmad Chalabi. These politicians would have reconstructed Iraq within the framework of US ideals for the region. The neo-conservative ideological approach and the misinformation by Iraqi politicians in exile seem to have played a role in the decision making process.

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COALITION TROOPS

	May 2003	February 2004	January 2005	July 2005	Novermber 2005	March 2006	2006 (Stated)
☐ American Troops	150.000	115.000	150.000	138.000	160.000	133.000	131.000
☐ Other Coalition Troops	23.000	24.000	25.000	23.000	23.000	20.000	23.000
☐ Total	173.000	139.000	175.000	161.000	183.000	153.000	154.000

TABLE-1[1]

- **Mistakes of the Coalition Provisional Authority**: American authorities dissolved the Iraqi army and the security forces regardless of their ranks, and discharged all civil servants who were members of the Baath Party. It is clear now that this was a major mistake. The policy of liberating Iraq from the cadres of Baath was planned to be limited to a number of high ranking members of the Baath Party in the early stages. However, almost 750 thousand civil servants including teachers and doctors lost their jobs. Furthermore, state institutions lost their ability to function properly under the heavy weight of the embargo as well as the looting that took place after the end of the war.

- **Preservation of arms by groups loyal to the old regime**: Sunni tribes who were supporters of Saddam Hussein's regime and militia organizations loyal to the Baath Party kept their arms intact. It is not surprising that these groups resort to all methods and means to prevent the Shia Arabs from holding political power.

- **Treatment of civilians:** The mistreatment of innocent civilians by American troops fuelled the feeling for revenge and resistance. Such incidents as the Abu Gurayb prison scandal have contributed to the strengthening of resistance and opposition to the US in Iraq.

- **The Sunni and Shia groups** have organized themselves against occupying forces since they regarded the US intervention as an occupation of the homeland. In a short period of time, the armed groups were thus able to launch an organized resistance movement, and they achieved the capacity of a military power.

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[1]"Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security In Post-Saddam Iraq" (The Brookings Institution, 06 April, 2006). For Donald Rumsfeld's statements plans for 2006 see, "Rumsfeld Says U.S. Forces in Iraq Will Decline by 7,000 in 2006," 23 December 2006, http://usinfo.state.gov.

- **Organization of Sunni groups** and their attacks who do not want Shia domination for ideological reasons.

- **Establishment of death squads** by Shia groups to take revenge from the members of the old regime and their engagement in assassination attempts.

- **Emergence of crime gangs** who seize the opportunity in an environment of security vacuum.

- Settlement of groups in Iraq with links to **al-Qaida** such as al-Zarkawi who declared a war on the US and their engagement in war against the coalition forces.

The most effective role in the circle of violence belongs to actors named "insurgent groups" or "insurgents". These groups gradually succeeded to achieve a great professionalism in their activities with no shortage of weapons.

Who are the insurgents? They can be categorized under four groups which include members of the former regime, anti-Baath Islamist groups, the so-called 'foreign fighters' and organized gangs:

- **Members of the Former Regime:** These groups which resort to violence with political purposes comprise former members of the Baath Party, army and security forces. They are especially strong in the Sunni triangle, in Tikrit and in its surrounding region as Saddam Hussein's central power base. Their purpose is to force the US to withdraw, sabotage the new regime in Iraq, and prevent Shia Arabs and Kurds from holding power.

- **Anti-Baath Islamist Groups:** Another group engaged in violence is the anti-Baath Islamist actors. The Sunni and Shia Arabs represent local policital groups and they are held responsible for acts of violence against both the US armed forces and Iraqi army and police forces. A new breed of Islamism encouraged by Saddam Hussein after 1991 has now merged with the Iraqi nationalism pursued by the Baath party since 1968. Out of this union, a new ideology has emerged which may be called 'the Islamic Iraqi Nationalism'. As in the case of Muqtada as-Sadr, this new ideology represents the politically excluded and economically repressed Iraqis. The Sunni Arabs in this group are worried about the hegemony of Shias and Kurds who are regarded as collaborators of the US. The goal of these groups is to create instability to ensure that the new regime fails, and force the US army to withdraw by accelerating violence.

- **Foreign Arab Fighters:** Number of these groups is estimated to be between five hundreds to three thousands although their numbers are believed to be exaggerated by the US and the Baghdad governments. Contrary to assumptions, they are not the central power or the most important force behind the resistance. Objective of these groups is to create instability, instigate ethnic-sectarian violence, cause a civil war and force the US to withdraw. These groups descried as the 'takfir' in

the Iraqi constitution regard Shia Arabs not political rivals but 'infidels'. Political actors in Iraq describe this group as a terror organization in order to distinguish them from local resistance which is seen legitimate. There are claims that foreign Arab fighters differ from local insurgent groups with their methods used against civilians.

- **Organized Crime Gangs:** The gangs operating especially in such large cities as Basra, Baghdad and Mosul were formed by people who were among the 40 thousand convicted individuals released from prison just before the war. Gangs are not ideological groups but help groups which resort to violence.
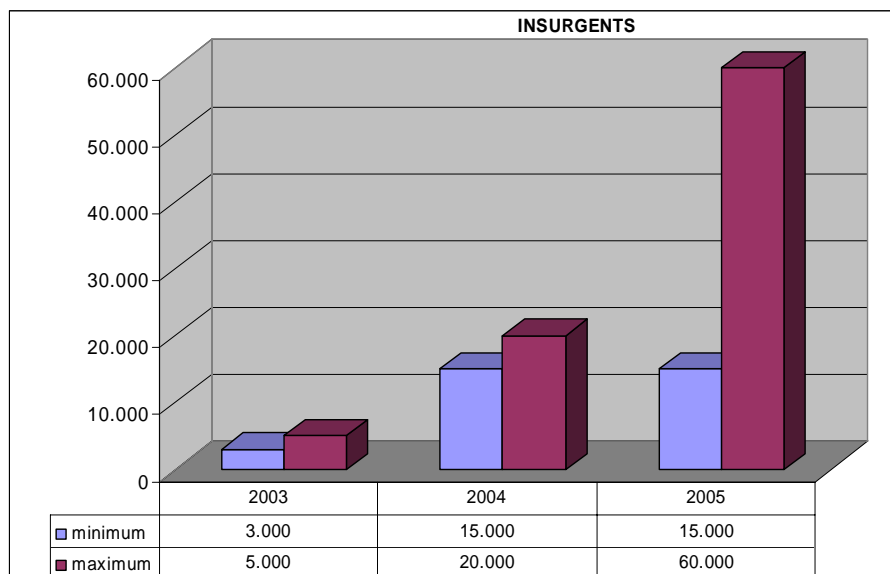
INSURGENTS

	2003	2004	2005
minimum	3.000	15.000	15.000
maximum	5.000	20.000	60.000

TABLE-2[2]

In conclusion, violence and resistance in Iraq have local roots. These groups chose different targets for their own purposes: US and coalition forces, staff of international organizations, candidates to join the army and police forces, the Shia Arabs and the Kurdish groups who are seen as rivals. Resistance as a source of instability and violence in Iraq has gone through three stages:

- Insurgents targeted the US forces first. When the **US forces** withdrew to their bases and started keeping a low profile on the streets, Iraqis working for the new Iraqi regime and the coalition forces or truck drivers became the main targets. At the same time, some groups started to attack **international organizations** such as the UN, the

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[2] "Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq" (The Brookings Institution, 15 December 2005). Number of resisting people in 2005 (the highest): Estimate of American officials: 20 thousand. Some analysts estimate their active numbers between 15 and 60 thousands. Cordesman gives a figure of 30 thousand. See, Anthony H. Cordesman "New Patterns in the Iraqi Insurgency" (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 27 September 2005). Ira Chief of Iraqi Intelligence General Muhammad Abdullah Shahvani states that there are 40 thousand core groups and with sympathizers this number reaches 200 thousands. "Iraq battling more than 200.000 insurgents: Intelligence Chief," Agence France-Presse (AFP), 1 March 2005. Foreign fighters estimated between %4-%10 are included in the Table.

Red Cross and **embassies**. Moreover, some leading Shia Arab and Kurdish politicians were assassinated.

- 'Cars and trucks loaded with bombs' were used as main tools since August 2003. Such attacks aimed at the targets mentioned above as well as **police and military** employment and training centers.

- Resistance has entered a new stage since April and August 2004. A second front was opened against the coalition forces with the participation of Shia Arabs under the leadership of Muqtada as-Sadr.

Attacks have ceased during the December 2005 elections, which took place without disruption to a large extent. However, the violence which resumed after the announcement of election results continues to increase on a daily basis.

Coalition forces and Iraqi government fail to fill the security vacuum. Local forces and ethnic-sectarian communities fill this gap and this situation creates difficult problems for the stability of Iraq. This security vacuum consolidated **militia groups which are organized on ethnic-sectarian bases** and legitimated their existence through ethnic-sectarian discourses.
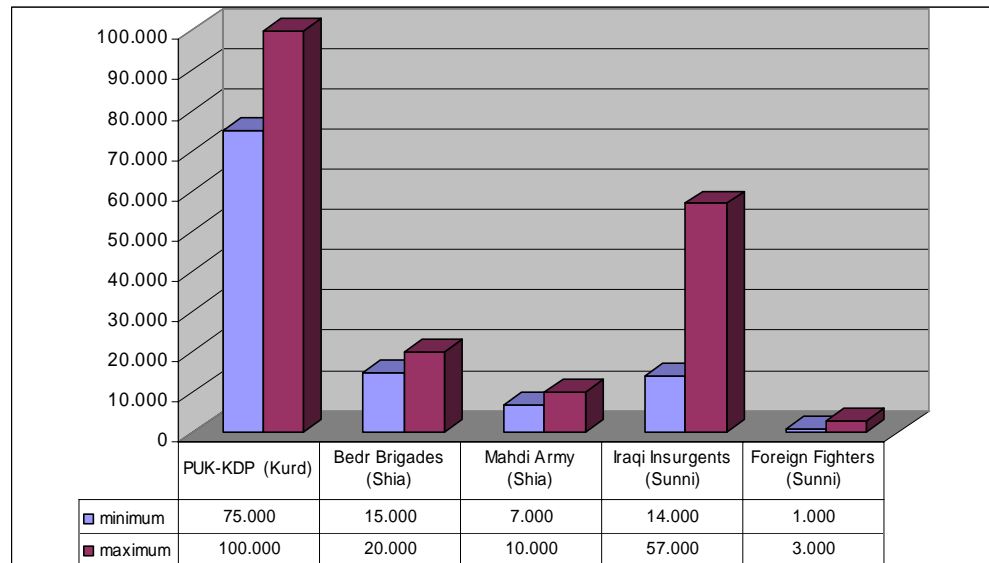
Militia groups can be analyzed in three categories:

- **Kurdish Pashmargas**: The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK): 75-100 thousands.

- **Shia groups**: Badr Brigades loyal to SCIRI (Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution of Iraq): 15-20 thousands; Mahdi Army loyal to Muqtada as-Sadr: 7-10 thousands.

- **Others:** Armed groups which were established in villages, towns and certain neighborhoods to find solutions for the lack of public order. Their numbers are estimated to be high.
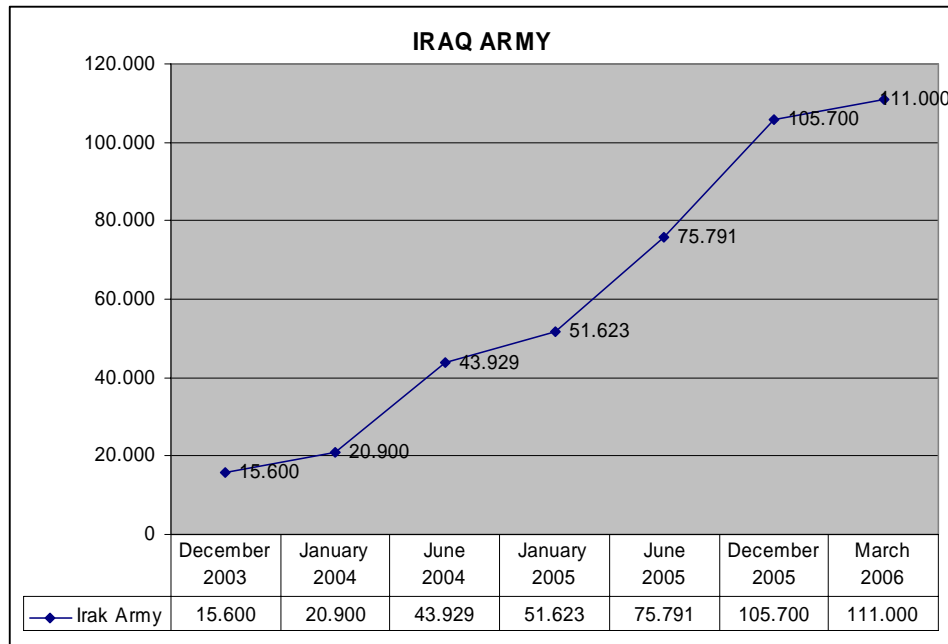
In addition to the insurgent groups consisting of about 30 and 40 thousand men, more than 100 thousand militias constitute a serious threat to the long term stability of Iraq. Problems concerning the transformation of these militias into army troops and security forces will be discussed in the following section.

'Coalition forces and Iraqi government fail to fill the security vacuum. Local forces and ethno-sectarian communities fill this gap and this situation creates difficult problems for the stability of Iraq. This security vacuum consolidated militia groups which are organized on ethnic-sectarian bases and legitimated their existence through ethno-sectarian discourses.'

	PUK-KDP (Kurd)	Bedr Brigades (Shia)	Mahdi Army (Shia)	Iraqi Insurgents (Sunni)	Foreign Fighters (Sunni)
minimum	75.000	15.000	7.000	14.000	1.000
maximum	100.000	20.000	10.000	57.000	3.000

TABLO-3[3]

'In addition to the insurgent groups consisting of about 30 and 40 thousand men, more than 100 thousand militias constitute a serious threat to the long term stability of Iraq.'

Figures in Table 3 indicate that if a civil war breaks out, its consequences will be devastating. Numbers of various militia groups are equal to each other and the total estimated number of militia forces is near the size of Iraqi army (for the number of Iraqi army, see Table 4). When we consider the ethnic-sectarian structure in Iraq, it is possible to see various armed groups to cooperate with each other or to change sides with a *fatwa*. This turns the question of security in Iraq into a stalemate. These observations indicate that formation of a new Iraqi army and a security force is one of the most important ways of establishing security and stability in Iraq. However, the current picture does not look very promising.

Not only the new army but also coalition forces remain ineffective against the insurgents (estimated to be between 30 to 40 thousands) and militias (estimated to be around 100 thousands). There is an urgent need for the formation of a strong military and police force to establish control in Iraq. This goal, however, is not easy to achieve for the current military and police force have problems concerning their quality and quantity:

- Iraqi armed forces were around 400 thousand at the end of Saddam's rule. The new army established after the dissolution of old armed forces has a total **capacity of nearly 100 thousand soldiers**. However, only 30 thousand of these forces have the ability to operate on their own. Currently, the US aims at creating an army of 160 thousand personnel in the first stage. An armed forces of 400 thousand soldiers are needed to establish security and order given the number of militia forces, resistance movements and other gangs operating in Iraq.

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[3] See for the numbers of **KDP-PUK**, Kenneth Katzman, Alfred B. Prados, "The Kurds In Post-Saddam Iraq" (Congressional Research Service (CRS), Report for Congress, May 5, 2005). On **the Badr Brigade** see, Gene Novikov, "Unmasking the Iraqi Insurgency," (Terrorism Monitor, Vol II, Issue 12, The Jamestown Foundation, June 17, 2004); Katzman and Prados, "The Kurds In Post-Saddam Iraq". On the **Mahdi Army see,** "Insurgents in Iraq show signs of acting as a network" (The Christian Science Monitor, 28 April 2005). For the number of **Iraqi resistance** see, footnote 2. On the number of **foreign fighters** see, Anthony H. Cordesman, "Iraq and Foreign Volunteers" (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 18 November 2005).
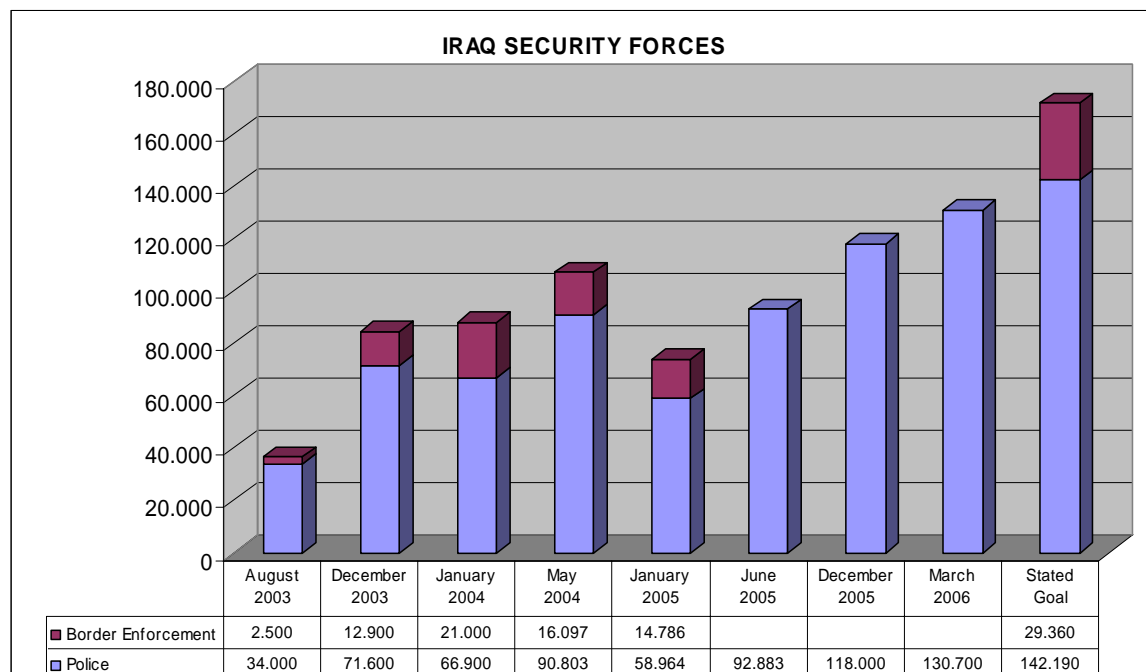
IRAQ ARMY

	December 2003	January 2004	June 2004	January 2005	June 2005	December 2005	March 2006
Irak Army	15.600	20.900	43.929	51.623	75.791	105.700	111.000

TABLE-4[4]

- **Ethnic-sectarian composition** of the new Iraqi army also causes concern as a potential source of problem. Operations of this new army, which is composed mainly of militias loyal to the Kurds and the Shia Arabs, towards Sunni Arabs on the basis of ethnic-sectarian identities create new hostilities.

It is not realistic to expect that an army composed of **inexperienced and insufficient number of soldiers** can accomplish what the US army has failed to do. Moreover, the **methods and tactics** which the security forces use in their operations escalate the resistance. The establishment of **security along the borders** and the control of border transitions are among the issues that the new Iraqi army will have to address. The newly established police forces also face similar difficulties.

'The current military and police force have problems concerning their quality and quantity.'

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[4] The Iraqi army mentioned here includes: The Iraqi Armed Forces, The National Guard, The Iraqi Intervention Forces, (IIF) and the Iraqi Special Operation Forces (ISOF). "Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security In Post-Saddam Iraq" (The Brookings Institution, 06 April, 2006)

IRAQ SECURITY FORCES

	August 2003	December 2003	January 2004	May 2004	January 2005	June 2005	December 2005	March 2006	Stated Goal
■ Border Enforcement	2.500	12.900	21.000	16.097	14.786				29.360
■ Police	34.000	71.600	66.900	90.803	58.964	92.883	118.000	130.700	142.190

TABLE-5[5]

In conclusion, the question of security in Iraq is entangled in the following vicious circle: It is not possible to end insurgence with the current or forthcoming army and unless insurgence is over, it will not be possible to establish stability. The control of the new Iraqi government will be limited only to Baghdad and its adjacent regions if an effective Iraqi security force is not established and the insurgence is not brought to an end. That would further deepen the existing divisions.

What can be done to overcome this vicious circle? It seems that it is not possible to counter armed insurgent groups by military force alone. New political strategies should be developed which can be applied to and used in fighting the insurgence. Some strategists argue that the US military existence escalates the insurgence because of the tactics they use. This view is getting support in the US public opinion as well. Furthermore, the majority of Sunni Arabs and some circles among the Shia Arabs want the withdrawal of US from Iraq as soon as possible or at least demand a withdrawal plan. The US plan for withdrawal, therefore, becomes more important for the future of the cycle of violence in Iraq.

'Ethno-sectarian composition of the new Iraqi army also causes concern as a potential source of problem.'

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[5] "Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security In Post-Saddam Iraq" (The Brookings Institution, 06 April, 2006)
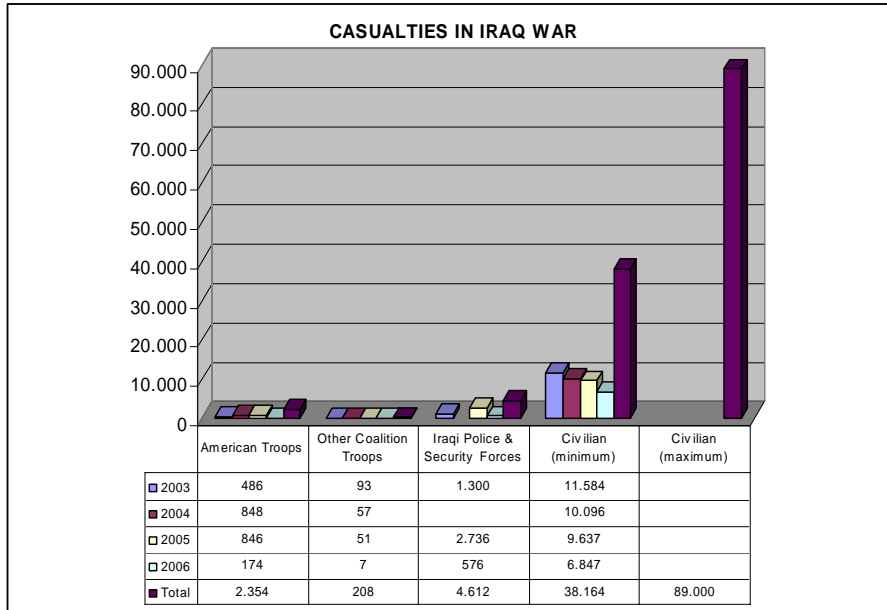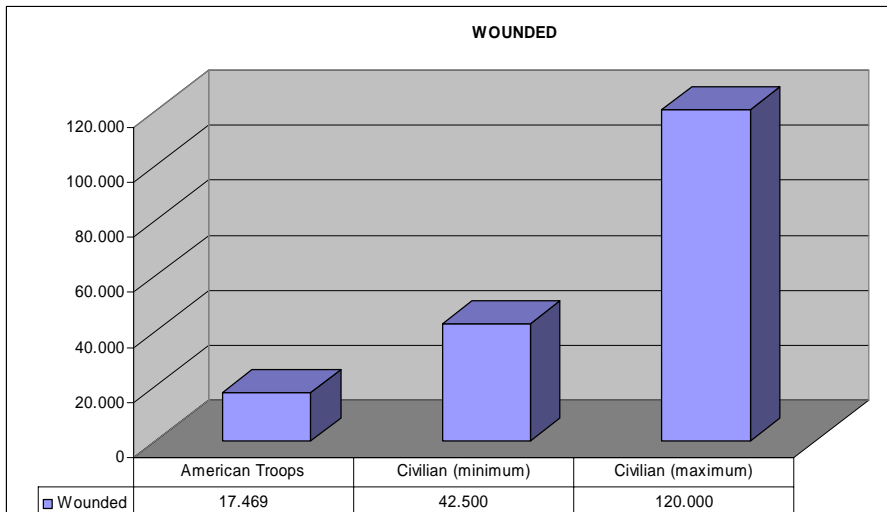
CASUALTIES IN IRAQ WAR

	American Troops	Other Coalition Troops	Iraqi Police & Security Forces	Civilian (minimum)	Civilian (maximum)
2003	486	93	1.300	11.584	
2004	848	57		10.096	
2005	846	51	2.736	9.637	
2006	174	7	576	6.847	
Total	2.354	208	4.612	38.164	89.000

TABLE-6[6]

WOUNDED

	American Troops	Civilian (minimum)	Civilian (maximum)
Wounded	17.469	42.500	120.000

TABLE-7[7]

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[6] For the data on the US soldiers, other Coalition Forces, the Iraqi police and armed forces see "Iraq Coalition Causalities Count" web site (http://icasualties.org/oif/default.aspx.). Data on casualties among Iraqi police and armed forces in the Table refers to the period between June 2003 and 4 January 2004. "Statement by Falah Hasan Al-Naqib, Minister of Interior ', Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), 4 January 2005.
(http://www.kuna.net.kw/English/Story.asp?DSNO=694138.) Data on (minimum) civilian casualties was taken from "Iraq Body Count" web site (http://iraqbodycount.net). Iraq Body Count uses records concerning only civilians which include morgue records and announced deaths. Therefore death and casualties could be more given the undocumented cases. For example the Brookings Institute provide a figure between 39.200 and 89.000, "Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security In Post-Saddam Iraq" (Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security In Post-Saddam Iraq" (The Brookings Institution, 06 April, 2006). For various figures on this issue provided by different institutions see, Lancet: 100.000 ("The Lancet Report", Vol. 364, No. 9448, 20 November 2004; International Amnesty Organization: 50.000 ("Iraq: The Human Cost of War" campaign posters, Spring 2003); Official US figure: 30.000 ("Statement by George W. Bush" 12 December 2005.)
[7] For the **number of injured US soldiers** (April 2006) see "Iraq Coalition Causalities Count" (http://icasualties.org/oif/default.aspx). For the number of injuries among civilians see, "Iraq Body Count", 42.500, "A Dossier of Civilian Casualties, 2003-2005" (www.iraqbodycount.net.) The alternative estimate by "The Project on Defense Alternative" is between 100.000 and 120.000.

The presence of the US army and its operations are among the most frequently discussed issues. The question of how long the US will keep its military presence is among the most urgent isssues. What unites all of the Sunni and Shia Arab sections except the Kurds is the opposition to the permanent US invasion of Iraq.

The Sunni and some Shia Arabs such as those loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr consider the withdrawal of US forces as a prerequisite for normalization whereas other Shia Arab groups such as SCIRI think that the presence of US armed forces is necessary until the disposal of the remainder of Baath, foreign fighters and establishment of a relative stability. However, these groups are expected to demand the withdrawal of US forces once the stability is achieved and these forces are no longer needed.

It seems that various Sunni Arab groups have changed their approach in recent months concerning the presence of American army in Iraq. These Sunni groups who realized that the balance of power has shifted in favor of the Shia Arabs and Iran seems to support the presence of US military force until stability is achieved and the Sunni Arabs are integrated into the system. However, despite this attitude towards the US military presence in Iraq, these Sunni groups remain persistent on the declaration of a clear withdrawal plan. Thus, pressure on Washington is mounting day by day and some Shia and Sunni Arab groups demand the declaration of withdrawal plan as early as possible.

'The US plan for withdrawal, therefore, becomes more important for the future of the cycle of violence in Iraq.'

B. POLITICS: Elections and Aftermath

Iraq has entered a new era following two elections and a referendum held in 2005. Holding the elections, despite all the shortcomings, irregularities and delays, is a big step for Iraq's transition to a post-conflict period. Developments in the new Iraq's political process will determine the ultimate direction the country will take in the future.

JANUARY 30, 2005 ELECTION RESULTS					
Party	Number of Votes	%	Seats	Ethnic/Sectarian Identity	Leader
United Iraqi Alliance	4.075.292	48.19	140	Shia	Abdulaziz al- Hakim Ibrahim al- Jaafari Ahmad Chalabi
Kurdistan Alliance	2.175.551	25.73	75	Kurdish	Jalal Talabani Massoud Barzani Salahaddin Muhammed Bahaddin
Iraqi List	1.168.943	13.82	40		Iyad Allawi
Iraqis	150.680	1.78	5		Ghazi al-Yawer
Iraqi Turcoman Front	93.480	1.11	3	Turcoman	Farouk Abdullah Abdurrahman
National Independent Cadres and Elites	69.938	0.83	3	Shia	Fatah al- Sheikh (Sadr Group)
People's Union	69.920	0.83	2		Hamid Majid Mousa
Islamic Group of Kurdistan	60.592	0.72	2	Kurdish	Ali Abd al-Aziz
Islamic Action Organization in Iraq	43.205	0.51	2	Shia	'Ala' Hamud Salih al-Tu'ma
National Democratic Alliance	36.795	0.44	1		Naseer Kamel al-Chaderchi
National Rafidain (Mesopotamia) List	36.255	0.43	1	Assyrian	Yonadem Kanna
Reconciliation and Liberation Bloc	30.796	0.36	1	Sunni	Mishaan al-Jaboori

Table-8[8]

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[8] "30 January Results" (Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, February 13, 2005) http://www.ieciraq.org ; and "Shi'ite Win in Iraqi Elections Confirmed", *(RFERL*- Special Section- Iraq Votes 2005) http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2005/02/238a479f-990f-4f04-9547-ecf8cc1a3515.html

DECEMBER 15, 2005 ELECTION RESULTS					
Party	Number of Votes	Percent of Votes	Seats	Ethnic/Sectarian Identity	Leader
United Iraqi Alliance	5.021.137	41.1	128	Shia	Abdulaziz al- Hakim Ibrahim al- Jaafari Muqteda el-Sadr
Kurdistan Alliance	2.642.172	21.6	53	Kurdish	Jalal Talabani Masoud Barzani
Iraqi Accord Front	1.840.216	15.0	44	Sunni	Adnan al- Dulaimi Tarıq al Hashimi Khalef al- Ulayyan
Iraqi National List	977.325	8.01	25		Iyad Allawi Ghazi al-Yawer
Iraqi Front for National Dialogue	499.963	4.1	11	Sunni	Saleh al-Mutlak
Kurdistan Islamic Union	157.668	1.29	5	Kurdish	Salahaddin Muhammed Bahaddin
Reconciliation and Liberation Bloc	129.847	1.06	3	Sunni	Mishan Al Jaboori
Progressives- Risaliyun	145.028	1.18	2	Shia	Sheikh Abdul- Hadi al- Darraji
Iraqi Turcoman Front	87.993	0.72	1	Turcoman	Sadettin Ergeç
Mithat Al Alaoosi List for Iraqi Nation	32.245	0.26	1	Sunni	Mithat Al Aloosi
Al Ezediah Movement for Progressing and Reform	21.908	0.17	1	Yazidi	Amin Farhan Jiju
Al-Rafidayn (Mesopotamia) National Movement	47.263	0.38	1	Assyrian	Yonadem Kanna

Table-9[9]

'Ethnic and sectarian animosity remains a vital problem in Iraq and threatens the stability and the political future of the country.'

It can be argued that the election turnout and regional votes represent Iraq's ethnic and religious structure. Although casting ballots along ethnic and religious lines makes sense during the transitional period, this will have a negative impact for Iraq's struggle to establish political stability and a democratic regime in the near future. The elections have been disappointing, to say the least, for those political parties that do not pursue an ethnic and/or sectarian politics.

Election results shown in Table 9 are indicative of Iraq's future political course. For the first time in the history of modern Iraq, the Shias gained sizeable political power and a coalition of Shia parties won 131 of 275 seats in December's parliamentary elections. This new situation would have far-

[9] "IECI Announces Certified Results of the Council of Representatives Elections" (Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, February 10, 2006) For further information on Iraqi political groups, see "Guide to Iraqi Political Parties" http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/4511450.stm

reaching consequences not only for Iraq but also for the Middle East politics at large.

There was a steady increase in participation in the last two elections and the referendum in 2005. The most important change has been the increasing participation of Sunni Arabs in the December election.

PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESS			
	Votes Casted	**Number of Voters**	**Percentage of Participation**
January 30, 2005 Elections	8.456.266	(estm.) 14.000.000	58.00
October 15, 2005 Referendum	9.852.291	15.568.702	63.28
December 15, 2005 Elections	12.396.631	15.568.702	79.60

Table-10[10]

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNORATES			
Governorate	**January 30 Elections (%)**	**December 15 Elections (%)**	**Ethnic/Sectarian Identity**
Babil	72	78	Shia
Basrah	63	73	Shia
Karbala	74	69	Shia
Maysan	61	73	Shia
Muthanna	64	65	Shia
Najaf	75	72	Shia
Qadisiya	70	64	Shia
Dhi Qar	68	71	Shia
Wasit	70	67	Shia
Anbar	2	86	Sunni
Selahuddin	29	96	Sunni
Diyala	32	73	Sunni
Dahuk	92	91	Kurdish
Erbil	83	94	Kurdish
Suleymaniya	81	83	Kurdish
Nineveh [Mosul]	17	67	Mixed
Tamim [Kirkuk]	69	85	Mixed
Baghdat	51	68	Mixed

Table-11[11]

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[10] See footnotes 8-9 and "Refrendum Results" (Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, October 25, 2005)
[11] "Graphics: The Iraqi election Results" (The New York Times,
http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/21/international/20060121_IRAQELECTION_GRAPHIC.html)

In the post-Saddam period, the ethnic-sectarian identities dominates the political scene. Ethnic and sectarian animosity remains a vital problem in Iraq and threatens the stability and the political future of the country.

Although ethnic and sectarian political language causes division, some analysts argue that the animosity between Shia Arabs and Sunni Arabs is not so much a problem of nationalist identity politics, as in the case of the Kurds. Nevertheless, the current Iraqi politics is dominated by those political actors who capitalize on ethnic and sectarian identities. While Saddam Hussein's cruel policies especially after 1991 created further rifts among Iraq's ethnic and sectarian lines, the other two major factors are the continuing violence and the central role played by exiled Iraqi politicians. The American approach to Iraq has also been mostly through ethnic and sectarian lenses. At the level of ordinary people, the sectarian tension is not as high as it is speculated. Nevertheless, the sectarian nature of current violence continues to deepen the ethnic-sectarian divisions. Even though there are both Sunnis and Shias among Arab and Turcoman tribes, the cycle of violence is likely to intensify the ethnic-sectarian divisions. This is further exacerbated by the use of Shia Arab and Kurdish security forces against Sunni Arabs. Increasing violence in the mixed areas is bound to cause irreparable damages.

The last two elections, a referendum and other developments all demonstrate that ethnic-sectarian politics will remain a main determining factor in Iraq's future. It is almost impossible to see the people of Iraq united under the umbrella of "Iraq-Arab Nationalism". The extent of the federal system proposed by the new Iraqi constitution will further intensify the ethnic-sectarian politics. This will be a major hurdle for political parties and governments as well as for the formation of the new Iraqi army and other security forces. The boldening of ethnic-sectarian lines will disrupt not only the stability of Iraq but the whole region.

'The extent of the federal system proposed by the new Iraqi constitution will further intensify the ethnic-sectarian politics.'

ETHNIC-SECTARIAN PARTICIPATION			
Governorates (Ethnic-sectarian)	January 30, 2005 Elections	October 15, Referendum Percentage of 'Yes' Votes	December 15, 2005 Elections
Shia Governorates[12]	%68.5	%96.55	%70.2
Sunni Governorates[13]	%21.0	%24.1	%85.3
Kurdish Governorates[14]	%85.3	%99.15	%89.3
Mixed Governorates[15]	%45.3	%61.84	%73.3

Table-12[16]

ETHNIC-SECTARIAN VOTES				
	January 30, 2005 Elections		December 15, 2005 Elections	
Parties (Ethnic-Sectarian)	% of Votes	Seats	% of Votes	Seats
Shia Parties[17]	49.53	145	42.28	130
Sunni Parties[18]	0.36	1	20.42	59
Kurdish Parties[19]	26.45	77	22.89	58
Non- Ethnic-Sectarian Parties[20]	16.87	48	8.01	25
Other[21]	0.43	1	0.55	2
Iraqi Turcoman Front	1.11	3	0.72	1

Table-13[22]

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[12] Babil, Basra, Karbela, Maysan, Muthanna, Najaf, Qadisiya, Dhi Qar, Wasit
[13] Anbar, Salahuddin, Diyala
[14] Dahuk, Erbil, Suleymaniya
[15] Baghdat, Tamim [Kirkuk], Ninevah [Mosul]
[16] See footnote 11
[17] United Iraqi Alliance, Progressives-Risaliyun, National Independent Cadres and Elites, Islamic Action Organization in Iraq.
[18] Iraqi Accord Front, Iraqi Front for National Dialogue, Reconciliation and Liberation Bloc, Mithat Al Alaoosi List for Iraqi Nation.
[19] Kurdistan Alliance, Kurdistan Islamic Union, Islamic Group of Kurdistan.
[20] National Iraqi List, The Iraqis, National Democratic Alliance, People's Union.
[21] Al-Rafidayn (Mesopotamia) National Movement, Al Ezediah Movement for Progressing and Reform.
[22] See, footnote 8-9.

C. LAW: The New Iraqi Constitution and The Future of Iraq

The constitutional referendum held on October 15, 2005 ushered in a new era in Iraq. The new Iraqi constitution (cited hereafter as NIC) is composed of 144 articles wherein the Republic of Iraq is defined as an "independent, sovereign nation". The system of rule is described as "democratic, federal, representative (parliamentary) republic".

Article 2:

1st - Islam is the official religion of the state and is a basic source of legislation:

(a) No law can be passed that contradicts the undisputed rules of Islam.

(b) No law can be passed that contradicts the principles of democracy.

(c) No law can be passed that contradicts the rights and basic freedoms outlined in this constitution.

2nd - This constitution guarantees the Islamic identity of the majority of the Iraqi people and the full religious rights for all individuals and the freedom of creed and religious practices like Christians, Yazidis, Sabaean, and Mandeans.

Article 4:

1st - Arabic and Kurdish are the two official languages for Iraq. Iraqis are guaranteed the right to educate their children in their mother tongues, such as Turcoman or Assyrian (and Armenian), in government educational institutions, or any other language in private educational institutions, according to educational regulations.

4th - Turcoman and Assyrian are two other languages that will be official in administrative areas where those groups are located in large numbers.

Article 7:

1st - Entities or trends that advocate, instigate, justify or propagate racism, terrorism, takfir or sectarian cleansing, are banned, especially the Saddamist Baath in Iraq and its symbols, under any name. It will not be allowed to be part of the multilateral political system in Iraq, which should be defined according to the law.

The American administration declared the completion of the constitution and the subsequent referendum on it within the scheduled time as a great success. Just as the situation in Iraq had a direct impact on the 2004 American elections, the constitutional referendum in Iraq was used as a propaganda to attract American voters and to convince critics that the process of the American withdrawal from Iraq is underway. The American efforts to include the Sunnis in the constitutional process have led to high expectations for ending resistance in Iraq.

Contrary to the expectation of the US government, however, the possibility of domestic peace and stability in Iraq through the NIC, approved by 78 % of

voters, remains doubtful. The constitution has many contradictions and was drafted under pressure rather than through mutual agreement. Such a constitution might produce a reverse effect and increase violence. Even though it might be claimed that the NIC is a 'modern' and 'democratic' constitution, it is open to question if it provides 'adequate' grounds for political stability in Iraq.

As a result of the hasty move in the ratification of the NIC, the constitution contains two serious flaws. First, **the constitution has been drafted without complete consensus**. Zalmay Khalilzad, the American Ambassador to Iraq, tried to dispel the concerns of Sunni-Arab negotiators after which a partial compromise was reached. The referendum results, however, show that the majority of Sunni-Arabs have rejected the NIC. Secondly, **the constitution is incomplete** as far as some crucial issues are concerned. Such key items as the limits of federalism have been left to the new parliament, which was formed after December 2005 elections. These issues are certain to stir up controversy in the new Iraqi parliament. Currently, these items, which include a total of about fifty key issues, will be decided upon by a Shia and Kurdish majority parliament. For instance, will it be possible to reach a consensus on such crucial issues as council of federations, vice presidents, council of supreme court, federal supreme court, constitution of regions, and the distribution of tax revenues, oil and gas? In the absence of constitutional and institutional guarantees, the only hope is that the conscientious and prudent leaders will ensure the mechanisms of mediation and reconciliation.

Another aspect of the NIC is related to the political system. The constitution proposes a political system based on a decentralized government and a loose federalist model. According to this model, one or more provinces will be able to form a region and these regions will have extensive autonomy. The central government will have responsibility and power only in defense, foreign policy, finance and customs policies. The authority on health, education, infrastructure and administration of customs will be shared among central government and regions. The rest of governance will be left to regional governments and they will have their own constitution, budget and court system. The regional governments will be responsible for managing their own internal security with their own local police and security forces. In case of a conflict between a federal law and a regional law over issues that are not under the jurisdiction of federal government, regional governments will have the right to amend these laws. Finally, in case of a conflict over issues where autonomy is shared, the priority will be given to regional law.

'As a result of the hasty move in the ratification of the NIC, the constitution contains two serious flaws. First, the constitution has been drafted without complete consensus Secondly, the constitution is incomplete as far as some crucial issues are concerned.'

Article 110: *The federal authorities will have the following exclusive powers:*

1st - Drawing up foreign policy, diplomatic representation, negotiating international accords and agreements, negotiating and signing debt agreements, drawing up foreign sovereign economic and trade policies.

2nd - Drawing up and executing national defense policy including setting up and operating the armed forces to ensure the protection and security of Iraq's borders and its defense.

3rd - Drawing up financial and customs policy, issuing currency, organizing trade policy among regions and provinces in Iraq, setting the general budget for the nation, drawing up currency policies and establishing and administering a central bank.

4th - Organizing issues of weights and measures.

5th - Organizing issues of nationality and naturalization, residence and asylum rights.

6th - Organizing a policy of broadcast wavelengths and the mail.

7th - Setting the general and investment budgets.

8th - Planning policies connected to water resources from outside Iraq and guaranteeing levels of water flow into Iraq, according to international law and custom.

9th - Conducting the general census of the population.

Article 114: *The following duties will be shared by the federal and regional authorities:*

1st - Administering customs, in coordination with the regional (governments and the provinces that didn't make it into a region), and this will be regulated by law.

2nd - Organizing and distributing the main electrical power resources.

3rd - Drawing up environmental policy to guarantee the protection of the environment from pollution and the preservation of its cleanliness, in cooperation with the regions (and the provinces that didn't make it into a region).

4th - Drawing up general planning and development policies.

5th - Drawing up general health policy, in cooperation with the regions (and the provinces that didn't make it into a region.)

6th - Drawing up general education and childbearing policy, in consultation with the regions (and the provinces that didn't make it into a region.)

7th - Drawing up the general water resources policy and organizing it in a way that would guarantee fair distribution and this will be regulated by law.

Article 115: *All that is not written in the exclusive powers of the federal authorities is in the authority of the regions (and the provinces that didn't make it into a region.) In other powers shared between the federal government and the regions, the priority will be given to the region's law in case of dispute.*

'The constitution proposes a political system based on a decentralized government and a loose federalist model.'

The constitution gives a broad administrative and financial autonomy to those provinces that do not constitute a particular region and remain outside the federal-regional districts.

Article 122:

1st - Provinces consist of districts, counties and villages.

2nd - Provinces that were not included into a region are given extensive administrative and financial authorities to enable them to (manage their affairs) according to the principal of administrative decentralization, and this is regulated by law.

3rd - The provincial governor, who is elected by the provincial council, is considered the highest executive president of the province to carry out the responsibilities designated to him by the council.

4th - The election of the provincial council, the governor and their authorities will be regulated by law.

5th - The provincial council is not subject to the domination or the supervision of any ministry or any party unrelated to a ministry, and it has its independent finances.

Article 123: It is permissible to delegate the federal government's authorities to the provinces or vice versa, with the two parties' approval, and this is regulated by law.

While the limits of decentralized government and loose federalism are defined in broad terms, the vital details pertaining to the procedures of their practice are left ambiguous in the NIC. There is no uncertainty about Kurdish federal region. Yet, the arrangement of rules for forming other federal regions is left to the parliamentary legislation, i.e. to the new parliament's simple majority vote which is dominated by the Shia-Arab majority. In other words, there is too much ambiguity on the key issues pertaining to the organization of the new Iraqi political system. These key issues should have been clarified and secured in the new constitution rather than being left to the simple majority of the parliament. It is essential that certain constitutional amendments be made to resolve these lingering issues in the new constitution.

In addition to what has been discussed so far, the NIC also contains a number of issues disputed by different parties. Some Shia Arab leaders, who have strong relations with Iran and lived there during their exile, have publicly expressed their desire to have a regional government throughout the nine Shia-dominated provinces of south Iraq. The Sunni-Arab parties reject this proposal as they argue that this leads to the dissolution of Iraq. They also believe that they will be left in the middle of an unstable, violence-driven and poor Iraq with no oil. The distribution of oil revenues is another issue that causes worries among Sunni Arabs. They claim that the vagueness in certain articles of the NIC is a deliberate attempt which aims at depriving them of Iraqi oil revenues.

> **Article 111:** *Oil and gas is the property of all the Iraqi people in all the regions and provinces.*
>
> **Article 112:**
>
> *1st - The federal government will administer oil and gas extracted from current fields in cooperation with the governments of the producing regions and provinces on condition that the revenues will be distributed fairly in a manner compatible with the demographical distribution all over the country. A quota should be defined for a specified time for (affected) regions that were deprived in an unfair way by the former regime or later on, in a way to ensure balanced development in different parts of the country. This should be regulated by law.*
>
> *2nd - The federal government and the governments of the producing regions and provinces together will draw up the necessary strategic policies to develop oil and gas wealth to bring the greatest benefit for the Iraqi people, relying on the most modern techniques of market principles and encouraging investment.*

In this context, Kirkuk will be one of the most controversial issues. The possible inclusion of Kirkuk in the Kurdish Federal Region is a concern not only for Turkey but also for all Iraqi Arabs, both Shia and Sunni. The Shia and Sunni Arab groups are extremely sensitive about the future of Kirkuk. It is a major disappointment that the article 53 of the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) has not been included in the NIC. According to this article, Kirkuk will not be part of any regional government. Another point of concern is that the implementation of normalization process outlined in the article 58 of TAL will automatically allow Kirkuk to be part of the Kurdish Federal Region.

> **Article 140:**
>
> *1st - The executive authority will take the necessary steps to complete implementation of the requirements of Article 58 of the Transitional Administration Law for the Iraqi State, with all its clauses.*
>
> *2nd - The responsibilities placed on the executive authority provided for in Article 58 of the Transitional Administration Law for the Iraqi State are extended to and will continue for the executive authority (elected according to this constitution) until the completion of (normalization, census, ending with a referandum in Kirkuk and other disputed areas to determine the will of the people) in a period no longer than 12/31/2007.*

The new Iraqi Constitution could be seen both as "the most modern" constitution in the Arab world as well as a constitution that contains the seeds of civil war and dissolution in Iraq. The absence of a broad consensus on the most crucial issues in the NIC may lead to a number of negative scenarios. In the final analysis, the new Iraqi constitution contains articles that are likely to deepen ethnic and sectarian divisions in the country. This, in turn, will delay, to say the least, the formation of a stable state and a viable civil society in Iraq.

'The constitution gives a broad administrative and financial autonomy to those provinces that do not constitute a particular region and remain outside the federal-regional districts.'

D. ECONOMY: Oil, Infrastructure, and Trade

Iraq is one of the countries with highest debt ratios in the world. It has suffered three wars and a devastating embargo in the last two decades. For a period of time, its per capita GNP plummeted into the $200 level. A shadow economy is dominant in the country. The non-oil related gross product of Iraq is estimated to be $10 billion and the oil related gross product is estimated as twice of this amount.

Energy is the most important economic problem in the daily life of Iraqi people. After the occupation of Iraq in 2003, the US administration focused on large scale infrastructure projects while ignoring the necessities of daily life. As an indicator, for instance, Iraq was able to produce 4,500 megawatt electricity per day in the pre-war period. Today, electricity production cannot exceed 4,100 megawatt per day whereas the daily demand for energy is between 7,000 and 8,000 megawatts. Severe distribution of utility problems have also contributed to the problem.

The reconstruction of Iraq has been plagued by a number of misguided policies. As the necessary measures were not taken, the targeted goal of economic reconstruction under the management of Emergency Post-Conflict Assistance (EPCA) program have not been achieved.

The per capita GDP level of Iraq is estimated to be between $770 and $1051[23]. Despite the existence of 112 billion barrel of proved oil reserves, instabilities, conflicts, and wars in the last three decades had diminished the per capita income of Iraq from around $3600 in the 1980s to $200 in the 1990s. Iraq's reconstruction and recovery period has just begun with heavy economic burdens inherited from Saddam's rule, wars, occupation, embargo and worsened by the current political situation in the country.

Like in the past, Iraq today realizes its economic development with oil revenues. Iraq, which possesses the third largest oil reserves in the world, is struggling to reach a stable level of daily oil production under the emergency action plan. In the two years preceding the war, the oil production was 2.5 million barrels per day (mb/day) and it has decreased to 2 mb/day in 2002. This level was maintained in 2005 and the daily amount of 1.5 mb was exported. Industry, the other branch of Iraqi economy, has lost its competitiveness in international markets. Economic sanctions and bad governance have had catastrophic effects on the industry. In the agricultural sector, on the other hand, the pressure of the oil-for-food program repressed the agricultural prices. Coupled with the famine in 1999 and 2000, this has inevitably worsened the situation.

The 70 percent of Iraqi GDP and 98 percent of the budget is composed of oil revenues. The most recent per capita GDP level is only a quarter of what it was 25 years ago. The unemployed Iraqis are estimated to be two million. It is also reported that 30% of the total work force for the year 2004 and 10% of the

[23] According to IMF's estimates, per capita GNP was around $770 in 2003. In 2005, while two different reports of the World Bank were illustrating the level as $940 in July, another study which was held in August estimates per capita GDP as $1051.

population is estimated to be surviving with less than one dollar a day. Combined with the low level of wages, this explains the vicious cycle of unemployment that affects nearly half of the work force in Iraq.[24]

Another obstacle inherited from Saddam's rule is the budget analyses. The financial transactions which are held mainly in cash and non-cash payment systems are primitive and inefficient.

Iraq had ranked 50th in the Human Development Index of UNDP in 1990. Today, her rank is 76 steps lower than where it was. As far as the recent macroeconomic developments are concerned, an increase of about 50 percent in GDP is to be noted in 2004. The 74 percent increase in the oil production is the main reason for this increase. The 2004 production level, however, is still less than the pre-war level.

The increase in the GDP in 2004 stems from the relatively good performance of the activities of increasing oil productivity and peaking oil prices (relative to Iraqi prices). The actual inflation rate (31.7%) was far away from the estimation of EPCA (7%)[25]. The estimations for 2005 budget are also based on oil revenues and oil prices in 2004.

The average oil sales price estimation of EPCA for 2005 was $26[26] per barrel. The oil exports were also estimated to rise to 1.8 mb/day. The oil revenue realizations were in line with the program in the first five months of 2005. The low level of oil exports volume was compensated by the high oil prices after May. The $36.4 per barrel was above the 2005 estimation. The oil exports in the first five months of 2005 had been 1.4 mb/day, i.e., the same as the level in previous year. In this period, the increase in Iraqi oil price had been much less than the increase in the general oil prices.[27] This has caused a severe decline in the Iraqi oil prices compared to the average world prices[28].

In contrast to the budgetary problems, money reserves have increased rapidly. This can be inferred from the increase in the official reserves of the Central Bank of Iraq in 2004. The increase in the money supply has been 117% in 2004. The Central Bank of Iraq had kept the fluctuations in the foreign currency relatively low by making sales of $25 million daily during 2004 and in the beginning of 2005. Economic reconstruction induced high level of imports. As a

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[24] `The Joint Report on Iraq's Reconstruction` International Development Organization, International Finance Corporation, Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. World Bank, 2005.
[25] Northern Iraqi region data are not included in consumer prices.
[26] This estimation relies on the September 2004 projection of World Energy Organization.
[27] The comparative oil prices index, announced by World Energy Organization and based on Brent, Western Texas, and Dubai oil prices, had indicated an increase of $6.4 per barrel in 2004, $13.4 per barrel in the first quarter of 2005 and $8.6 per barrel between April and May 2005.
[28] The serious price differenciation is still not smoothed. Known explanations are quality problems, risk costs sourcing from high freight costs and security cost, (due to infrastructure handicap), and the temporary competition of American refineries repressing the Iraqi and Saudi oil prices.

result, 2004 and 2005 brought high levels of current account deficits. The financing of the deficit was provided from abroad[29].

There is an abundance of speculative data on Iraq's debts. On November 21, 2004, the Paris Club declared that it would waive 80% of Iraq's debt with a three-stage scheduled program. According to this, after the first step, the debt stock falls to 78$ billion, which is triple of Iraqi GDP. Even if the Paris Club program works out fully, the servicing of debt will start in 2011 and end in 2038.

Foreign trade of Iraq has continued in spite of the embargo before the occupation. Having a foreign trade volume of $7.7 bn with Russia from 1997 and 2003, Iraqi foreign trade tried to survive under the embargo regime. France which exports industrial products, telecommunication tools and electrical tools to Iraq was a major player in the Iraqi market. During this period, Iraq was exporting oil to Jordan with high level discounts against the imports it made from Jordan.

Turkey was one of the major foreign trade partners of Iraq before the embargo. After the war, the foreign trade volume of $3 bn per year came to the verge of shrinking. Subsequently, it found its way in the form of informal trade. According to various analyses, the loss of Turkey is estimated to be between $30-80 bn in this period. 87% of the $70 bn worth of Turkish exports is composed of industrial products. Turkey can develop economic cooperation with Iraq in various industrial branches such as automotive, ceramics, glass, food products, construction tools, and cement sectors. Between January and October 2005, the second largest increase in Turkish exports after Italy was Iraq. In this period, Turkish exports to Iraq had increased by 51.2 percent reaching $2.2 bn. This makes Iraq the 7th largest export country for Turkey. Regardless of the shape of the political future of Iraq, Turkey's economic relations with Iraq will remain substantial.

'Turkey's economic relations with Iraq are important for both countries. Turkey participated in the embargo against Iraq which the United Nations (UN) announced with the efforts of US during the first Gulf War. Turkey suspended the border trade with Iraq during this period. Turkey's total economic loss is estimated between 30 to 80 billion US dollars because of the sanctions in the post-1991 period. Oil prices, border trade, regional relations and terror costs are the main items of this loss for Turkish economy. Today, the Turkish-Iraqi economic relations have a great potential for compensating these losses.'

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[29]Although foreign funding sources vary, the major source is the Development Fund for Iraq. In addition to this fund there also exist accredited letters of UN Oil-for-Food Fund.

III. The Future of Iraq

A. DOMESTIC ACTORS: Stability in Iraq and the Consequences of Ethnic-Sectarian Politics

The future of Iraq depends on a functioning constitutional and federal democratic system as well as achieving stability and a reasonable degree of compromise among various ethnic-sectarian groups. Political future of Iraq will take its shape in the light of the following trends.

- It seems that disengagement from **ethnic and sectarian discourse/politics** will not take place in the short run considering the political developments since May 2003 in Iraq. Projections concerning the future of Iraq cannot be discussed without paying attention to this particular discourse/politics. This is paradoxical in the short run yet it is a realistic necessity in the long run.

- One can argue that '**Islamism**' will be influential **as a political power** in the new Iraq considering the developments since the beginning of the war and the voting behaviors of the electorate. The 'Islamist' trend includes both armed and non-armed groups. The armed groups are led by SCIRI and Muqtada as-Sadr. The leading non-armed Islamist groups include the Dawa (Shia), the Islamic Party of Iraq (Sunni Arab) and the Party of Islamic Union (Kurdish).

- **Islam-state and Islam-society relations** will be different in the new Iraq due to different trends among Shia and Sunni Arabs. Especially the Shia Ulama will increase their role in political and social life. There might be no direct rule by the ulema similar to Iran where the system of *walayet-i faqih* (guardianship of the jurist/rule of religious scholars) is in place. It does not mean, however, that the Shia ulama would not have an influential position in politics especially bearing in mind the remarkable political role that has been played by Ayatullah Sistani in recent years.

- Overcoming **the problem of security** will be rather difficult in the new Iraq even after achieving peace and stability. Hence the outcomes of the formula such as the withdrawal timetable of the American forces, both the quality and the quantity of the new Iraqi army, the proposed "Islamic peace force" and finally the UN peace force will be fairly significant.

- It seems that **resistance and cycle of violence** will continue for sometime to come although it will diminish to a certain degree. As the developments after the elections on 15 December 2005 indicate some Sunni groups will take part in the political process while they will continue to lend support for armed resistance. Even if Sunni Arabs are fully integrated in the political system and abandon arms except for a few radical groups, groups designated as foreign fighters will not

'One can argue that 'Islamism' will be influential as a political power in the new Iraq considering the developments since the beginning of the war and the voting behaviors of the electorate.'

give up their activities and to the contrary will carry on with further vigor.

- **The state formation process** has fallen into a vicious cycle in the midst of occupation and armed resistance. The persistence of violence leads to using financial resources, which are supposed to be allocated for the restoration of the country and for investments for the infrastructure, merely on security. Making the fundamental democratic process functional and establishing stability in Iraq directly depends upon the extent to which this cycle would ease. The faster the withdrawal of the US from Iraq and the stronger the representation of resisting entities in the new process, the sooner the termination of the impact of vicious cycle will be.

- **Relative weakness of the state or state institutions** will continue if no fundamental amendment is made in the current constitutional and federal system in the new Iraq. Military and fiscal power of the central government is limited under the federal system as delineated in the constitution. This is not only the result of the post-war development but also a deliberate inclination among the Kurds and the Shia Arabs since the very beginning. The constitution was drafted to increase and intensify this trend. It seems inevitable that such a political system based on extensive decentralization and loose federalism will simply create negative consequences for the stability of Iraq. Because of the current constitution and federal system, the actual power will disperse in regions and this will irrevocably deepen the current ethnic-sectarian partition by weakening the center profoundly.

The current constitutional structure causes a paradox for the unity of Iraq. The state of decentralization which is one of the conditions of Iraq's unity in the short run may cause disintegration of Iraq in the long run. This paradox can be overcome by ethnic-sectarian groups only by adopting **power-sharing and compromising procedures**. If an environment of power-sharing and rapprochement is not achieved, many more areas of conflict may emerge among various groups in Iraq.

A civil war may erupt if the sectarian violence is not brought to a halt and power struggle between Shia and Sunni actors gets more intensified. Paramilitary forces loyal to the Shia and Sunni groups may start fighting with each other in such a situation. If such a conflict erupts crucial questions such as what Kurdish groups will do, whether they will prefer to stand by or to take stand with one of the groups will necessarily arise.

If a civil war and a process of disintegration begins, currently non-aligned Iraqis who preserve their sectarian identity will be eventually forced to make their choice and take their stand. If that happens, the partition process of Iraq into three parts will unfortunately be extremely violent and bloody. Tragedies, therefore, might happen in Kirkuk, Baghdad, Mosul and Basra among ethnically mixed population. A civil war may erupt also between the Shia and Sunni Arabs on the one hand and between Kurds and Arabs on the other,

if Kurds declare independence or attemp to seize control of Kirkuk. This possible development will have serious consequences for the whole region and neighboring countries as explained in the following section.

'Relative weakness of the state or state institutions will continue if no fundamental amendment is made in the current constitutional and federal system in the new Iraq. Because of the current constitution and federal system, the actual power will disperse in regions and this will irrevocably deepen the current ethnic-sectarian partition by weakening the center profoundly.'

B. EXTERNAL ACTORS: The Future of Iraq and the Countries in the Region

Iraq can be seen as a miniature of the Middle East as far as its population structure, problems and challenges are concerned. A process of mutual influence is expected between Iraq and surrounding countries. Recent developments in Iraq would affect its neighbors, and in return, the policies of neighboring countries seem to be destined to influence Iraq directly. This mutual impact could be summarized as follows:

- **The Shia Arab factor:** The emergence of Iraq as **an Arab country dominated by the Shia** for the first time in the Middle East and the importance and impact of the so-called "Shia crescent" that is originating in the region.

- **The Sunni Arab factor:** The results of the loss of Iraq's strong army and its "Arab identity" in the region. And the emergence of radical Sunni groups who are both anti-US and anti-Israel as well as anti-Shia and anti-Kurdish.

- **The Kurdish factor:** The emerging political picture in Northern Iraq would have political, social, and cultural impact on the **Kurds living in all the three neighboring countries**.

In the light of these factors, the developments in Iraq and their consequences for the countries in the region can be analyzed as follows:

IRAN: The country that is expected to benefit most from the current process is Iran both in the short and long term. The strategic impact of Iran has increased due to the fact that regimes of Saddam Hussein in Iraq and the Taliban in Afghanistan were overthrown.

- Iraq will turn out to be a country in which the Shia Arabs would dominate both the central government and the foreign policy in the federal and democratic process as prescribed by the constitution. It is inevitable that in such a situation Iran will gain an enormous advantage. Those that supported the pre-war invasion were referring to the difference between Najaf and Qum and the Iran-Iraq war to ground their argument that the current situation would not be for the advantage of Iran. However, what has been disregarded in these arguments was the fact that the leading authorities of the Iraqi Shia had lived in Iran for many years and that the Iraqi Shia Arabs had suffered persecution under the Baath regime especially after 1991. The economic, social, cultural, and religious interactions between these two countries that had been prevented by the Baath regime will definitely increase in this new situation.

- These interactions also cause anxiety for other regional actors who think that **a 'Shia zone' is being created** in the region stretching from Pakistan to Lebanon. As to the population rates, Shias comprise 60 % of

population in Bahrain, 30 % in Kuwait, 14 % in Saudi Arabia, and 32 % in Lebanon. In some arguments, the Zaydis that compose the 73 % of the population in Yemen and the Nusayris in Syria who remain outside the Twelver Shia Islam are also added to this list.

- This political zone is at the same time **an "oil zone" under the Shia control** stretching in the axis of Iran, Bahrain, the eastern province of Saudi Arabia, and southern Iraq.

- In addition to the aforementioned political or geo-strategic influences, the question of what kind of effects, brought about by new social, cultural, and religious changes in the 'Shia world' during the process of globalization, would be felt in this zone remains unanswered.

- It is obvious that the failure of the US in Iraq would serve to the advantage of Iran. In this process, the argument that the US needs Iran in order to secure the stability in Iraq gains more and more popularity.

- The point that has been considered as a paradox or disadvantage for Iran is the increasing military presence of the US in the region and the possible consequences of this situation for the relationship between the US and Iran. The US intensifies its military existence and settles in the region where it has toppled the enemies of Iran. It seems that it would be interesting to follow the consequences of this situation in terms of the future US-Iran relations.

- From the point of view of Iran, if Iraq disintegrates, no other powerful Arab state that opposes Iran would remain in the region. In the case of Iraqi disintegration, the influence of Iran would increase gradually. The only danger for Iran is the possibility of the expansion of a civil war in Iraq to the other countries in the region. When the Kurdish and Arab populations in Iran are taken into account, it might be assumed that such a scenario would also influence Iran itself.

'The emerging political picture in Northern Iraq would have political, social, and cultural impact on the Kurds living in all the three neighboring countries.'

SAUDI ARABIA: The country that is the most anxious about the possible developments and which raises the issue in international platforms at every opportunity is Saudi Arabia. The Saudi administration has in the last decades tried to curb the Iranian influence in the Gulf region. It has even supported Iraq during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war by establishing the Gulf Cooperation Council among the countries in the region.

- The Wahhabism that is effective in Saudi Arabia does not accept Shiism and considers it a 'blasphemy'. The Shia population (14 %) in Saudi Arabia who follows Ayatullah Sistani as the *Marja-i taqlid* (the highest 'source of emulation' within the Shia religious community) inhabits the oil region in the eastern part of the country. They control an important zone of interaction given their presence in the neighboring Bahrain and Kuwait. Another reason for those who are anxious about the Shia zone is the fact that this zone would control the oil areas.

- The developments in Iraq would certainly have some consequences for the Saudi Arabia-US relations. A multi-cultural, democratic, and stable Iraq could easily incite a rebellion among the opposition in the country which consequently would cause many problems in Saudi Arabia.

- An outbreak of a civil war in Iraq or its disintegration is one of the worst possible scenarios for Saudi Arabia. In such a situation, Saudi Arabia is expected to support the Sunni Arabs against the Shia Arabs, yet this would have its own domestic security repercussions. In the case of Iraqi disintegration, it could be expected that Saudi Arabia would play a key role in the defense of Gulf countries.

JORDAN: The most advantageous situation for Jordan is the preservation of Iraq as a unified and integrated country.

- From an economic point of view, Iraq is the most important commercial partner of Jordan considering the fragility of the Jordanian economy and its trade volume with Iraq. Especially during the embargo period, Jordan that was permitted to establish qualified industrial and trade zones had increased its trade with Iraq to a maximum level. After the war, Turkey and Iran will be the main competitors for Jordan that also wish to preserve trade relations with the new Iraq.

- From the political point of view, Jordan is a fragile country due to its internal structure in the midst of problems that originate in its neighboring countries. Jordan had been a shelter and centre of opposition for the exiled Iraqis like Chalabi and Allawi in the past and still continues to play the role of an alternative political centre for Iraqi politics. This situation would create serious security problems and make Amman a new target such as the hotel bombings last year.

- A civil war in Iraq or disintegration of the country would harm the economic interests of Jordan. Furthermore, this would cause new problems of refugees and exiled politicians.

SYRIA: It seems that the future of Iraq will influence Syria to an even greater extent in all possible outcomes. The fundamental factors are Syria's Kurdish population, a long border with Iraq, and tribal and ideological affiliations.

- It is stated by many that the Kurdish problem in Syria is gaining certain degree of vitality as a result of developments in Iraq. Syria recently started to confer citizenship to Kurds. It also seems that it is inevitable for the border crossing of tribes and all kinds of interactions on the long borderline.

- If Iraq becomes a stable and democratic neighbor, some new elements would gain momentum in the Syrian domestic politics. This situation would strengthen the current Islamist opposition and increase the demands for freedoms voiced by different segments of the society in

'The country that is expected to benefit most from the current process is Iran both in the short and long term.'

Syria that has undergone a psychology of defeat because of the withdrawal from Lebanon. On the other hand, the continuation of American existence in Iraq would intensify the political pressure on the Syrian regime.

- The disintegration of Iraq would affect Syria in a very detrimental way and cause instability in the country. One of the fundamental factors that causes Syria to worry about the disintegration of Iraq is the consequences originating from the Kurdish population and northern Iraq. Secondly, despite the fact that Syria is in good terms with the Iranian and Lebanese Shias, it would not like the idea of a Shia state for it will strengthen Iran and weaken the Arabs. Similarly, in the case of an Iraqi disintegration, the strengthening of Israel and weakening of Syria would make Syria an easy target.

In conclusion, the Arab countries in the region have some concerns over the possibility of a new situation in which Iraq, as a strong Arab country, would withdraw from the regional equation and the vacuum would be filled by an Iran-centered Shia zone. Iraq's loss of its strong army and its Arab identity would strengthen Israel, Iran, and Turkey strategically in the Middle East. Against the expectations of the American neo-conservatives, the emerging Iraqi regime shall not be a supporter of Israel. However, this would not change the fact that Iraq will be a militarily weak state and a politically instable country.

'Iraq's loss of its strong army and its Arab identity would strengthen Israel, Iran, and Turkey strategically in the Middle East.'

'Iraq will be a militarily weak state and a politically instable country.'

C. TURKEY: Northern Iraq, the Turcomans and the Unity of Iraq

Turkey and Iraq started to improve their relations as soon as Iraq achieved its independence despite the imprints of the perception of Ottoman legacy in general, the 'Arab revolt" and the question of Mosul in particular. Turkey and Iraq signed the Sadabad Pact (together with Iran and Afghanistan) in 1937 as countries having similar perception of threats and overlapping national and regional interests. Turkey spent a great deal of efforts to find a solution for the border question between Iran and Iraq to this end. 'The Baghdad axis' which emerged in the Turkish foreign policy in the 1930s has continued until 1990/91 despite the changes of governments and regimes. Turkey defined and pursued its relations with the Arab world over this axis.

'The Baghdad axis' continued to influence Turkish foreing policy even after the Second World War. From 1945 onwards, Turkey started to take a closer position to countries that are pro-Western, moderate Arab nationalist and conservative monarchies which felt a certain danger of Soviet communism such as Iraq and Jordan while distancing itself from republicanist, anti-Western, radical Arab nationalist countries which were pro-Soviet to a degree such as Syria and Egypt. As a consequence of a common perception of threat and overlapping interests, Turkey and Iraq led to the foundation of Baghdad Pact. Although, as a result of Iraqi Revolution in 1958, pro-Nasser and radical Arab nationalists came to power in Baghdad, and this caused the collapse of the Baghdad Pact and basis of contacts, relations with Iraq started to move in the positive direction contrary to the expectations. 'The Baghdad axis' in Turkish foreign policy continued despite the characteristics of regimes after 1958. Common interests have undoubtedly played a major role in this process.

What troubled Turkey throughout the 1960s were the relations between unstable regimes in Baghdad and the Kurds under the leadership of Molla Mustafa Barzani. Developments surrounding the Kurdish rebellion against Baghdad and especially the Iranian support (together with US and Israel) to the Kurds in northern Iraq fighting with Baghdad deeply concerned Turkey. Turkey conveyed its concerns to the Shah of Iran over this issue and tried to persuade him that his help could lead to the establishment of an independent Kurdish state with serious implications for Kurds in Turkey and Iran. Ankara had tried to improve relations between Iran and Iraq as a final solution and had not refrained from taking initiatives to mediate for this purpose. Ankara remained silent when Baghdad recognized the autonomy for northern Iraq in 1970; however, provision of financial help and arms to Kurds by the Shah caused the continuation of concern on the part of Turkey. Therefore, Turkey had welcome the Algerian Agreement between Iran and Iraq in 1975 which ended the Shah's support to the Kurdish movement, which eventually brought an end to the Kurdish rebellion.

Although the trade volume between Turkey and Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) increased significantly, the possibility of change in the status quo (borders) as a result of war has caused security concerns for Turkey.

Unification of all Kurdish groups in northern Iraq and their slip under the control of Iran on the one hand, and movement of the Iranian army getting close to Kirkuk and its threat to Kirkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline on the other hand, raised concerns for Turkey. This led Turkey to take some military measures along the Iraqi border. The PKK also continued to be a problem in this period; Iran considered Turkey's operations against the PKK in northern Iraq to be a move against the Iraqi Kurds (Iran's allies) and therefore as Turkey's help to Baghdad in the war. When Turkey's operations in northern Iraq intensified, this has caused conflicts of interest between Iran fighting with the Iraqi Kurds and Turkey fighting against the PKK.

Turkey radically changed its regional and international policy parameters in 1990 and 1991, which it had adopted since 1945 and 1965. The reasons for this radical change can be explained by such events as the Gulf crisis and the Gulf War after the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, end of the cold war, and the beginning of a peace process between the Arabs and the Israelis. There used to be two main functional factors in relations between Turkey and the Arab world. These factors were the question of Cyprus and oil/trade. However, two more basic factors have emerged in 1980s and 1990s. The first is the question of the Kurds, and the second is the question of water. The most important outcome of this period for Turkey's Middle East policy was the disappearance of the "Baghdad axis" for sometime which had remained strong since 1930s.

In the period after 1991 Turkey begun to step in to handle the lack of authority that PKK began to make use in Northern Iraq. When some refugees sought shelter alongside the borders of Turkey and Iran after the Kurds of northern Iraq rose against Saddam Hussein following the Gulf War, the US and its allies seized the opportunity to move into Northern Iraq both militarily and politically. These new conditions regarding Kurds and Northern Iraq created new problems between Iran and Turkey as it happened in the past during the war between Iran and Iraq. Turkey and Iran have always been aware of the fact that disintegration of Iraq would definitely create negative outcomes for both countries. Therefore they have cooperated to maintain the integrity of Iraq. Yet, because of the uncertainties and rise of tension in Iraq, it was difficult for both countries to keep the same level of cooperation concerning the current crisis in Iraq.

The Kurds clashed among themselves on the one hand and pursued, on the other hand, a wise policy of managing their relations with Turkey, Iran, and the US. Turkey's increasing intervention in Northern Iraq when PKK became more assertive in the area caused a concern for Iran. Though conditions have somewhat changed after the capture of the PKK leader Ocalan in 1999, this general picture of the region continued until April 2003 when the US declared war on Iraq. With the declaration of war, a new situation emerged while risks for Turkey remained the same.

After 1991 when Iraq faced a profound uncertainty and a lack of authority, Ankara favored a sovereign, independent, democratic, united, and stable Iraq to have a place in the international community so that it could deal with its internal problems and control northern Iraq. Turkey argued that this should be done peacefully. Perhaps the best solution, from Turkey's point of view, was to have Saddam step back being aware of the new balance of power in world politics, and also have him venture upon a process of transition leading to democracy and establish social consensus among different groups in domestic politics. The new parameters that came about after the Cold War in general and parameters after 9/11 in particular were to be taken into account in the establishment of regional peace and stability. For Turkey, it was crucial to have an Iraq which has a full control over its borders with Turkey. Turkey was fully aware that this could never happen if the chaos in Iraq had spread to the rest of the Middle East.

Turkey's expectations in the wake of the war were the following:

- **The territorial unity of Iraq is to be secured**: Turkey believed that not just the northern region but a disintegrated Iraq altogether would bring chaos and instability for the region as well as for Turkey.

- **The political unity of Iraq is to be secured**: Turkey was of the opinion that a central and powerful government should definitely be maintained in order to control all parts of Iraq including its natural resources. A militarily and strategically weak Iraq might be seen for the benefit of Turkey when compared to the regime of Saddam Hussein, but the reality now is the reverse: a weak Baghdad causes concern for Turkey.

- **A strong central government is to be secured**: Turkey favors a strong central government in Iraq because stability cannot otherwise be achieved. A federative or confederative governmental structure may deepen the present factions and lead to the disintegration of Iraq in the end.

- **The Turcoman Community**: Turkey wishes the Turcoman community, who were oppressed by the Baath regime along with some other communities, to live in peace and security.

- **Kirkuk and the oil**: Turkey prefers the Kirkuk region and its oil resources to belong to a united Iraq both for the benefit of Turcomans and for the unity of Iraq.

- **The problem of PKK**: Turkey believes that the PKK should never be allowed to exist in the Iraqi territory.

"The Baghdad axis' which emerged in the Turkish foreign policy in the 1930s has continued until 1990/91 despite the changes of governments and regimes. Turkey defined and pursued its relations with the Arab world over this axis.'

What follows is an analysis of whether Turkey's expectations of Iraq before the war are fulfilled:

Territorial-political integrity of Iraq and its regime: Though Iraq has remained territorially and politically united after the war, its political-constitutional system was defined as a loose federalism. This governmental and constitutional condition was created by *de facto* realities after the war. In the pre-war period Turkey was concerned that the war might in the end lead to the establishment of an independent Kurdish state. The war, however, came to a close without causing as much chaos and resistance as expected. When the Shia Arabs displayed a radical attitude, this was balanced by bringing the Kurds into the center. Kurdish groups consented to remain within a united Iraq on condition that they had a greater autonomy and governed through a loose federalism.

It should be beared in mind that Turkey did not reject Baghdad to grant autonomy to the Kurds of Northern Iraq in the early 1970s, and it found such a policy acceptable even after 1991. Yet, the chain of events occurring in 1990s – namely when the PKK, The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) grew stronger- made Turkey doubtful of the formula of autonomy or federation. The formula of federalism, however, became inevitable because of the reasons cited above. This present constitution had reinforced and legalized the formula of federalism. Thus, the present structure formulated in the 1970s and practically exercised from 1991 onward was legitimized. Turkey, after all, can no more raise objection to a federal system approved by the majority of the Iraqi people.

The Turcomans: Turkey's relations with Iraq were mainly confined to the questions of 'Kurds' and 'security' from 1920s to early 1990s and the question of Turcomans was avoided to refrain from damaging bilateral relations. Injustice towards Turcomans were either ignored or warded off through simple protests. Ankara assumed that if Turkey brings up the question of Turcomans, Baghdad would bring the Kurds on the table. Therefore, a special attention was paid to this issue so that it wouldn't damage relations based on mutual interests. Moreover, Turkey regarded pushing Baghdad on this issue to the corner, which was combating the Kurdish nationalism, as needless and damaging fundamental interests. Turkey did not pursue such a balance-seeking policy only towards Turcomans; rather, Turkey's overall policy, especially during the Cold War period towards the Turks who were living in all neighboring countries was underlined by the same attitude.

However, Turkey started to use the question of Turcomans as a policy instrument in the post 1991 environment to intervene in developments (foremost concerning PKK) in Northern Iraq because when Baghdad began to lose its control in Northern Iraq, a power vacuum emerged which led to uncertainties and conflicts. The question of Turcomans became one of the national concerns of Turkey in this process with the efforts of Turcoman lobby. Developments surrounding PKK also played a significant role in Turkey's policy towards Turcomans. In parallel with the increasing concern about Turcomans in the Turkish public opinion and the Turkish media, it is observed that

negative publications about Iraqi Kurdish groups scaled up which led to the emergence of a negative environment when the critical climate in the Southeastern Turkey is taken into consideration.

Turkey has been concerned with the issue of Turcomans since the beginning of Iraqi War in 2003 and spent efforts for the provision of their cultural and political rights. Although Turcomans do not constitute an independent political entity[30], at least their social and cultural rights are guaranteed by the constitution. Turcoman identity will be expressed freely in the new Iraq, they will live freely and improve their existence in a democratic Iraq by exercising their social, cultural and economic rights. These rights are guaranteed in the Iraqi constitution. (For example see articles 4/1, 4/4, 125). However, implementation of these articles in practical life is an extremely important issue. Turcomans' political engagements and representation in different political parties, whether non-ethnic-sectarian political parties or Kurdish, Shia Arab and Sunni Arab parties, may bring many advantages to Turcomans in the long run. Indeed, Shia Turcomans played a certain role in the inclusion of articles concerning the rights of Turcomans in the constitution.

Kirkuk: Turkey has always had a concern on the issue of Kirkuk. It seems that Kirkuk will be incorporated in the Kurdish region as far as implementation of the constitution and balance of power in Kirkuk are considered, against the expectations of Turkey and the Turcomans. The Shia and Sunni Arabs did not support Turcomans on the issue of Kirkuk and it is unlikely that they will do so in the future. There are several reasons for this. First, the Sunni Arabs are in a weak position. The Shia Arabs, on the other hand, did not act assertive enough in their negotiations with the Kurds on the issue of Kirkuk despite the concerns of Shia Turcomans. Neither did the Arab countries support this issue. Efforts to determine the status of Kirkuk still continue and this process will be completed by the end of 2007 at the latest according to the new constitution.

The PKK Question: Turkey's expectations concerning the existence of PKK in Northern Iraq were not met either. This issue continues to be source of tension in the Turkey-US relations. It is likely that this question will be a source of tension between Turkey and governments in Baghdad and 'Kurdish Federal Region'.

The following observations and analyses can be made concerning the impacts of post-2003 events on Turkey:

- The 'Baghdad axis" which continued until late 1980s in the Turkish foreign policy faded away. **Weak central governments** in Baghdad will not probably be able to pursue such a foreign policy even if Turkey wants to establish relations as before.

- Given the strategic threat posed by Iraq to Turkey under Saddam Hussein, absence of a strong Iraqi army in the near future will be a source of comfort for Turkey. However, it is likely that threats stemming from Northern Iraq in **the context of PKK** will continue.

'Turkey, after all, can no more raise objection to a federal system approved by the majority of the Iraqi people.'

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[30] For a number of reasons for this situation that stem from the particular realities of new Iraq and Turcomans, see "Social and Political Analysis of Turcomans", p. 46-47.

- Iraq's loss of its strong army and its Arab identity would change the power balance in the Middle East and would lead Turkey to emerge as a prominent strategic actor. However, **problems in the southeastern Anatolia** would limit Turkey to use its potential in the region.

- Both in the short and long run, Turkey will feel the **political, social and cultural impacts of the 'Kurdish Federal Region'** which was established in Northern Iraq. The main reason behind Turkey's concern regarding Iraqi federalism at the beginning was the probability that a federal region in the north could consolidate its power by using oil resources and would impact Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin. However, this approach provides a short-sighted framework to see various dimensions of the question. The constitution of Iraq is based on the principle of decentralization alongside a federal base and introduces unconstrainted authorities and autonomy even for provinces outside the federal regions. As far as Turkey's concerns for the future are concerned, even if Iraq adopted a centrally strong political system, emergence of expected influences would have been inevitable.

- Developments in Northern Iraq in the context of political, social and cultural freedoms recognized in the Iraqi constitution may have a direct impact on Turkey in any event. The rise of the **idea of independence** and **pan-Kurdish movement** should be expected to gather momentum especially among the post-1991 generation in northern Iraq. In addition to mutual political effects, social, cultural and economic interplay should also be expected due to strong tribal and religious relations across the borders. Cultural interaction will have wider dimensions given the opportunities of globalization, i.e., media, universities, newspapers and magazines, literary products and internet facilities.

- Turkey should be expected to play a particular role in the **establishment of political stability in the new Iraq**. As a matter of fact, Turkey contributed to the participation of Sunni Arabs in the political process in Iraq by bringing together Zalmay Halilzad and Iraqi Sunni Arab leaders in Istanbul on 4 December 2005. The Turcomans and the Sunni Arabs will inevitably have a particular weight in this new role rendered to Turkey.

- Turkey will have a significant economic influence in addition to this political role primarily in northern Iraq and in the whole country. Turkey's economic role would become a **'hinterland'** relation for Northern Iraq.

- **Intensification of such interactions** with northern Iraq, unfavorable developments concerning Turcomans or annexation of Kirkuk to 'Kurdish Federal Region' may cause tensions in domestic politics in Turkey.

- The water question is expected to be one of the first issues to come on the agenda following the achievement of stability and normalization of the political system in Baghdad.

'Both in the short and long run, Turkey will feel the political, social and cultural impacts of the 'Kurdish Federal Region' which was established in Northern Iraq.'

Social and Political Analysis of Turcomans in Iraq

*The exact number of **Turcoman population** like all other ethnic and religious groups is not known and can only be estimated. According to population projections based on 1957 census results, which is regarded as the last regular one, and on various estimates of Turcoman groups, the number of their population is estimated between 2.1 and 2.4 millions.*

*Turcomans are **scattered and dispersed** all over the country including southern Iraq; they do not constitute a majority in any particular province or region.*

*Turcomans **are excessively divided** politically and socially along the lines of their geographical dispersion. Almost half of Turcoman population are Shia and loyal to Shia mujtahids like Ayatullah Sistani. Shia Turcomans are settled in rural areas in general. The **Shia Turcomans** tend to vote for their political parties which are in the Shia Union. Although their political loyalty lies with the Shia parties and religious belonging is attached to the Shia mujtahids, they are Turcomans as far as their social and cultural identity is concerned. In fact, they do not deny their Turcoman identity. The Shia Turcomans have achieved prominence because of the weight of Shia Arabs in Iraq and gained a position of representing Turcomans in the new political process.*

*Turkey and Sunni Turcomans were not able to establish a dialogue or cooperation with this group until recently. Turkish authorities usually tend to see Shia Turcomans as Iranian agents. This largely stems from the absence of a clear **Turkish policy towards Shia Turcomans**. If Turcoman identity and presence in Iraq are to be preserved and improved, policies to this end will have to be developed. Shia and Sunni Turcomans need to be brought together on various platforms and a dialogue should be initiated between them.*

*It is estimated that some Turcomans were forced to become **'Arabs' or 'Kurds'** to find jobs and get promotion in their work since the Baath regime did not recognize Turcoman identity. The question remains whether this group, which is estimated to be at least around 10 percent of the general Turcoman population, will reclaim their previous identity in the new period.*

Turcoman parties in the Kurdish alliance *are the parties led by individuals with no social support basis. They are symbolically supported by KDP and PUK. Kurdish groups claim to be real guardians of Turcomans and argue that they are happier and better represented under their administration. For this reason, they also finance the publications of various newspapers and magazines.*

The Sunni Turcomans *are constantly divided instead of getting unified. Turcomans who were called 'nationalists' compose a group who have studied in Turkey or still preserve their family relations, claiming that Turkey should be the guarantor of Turcomans as well as defending the view that Turcomans should be united under a single party. Although this group is generally represented by the Iraqi Turcoman Front (ITF), they are not monolithic as imagined. Since 1990s, there have been divisions and splits stemming from ITF's organizational characteristics and internal functioning which led to the establishment of new parties, foundations and associations. Americans have started to ignore ITF in the post-war period although they were invited to opposition meetings before the war because of their close relations with Turkey and their image. The dominant position of Kurds and the Shia Arabs after the invasion also played a role in this regard.*

ELECTION PERFORMANCE OF IRAQI TURCOMAN FRONT			
	Number of Votes	**%**	**Number of Deputies**
30 January 2005	93.480	% 1.11	3
15 December 2005	87.993	% 0.72	1

TURCOMAN PARTIES IN IRAQI ELECTIONS			
Election List	**Turcoman Parties**	**30 January 2005 Number of Deputies**	**15 December 2005 Number of Deputies**
United Iraqi Alliance Abdülaziz Al Hakim, İbrahim Cafari, Mukteda es-Sadr	Islamic Union of Iraqi Turcomans (Abbas Bayati) Turcoman Loyalty Movement	5	4
Kurdistan Alliance Calal Talabani Masud Barzani	Turcoman Brotherhood Party	4	1
Iraqi Accord Front Adnan al-Dulaymi, Tarıq al-Haşimi, Halef al-Ulayyan	-		1
Iraqi National List Iyad Allawi	Union of Turcoman Tribes and Nobles of Iraq	-	-
Iraqi National Congress Ahmad Chalabi	Turcoman Decision Party (Faruk Abdullah)	-	-
Iraqi Turcoman Front Sadeddin Ergeç		3	1
TOTAL		12	7

IV.   The New Era in Iraq and Turkey's Policy Towards Iraq: Recommendations

General Recommendations

- The Sunni Arabs must be integrated in the system for territorial integrity and stability of Iraq. This can be accomplished only by the presence of Sunni Arabs in the government and by keeping the promises made to them. Therefore a model of power sharing should be adopted and Sunni Arabs should be enabled to take part in the government.

- Zalmay Khalilzad's initiative for the political participation of Sunni Arabs which is supported by Turkey and the Arab League must continue.

- Promises given to the Sunni Arabs before the referendum on 15 October 2005 and the 15 December 2005 elections should be kept.

- In this context, promised process of constitutional revision must be carried out and finalized to meet the expectations of Sunni Arabs. Promises which remain only on paper would lead to violence and instability.

- Several mechanisms should be introduced to prevent electoral irregularities as observed during the elections on 30 January and on 15 December 2005.

- A fair election system should be worked out to facilitate equal representation of minorities.

- Problems concerning the election system, irregularities and ethnic-sectarian nature of the police force should be resolved before the local elections in 2006.

- Measures should be taken regarding the ethnic-sectarian composition of the army and the police porce, and the current composition should be changed.

External Actors

- Turkey should continue its relations with various actors in Iraq while continuing its dialogue with the neighboring countries. In this context, we should expect the emergence of a Syria-Iran axis on the one hand, and a Saudi Arabia-Jordan-Kuwait axis on the other hand. Turkey can and should work together with all these actors at the same time for different interests.

- Iraq would become a ground for cooperation between Turkey and the US, not a discord if Turkey could continue its current policy on Iraq. The US which could not receive the amount of support it expected from Arab and Gulf countries began to realize the constructive and balancing role of Turkey as advantageous.

'The Sunni Arabs must be integrated in the system for territorial integrity and stability of Iraq. Promises given to the Sunni Arabs before the referendum on 15 October 2005 and the 15 December 2005 elections should be kept.'

The Sunni Arabs, the Shia Arabs and the Kurds

- Process for the integration of the Sunni Arabs should continue. This is important both for the stability of Iraq and for the status of Kirkuk. On the other hand, dialogues with the Sunni Arabs should also continue.

- Continuation of negotiations between the Sunni Arabs and the US before and after the elections is an important development. Turkey should continue its effective role in this area.

- Turkey should pursue coherent and balanced relations with all parties while working for the integration of Sunni Arabs and Turcomans in the new system.

- A special attention should be paid to the Kurds, in order not to give an impression of excluding the Kurds. Contacts with the Kurdish leaders in northern Iraq should be increased.

- Relations with the Shia Arabs should also be improved. Opportunities for direct contacts with Shia leaders should be created. Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari's visit to Turkey on 28 February 2006 was a significant step in this context.

Northern Iraq

- Turkey should draw up a new policy for Iraq. The crisis of sovereignty has ended in Iraq and a new sovereign state has been established. Turkey can no longer play a role as an intervening actor with the methods it used in the 1990s. Economic, social and cultural spheres of influence which are compatible with the realities of new Iraq should be generated.

- Turkey should not allow the developments in northern Iraq to constrain and constrict its general regional policies. Turkey's Middle Eastern policy should not be constrained in a way similar to the problems regarding Armenia in the 1990s which constricted Turkey's policy in Caucasus.

- Turkey should find a way of removing the 'Kurdish issue' from being a factor in its relations with Iraq. An automatic association of southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq should come to an end. Realist approaches that started to emerge in several government circles are extremely important to overcome this vicious circle.

'The US which could not receive the amount of support it expected from Arab and Gulf countries began to realize the constructive and balancing role of Turkey as advantageous.'

- EU membership process constrains Turkey's policy options toward Iraq; for example it makes military intervention impossible. Indeed this situation might strengthen the opposition to EU in Turkey. The same paradox also exists in Turkish-US relations.

- Developments in northern Iraq are certain to have a direct impact on Turkey. Social, economic and cultural interaction should also be expected in addition to the political one. There are already strong tribal and religious relations across the borders. Cultural interaction

would have wider dimensions given the opportunities of globalization such as mediums of mass communication, universities, newspapers and magazines, literary products and internet facilities. Cultural interplay looks inevitable even in the absence of political influence.

- Turkey should be prepared for a possibility of the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in Iraq in the long run. Considering this probability, Turkey should initiate policies for the solution of 'Southeastern Problem'.

Turcomans

- Developments in Iraq are perceived in Turkish public opinion as a zero sum game between Turcomans and Kurds. The association of these two groups harms Turkey's interests. This perception constrains Turkey's possible maneuvers in Iraq.

- Question of Turcomans and Kirkuk have a great potential to cause serious problems from the point of view of domestic politics in Turkey. Failure of the Iraqi Turcoman Front (ITF) model is evident now and insistence on this model would do nothing but weaken Turcomans further. Failure of the ITF model can not be ascribed to persons or institutions. Social realities of Turcomans and the new Iraq are also related to this result. (See the section on Social and Political Analysis of Turcomans)

- Turkey cannot sustain its current policy towards Turcomans due to the political conditions and realities in the new Iraq. Coupling Turkey's name with that of the ITF in the international community and coalition forces causes problems both for Turkey and the ITF. On the other hand, activities of state instutions in this matter produce reactions and reverse effects.

- Turkey should develop a different/new policy or model for Turcomans. Indeed, since the 30 January 2005 elections, its signs started to emerge. Turkey somewhat changed its attitude in the face of a negative situation after the elections and the so-called 'Bulgarian model' entered into discussions. However, this model doesn't seem to be applicable because of the specific situation of Turcomans and Iraq.

- Turkey should define a new Turcoman policy encompassing all Turcomans. Turcomans who entered the parliament on the list of various parties should be encouraged to come together on a mutual ground to establish a dialogue. Turkey should take initiatives especially concerning the rights of Turcomans and Kirkuk.

- Activities addressing Turcomans should be carried out through civil society organizations. In addition to political activities targeting Turcomans, economic, social and cultural activities should be given weight as well. Economic, social and cultural assistance should be extended to all Turcomans without any discrimination on the basis of political party and sectarian affilities. Turcomans living in Turkey,

'Turkey cannot sustain its current policy towards Turcomans due to the political conditions and realities in the new Iraq. Turkey should develop a different/new policy or model for Turcomans.'

Turcoman organizations and other interested parties have sufficient sources and means to carry out such activities. Civil society organizations should take the initiative and all Turcomans whether they are Shia or Sunni should be invited to unite on a common cultural platform. Special activities should be launched for the preservation and revival of Turcoman culture through social welfare assistance, restoration of historical monuments, organization of cultural activities, supporting newspapers, magazines, TV stations, establishing cultural centers and literary movements. TIKA (Turkish Development and Cooperation Agency) which operates in many other regions can transfer its experience and expertise to Iraq.

- If the Turcoman identity and existence are to be preserved, then a policy should be developed addressing the Shia Turcomans. The Shia and Sunni Turcomans should be united at least on the cultural front and an establishment of a dialogue should be facilitated. There is a need for the development of a 'policy for Shia Turks'. The Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey can step in to contribute.

- Turkey should work for the legislation and codification of constitutional rights and their implementation.

'In addition to political activities targeting Turcomans, economic, social and cultural activities should be given weight as well. If the Turcoman identity and existence are to be preserved, then a policy should be developed addressing the Shia Turcomans.'

- Works on the status of Kirkuk should be continued without interruption and Turkey's perspective should be explained to people in Kirkuk, all groups in Iraq, neighboring countries and to the international community. Public diplomacy should be scaled up to this end. Turkey should develop active policies in addition to its current initiatives. Questions concerning the welfare and security of Turcomans, possibility of according a special status to Kirkuk, special rulings on oil, different alternative scenarios such as 'Kirkuk without oil' and 'oil without Kirkuk' should be discussed. Turkey should have long term thinking on this issue and should have preparation for the possibility of settling the Kirkuk questions against its expectations.

In conclusion, Turkey should realistically define its interests and draw a policy against the background of new facts in Iraq and in the region. Turkey's constructive, facilitating and balancing role is unavoidable in the new Iraq. Turkey should therefore establish balanced and equal relations with all actors on all levels as pursued in recent times. Discourses based on fear and reactionary attitudes concerning Iraq should be abandoned. An active, constructive and multidimensional discourse and policy which emphasizes peace, security, democracy and stability should be developed. To this effect, Turkey should pursue a comprehensive public policy towards the people of Iraq, the region and international actors. On the level of discourse, participatory democracy based on territorial integrity, effective use and fair share of resources, ethnic-sectarian integration, pluralist unity, security for all, a constitution that would establish consensus and stability should be emphasized as Turkey's expectations. Likewise, there is a need to pursue a public policy aiming at the Turkish public opinion. Domestic public opinion

should be informed about the new situation in Iraq and Turkey's current and possible policy alternatives.

'Turkey should realistically define its interests and draw a policy against the background of new facts in Iraq and in the region. Turkey's constructive, facilitating and balancing role is unavoidable in the new Iraq. Turkey should therefore establish balanced and equal relations with all actors on all levels as pursued in recent times. Discourses based on fear and reactionary attitudes concerning Iraq should be abandoned. An active, constructive and multidimensional discourse and policy which emphasizes peace, security, democracy and stability should be developed.'