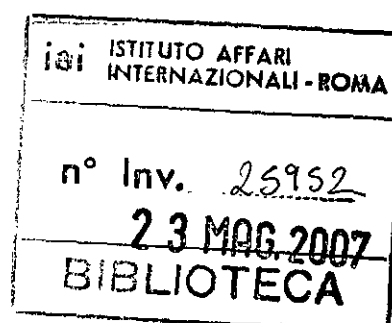


**IRAQ AFTER THE NEW GOVERNMENT:
STABILIZATION, SECURITY PROBLEMS AND THE REGIONAL SCENARIO**

Landau Network Centro Volta (LNCV)
Iraqi National Academy of Science (INAS)
Como, 24-25/XI/2006

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- 2. Federalism from below in Iraq: some historical and comparative reflections / Reidar Visser (10 p.)
- 3. Emerging media in Iraq [outline] / Ibrahim Al-Marashi (2 p.)
- 4. The new Iraq and federalism [outline] / Bayazeed H. Abdullah (5 p.)
- 5. The language question in some Arab constitutions with emphasis on Iraq [outline] / Georges Jabbour (2 p.)
- 6. The stabilization of Iraq: the role Iran and the US can play [outline] / Nasser Saghafi-Ameri (6 p.)
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Rete per la cooperazione scientifica
e lo studio di problematiche globali



Centro di Cultura Scientifica
"Alessandro Volta"

LANDAU NETWORK - CENTRO VOLTA

Villa Olmo - Como

International Workshop on:

Iraq after the New Government: Stabilization, Security Problems and the Regional Scenario

*Council Room, Municipality of Como,
Como, Italy*

24-25 November, 2006

organized by

Landau Network Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
Iraqi National Academy of Science (INAS), Baghdad, Iraq

promoted and supported by

General Directorate for Mediterranean and Middle-East (GDMM)
of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Rome, Italy

with also the support of

Municipality of Como, Italy

Preamble

In order to analyse the multidimensional aspects associated with the stability, the regional security relations and current trends of the new Iraq and of the Middle-East, the Landau Network-Centro Volta (LNCV) in collaboration with the Iraqi National Academy of Science of Baghdad, directed by Prof. Hussain al-Shahristani, and with the support of the General Directorate for Mediterranean and Middle-East (GDMM) of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), is organizing the international Workshop on: *Iraq after the Government: stabilization, security problems and the regional scenario*.

The Workshop aims to discuss the current political, social and security situation in Iraq after the promulgation of the Constitution and the election of December 2005, analyzing in particular the many challenges which the new Iraq is facing. Due to the relevance of the neighbouring countries' role for the stabilization of Iraq the Seminar will also focus on the regional scenario and on the necessity of enhancing regional stability in order to reduce the lack of confidence and misperceptions amongst Iraq and its neighbours.

The Workshop represents a follow up of the LNCV Workshops held in Como, on November 4-5, 2005, on *The New Iraq. Stabilization, Reconciliation, Institution-Building and the Regional Scenario*, and in Rome, on July 5-6, 2004, on *Towards a Multilateral Regional Security Arrangement in the Middle East*.

General Information

Attendance at the two-days Workshop, organized like a real Roundtable, is strictly on invitation and open to about 40 participants, speakers included.

The official language of the workshop is English. Each Session is coordinated by a Chairperson. Each speech is limited to no more than 10 minutes in order to leave enough time for the general discussion. Each speaker should provide his/her paper (or enlarged abstract) some weeks in advance, in order to allow the preliminary circulation of papers amongst all the participants.

Participants at the Workshop take part as individuals and not as representatives of their institutions or governments in order to encourage wide-ranging and uninhibited discussions among experts.

A press conference, if required, might be arranged at the end of the Workshop.

Main Topics of Discussion

The Workshop key topical sessions will be addressed to the following questions:

- 1 The concept of representation in multi-ethnic and multi-religious states;
- 2 The political compromise over the Constitution and the Iraqi core-periphery trouble relations;
- 3 Main elements of concern of the different Iraqi communities presented by their representatives;
- 4 Ethno-religious sectarianism, jihadist terrorism, civil conflict: avoiding the trap of fragmentation;
- 5 Fiscal federalism, the issue of oil revenue distribution and oil fields and related plants management;
- 6 The stabilization of Iraq and the regional scenario: which role for the international communities and the regional states?;
- 7 Lack of confidence and misperceptions amongst Iraq and the neighbouring countries: the different perspectives;
- 8 Enhancing regional security confidence.

Preliminary Agenda

24 November 2006

09.15 – 09.45

Welcome and Opening Address

Chairperson with addressing remarks: **Riccardo Redaelli**, Landau Network – Centro Volta, Como

- **Giorgio Conetti**, University of Como
- **Maurizio Martellini**, Landau Network – Centro Volta, Como
- **Gianludovico de Martino**, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Roma

09.45 – 11.00

Session 1: The Status of Iraqi Political and Security Environment: Main Issues and Concerns

Chairperson with addressing remarks: **Maurizio Martellini**

Luciano Callini *"On the Political and Security Situation in Iraq"*

Speeches by Iraqi Representatives

Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.00

Session 1: Second Part. Round Table

Buffet Lunch

14.30 – 16.00

Session 2: Federalism, Ethno-Religious Sectarianism and Oil-Revenues Distribution: Managing Difficult Core-Periphery Relations

Chairperson with addressing remarks: **Riccardo Redaelli**

Reidar Visser *"Challenges of Building Federalism from Below in Iraq: Some Historical and Comparative Reflections"*

Ibrahim Al-Marashi *"Ethno-sectarian Dynamics in the Iraqi Media"*

Speeches by Iraqi Representatives

Coffee Break

16.30 – 18.00

Session 2: Second Part. Round Table

20.15

Social Dinner at "Imbarcadere" Restaurant

25 November 2006

09.30 – 11.00

Session 3: Iraq and the Regional Scenario

Chairperson with addressing remarks: **Franco Zallio**, Institute for International Politics Studies, Milano

Georges Jabbour *"The Language Question in Some Arab Constitutions with Emphasis on Iraq"*

Nasser Saghafi-Ameri *"The Role of Neighbouring and Regional Countries for the Promotion of Security in Iraq"*

Revuén Paz *"The Effect of the Iraqi Jihadi Insurgency on Global Jihad"*

Aliboni Roberto *"Role and Interests of Turkey in the Iraqi crisis"*

Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.00

Session 3: Second Part. Round Table

13.00 *Closing Remarks*

Buffet Lunch

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Villa Olmo - Como

International Workshop on:

Iraq after the New Government: Stabilization, Security Problems and the Regional Scenario

Como, November 24-25, 2006

Participants

- 1) **AL-FAISAL Faisal**, Former Deputy Chairman, Security National Council, Baghdad, Iraq
- 2) **AL-HASSANI Abdal Hadi**, Iraqi Council of Representatives, Iraq
- 3) **AL-KADDO Hunain**, Head of the Council of Minorities, Iraqi Council of Representatives, Baghdad, Iraq
- 4) **AL-MARASHI Ibrahim**, Visiting Faculty Member, Koc University, Istanbul, Turkey
- 5) **AL-MOSAWI Mosa**, President of Baghdad University, Baghdad, Iraq
- 6) **AL-MUSAWI Shatha (Mrs.)**, United Iraqi Alliance, Iraqi Council of Representatives, Iraq
- 7) **AL-SAFI Safa'**, Minister of State for the Council of Representatives Affairs, Baghdad, Iraq
- 8) **ALIBONI Roberto**, Vice-President, Institute for National Affairs (IAI), Rome
- 9) **BAYAZEED H. Abdullah**, Kurdish Coalition and member of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, Baghdad, Iraq
- 10) **BILOSLAVO Fausto**, Researcher, Italian Military Center for Strategic Studies (CeMiSS), Rome

- 11) **BRUNO Delia**, Landau Network-Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
- 12) **CALLINI Luciano**, Director, Italian Military Center for Strategic Studies (CeMiSS), Rome, Italy
- 13) **CARDELLI Federica**, Program Manager, Italian Center for the Peace in the Middle East (CIPMO), Milan, Italy
- 14) **CARRARA Salvatore**, Task Force Iraq, Direction General for the Mediterranean and the Middle East (DGMM), Italian MFA, Rome, Italy
- 15) **CAVERZASIO Gaia**, Program Manager, Landau Network - Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
- 16) **CONETTI Giorgio**, Vice Chancellor, Insubria University, Como, Italy
- 17) ***CREMONESI Lorenzo**, Special Correspondent, Corriere della Sera, Milan, Italy
- 18) **DE BANNE Maurizio**, Italian Center for the Peace in the Middle East (CIPMO), Milan, Italy
- 19) **DE MARTINO Gianludovico**, Director Task Force Iraq, Direction General for the Mediterranean and the Middle East (DGMM), Italian MFA, Rome, Italy
- 20) **FAROUK Abdullah**, Head of the Turkmen Decision Party, Iraqi Council of Representatives, Baghdad, Iraq
- 21) **FONTANA Paolo**, Research Fellow, Landau Network - Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
- 22) **GOLDKORN Giacomo**, Editorial Director Equilibri.net, Milano
- 23) **JABBOUR Georges**, Former adviser to the President of Syria, President, Syrian UN Association, Member of Parliament, Damascus, Syria
- 24) **KANNA Yunadem**, President National List al-Rafadeen, Iraqi Council of Representatives, Baghdad, Iraq
- 25) **KIBAROĞLU Mustafa**, Vice Chair & Graduate Advisor, Bilkent University, International Relations Department, Bilkent, Ankara, Turkey
- 26) **LOMBARDI Marco**, Professor of Sociology, International Relations at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy
- 27) ***MAGGIONI Monica**, Special Correspondent, RAI Italian Television, Milan, Italy
- 28) **MARTELLINI Maurizio**, Secretary General, Landau Network - Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
- 29) **MUTLAQ Saleh**, Head of the Iraqi Front for National Dialogue, Baghdad, Iraq
- 30) ***PARSI Vittorio Emanuele**, Professor of International Relations at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy
- 31) **PAZ Reuven**, Director, Project for the Research of Islamist Movements (PRISM) GLORIA Center, The Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya
- 32) **PIGOLI Aldo**, Deputy Director Equilibri.net, Milan and Associate Researcher, Landau Network-Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy

- 33) **PLEBANI Andrea**, Research Fellow, Landau Network - Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
- 34) **REDAELLI Riccardo**, Director Middle East Program, Landau Network - Centro Volta (LNCV), Italy Como and Professor of Geopolitics, at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan Italy
- 35) **SAFA Hussain**, Deputy President, National Security Council, Baghdad, Iraq
- 36) **SAGHAFI-AMERI Nasser**, Senior Fellow, Department of Foreign Policy & International Relations, Center for Strategic Studies, Tehran, Iran
- 37) **SAWA Abalhad Afram**, Kurdish Coalition, Member of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, Baghdad, Iraq
- 38) **SHAKER Mohamed**, Vice Chairman, Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), Sawiris Foundation for Social Development, Chairman, Regional Information Technology Institute (RITI), Cairo, Egypt
- 39) **SHAWKAT Yasoub Rafiq**, Former Iraqi Diplomat, Baghdad, Iraq
- 40) **STUCCI Stefano**, Task Force Iraq, Direction General for the Mediterranean and the Middle East (DGMM), Italian MFA, Rome, Italy
- 41) **TONINI Alberto**, Researcher of History of International Relations, University of Firenze, Italy
- 42) **VISSER Reidar**, Research Fellow, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Norway
- 43) **ZALLIO Franco**, Director Global Watch, Institute for International Politics Studies (ISPI), Milan, Italy

**To be confirmed*

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Luciano Callini - PowerPoint 1 - LNCV Workshop and Round Table on
**"Iraq after the New Government: Stabilization, Security Problems and the Regional
Scenario"**

November 24-25, 2006

Como, Italy

On the Political and Security Situation in Iraq

Luciano Callini



Landau Network Centro Volta

Villa Olmo - Como 24-25 November 2006

**Iraq after the New Government:
Stabilization, Security Problems and the
Regional Scenario**

*Rear Adm. Luciano Callini
Military Center for Strategic Studies - Director*



STABILIZATION (1) - Government

- “A national unity government” (but in reality a coalition government deeply divided along sectarian lines)
- Ministers have removed the better qualified functionaries not perfectly politically aligned
- Corruption continues to spread
- The average citizen believes that the democratic growth of political parties has only multiplied the problems



STABILIZATION (2) - Parliament

- The alliance between Shi'ites and Kurds is seen by the Sunnis as a threat
- The Shi'a and the Sunni parliamentarians accuse each others.
- The parliamentary commissions are not succeeding their task of writing laws
- The country is in need of a global political compromise and of a national reconciliation, not possible without a partial rehabilitation of the ex-Baathists who are not part of the regime
- The Kurds are convinced by federalism, while the Sunnis are afraid to remain in a weak position.
- The Shi'ites are divided. Abdul Aziz al-Hakim Hakim and the SCIRI, parliament's largest party, are in favour of federation while Muqtada Sadr's extremist movement opposes it in the name of Iraqi nationalism



SECURITY (1) – Sunni insurgents

- Insurgency: a war after the war, threatening the unity of the country
- Initially most of the guerrilla warfare and terrorist acts were carried out by Sunni insurgents, who can be broadly divided as follows:
 - Armed groups, made up of former members of the Iraqi army and of the secrets services, influenced by tribal leaders and Sunni religious leaders. Some time ago, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani began talks with the larger groups;
 - The Baathists, who want to be legally recognised before they suspend their armed struggle;
 - A constellation of extremist *takfir* organisations, the most notable of which is Al Qaeda, made up of foreigners enlisted into the international holy war.
 - Groups of common criminals who use the cover of the "resistance" for personal interests



SECURITY (2) – Iraqi sectarian and ethnic violence

- A systematic spiral of violence between Shi'as and Sunnis (the golden cupola of the Al Askari mosque in Samarra blown up on 22 Feb 2006)
- Emerging trends causing changes in the dynamics of fighting:
 - Sectarian fighting, led by the growth of some 23 militias around Baghdad, was the chief factor in the foundation of the civil war.
 - Baghdad was almost completely divided into sectarian strongholds as both Sunnis and Shi'ites fled neighborhoods in which they were a minority
 - Attack patterns continued to focus on civilians with the average deaths per day rising to almost 100 in October. 104 US troops died in Oct, the highest since Jan 2005
 - Ethnic cleansing forced upwards of 300,000 Iraqis to relocate since the February Samarra mosque bombing.
 - The Shi'a community is internally divided, increasingly along militia-support lines (Badr brigade and the Mahdi army)



SECURITY (3) – Iraqi's Security Forces

- Despite US military recently announced that around 300,000 members of the Iraqi Security Forces had been trained and equipped, overall security conditions in the country were declining
- Militia infiltrations and death squads
- Members of the Badr brigade are normally part of the Interior minister's special forces while those who follow Mahdi are joining the police.
- “....90 percent of the sectarian violence in Iraq takes place in about a 30-mile radius from the centre of Baghdad; and secondly, 90 percent of all violence takes place in five provinces...”



THE REGIONAL SCENARIO – Iran

- August 2006, *Chatham House* report: “....the great problem facing the US is that Iran has superseded it as the most influential power in Iraq.” “...every Shi’a party in Iraq now has strong links with Teheran”.
- September 2006, a US Gao report cited the Director of National Intelligence as saying that Iran “provided guidance and training to select Iraqi Shi’a political groups and provided weapons and training to Shi’a militant groups to enable anti-coalition attacks.”
- Signs of Iranian presence in central and southern Iraq :
 - change in cultural and social habits, return to religious traditions
 - opening of hundreds of cultural and religious associations and of commercial offices in the cities with a Shi’a majority (often operating as covers for Iranian intelligence)
- Teheran's strategic aims:
 - weakening the grip of the American troops to the east in Afghanistan and to the west in Iraq
 - pushing for a federal solution for their turbulent neighbouring country
 - developing nuclear capabilities that would give them dominance over the entire area.



THE REGIONAL SCENARIO – Syria

- By early October Syria decided to move troops from the Iraqi border to its border with Lebanon fearing that a new conflict with Israel is inevitable.
- October 12, US Ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, accused Syria of supporting armed groups in Iraq and allowing foreign insurgents to slip through the border. He said the Syrians, along with the Iranians, wanted a weak and divided Iraq.
- *Washington Post*: Iraqi officials said that as many as 2,000 people with Iraqi passports, 500 foreigners, 300 commercial trucks, 80 cars and 30 buses passed through the border checkpoint at Rabiya on average everyday.
- Major General Caldwell, the chief military spokesman, stated that some 50 to 70 foreign fighters passed through the Syrian border every month.
- Damascus, after the Democratic victory in the US mid-term elections announced it was ready to enter talks with the US over the future of Iraq, the Middle Eastern situation and its own survival.



THE REGIONAL SCENARIO – Saudi Arabia and Turkey

- Saudi fears of the spread of civil war across the greater Middle East and plans to build a fence along their border with Iraq, a project including plans for electronic sensors, security bases, and physical barriers.
- Saudis worried in particular about the possibility of a Shi'a uprising in the Kingdom among the minority living around the oil rich areas and announced that the Kingdom opposed any official separation of Iraq into autonomous regions.
- Sunni extremists returning to Saudi Arabia from Iraq could also cause trouble for the monarchy. Almost all the leaders of the bloody Al Qaeda wing in Saudi Arabia fought in Iraq against the multinational troops.
- Turkey supports the Turkoman minority in Iraq in so far as it is anti-Kurd. Ankara remains determined to root out the final remains of the Pkk (Kurdistan Workers Party), their historic enemy, whose renewed structure has been given refuge Iraq's Kurdistan.
- Turkish premier Erdogan will put pressure on Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki to deal with the issue of the Pkk presence in Iraq and ask him to postpone the application of article 140 of the constitution



THE REGIONAL SCENARIO – “ANTICA BABILONIA” MISSION (1)

Main tasks carried out by the Italian military within the framework of the Antica Babilonia mission:

- reconstruction of the Iraqi “security structure” through helping to train and arm the central and local forces, in both a Nato and a bilateral context.
- on the bilateral front, formation and training was offered to military personal in Italy at the Senior Staff Officer courses held at CASD, of which CEMISS is part;
- defence of the archeological treasures in the Dhi Qar province;
- project for the “virtual museum of Baghdad” (a 3 million euro investment from Italy)
- rationalisation and reorganisation of the energy and water supply sector, support for the education, health systems, waste-disposal and road maintenance.
- help to the aid org. and refugees returning from Saudi Arabia.



THE REGIONAL SCENARIO – “ANTICA BABILONIA” MISSION (2)

Since 2003, the Italian government has spent more than 200 million euro to help Iraq (the military alone, through the Cimic units, have spent 12 million euro on 201 projects).

The positive aspects:

- important role in bringing a minimal level of safety and stability;
- great respect towards the local population;
- important projects carried out, leaving a lasting impression on the people

The negative aspects:

- a difficulty in building a trusting relationship with the extremist political-religious groups such as Sadr's movement;
- an increase in guerrilla and terrorist activities coinciding with the reduction of Italian patrols of the territory;



Landau Network Centro Volta

Villa Olmo - Como 24-25 November 2006

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Reidar Visser – Paper 2 - LNCV Workshop and Round Table on
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Regional Scenario”

November 24-25, 2006
Como, Italy

**Federalism from Below in Iraq: Some Historical and
Comparative Reflections**

Reidar Visser - Norwegian Institute of International Affairs

The Iraqi choice of federalism as a system of government is not surprising, but the particular path to federalism established in the Iraqi constitution is truly remarkable.

Among the 25 existing federations of the world, the vast majority belong to one of two categories, or to a combination of these two. Firstly there are “evolutionary” federations – either polities that developed gradually from below by the amalgamation of entities that wished to federate (as in Switzerland), or those built on imperial remnants similarly created over time but which, with a single stroke, were converted into federations, often at independence (like Micronesia). Secondly, there are “designed” federations – political systems whose geographical make-up has been decided by a small group of political elites, often in closed-doors forums of experts on constitutional questions and democratic theory (examples include South Africa and Ethiopia). Only one existing federation has a method for implementing federalism comparable to that of the new Iraq: Spain.¹

Federalism from below: Spain’s experience

The unique feature of Spanish federalism as expressed in the 1978 constitution – based on a precedent from the 1931 constitution of the short-lived Second Republic – is the role of the popular initiative in designing the federal map of the country. In theory, at least, the federal entities of Spain were to be crafted from below, *abajo-arriba* (bottom-up), through initiatives at the municipal level. The 1978 constitution allows contiguous provinces to amalgamate into autonomous regions provided that at least two thirds of the municipalities concerned (and representing at least a majority of the population of each of the affected provinces) have assented to the federalisation initiative; such efforts can be launched every five years until successful. On paper, this

¹ See Reidar Visser, “Building Federal Subunits By Way of Referenda: Special Challenges for Iraq”, 9 June 2006, <http://historiae.org/federalism.asp>

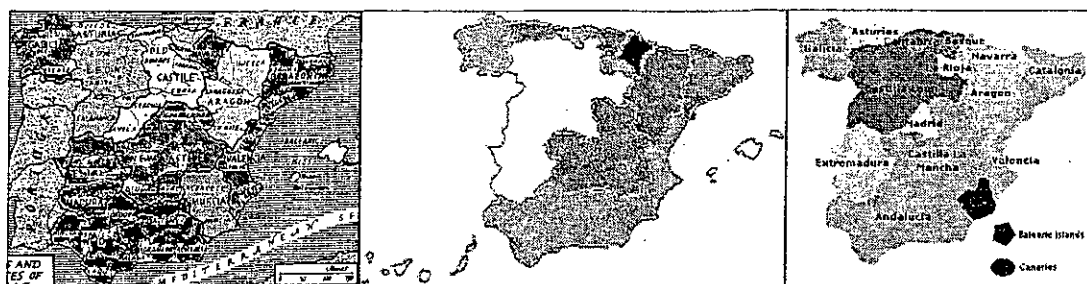
resembles the mechanisms adopted in the 2005 Iraqi constitution and the subsequent legislation for implementing federalism: with the exception of Baghdad, all Iraqi governorates south of Kurdistan – 14 altogether – are free to combine into federal regions on the basis of referendums, and the initiative for the referendum rests with the local governorates in that one tenth of voters or one third of governorate council members can call a plebiscite. Thus the thresholds for starting an autonomy initiative are markedly lower than in Spain (as is the moratorium on renewed attempts: one year only), but the principles are similar.²

However, the actual experiences of Spain in the crucial years of transition from 1978 to 1983 illustrate how building federalism from below can involve unexpected complications, and may prove to be less of a bottom-up enterprise than initially envisaged. The first point concerns the danger of federal chaos and reactions from conservative forces if the federalisation process should develop in unforeseen ways. In Spain, it had generally been expected that three or four regions with long-standing autonomy demands would take steps to ensure autonomous status, whereas the remainder of the country would retain a more unitary state structure. In fact, however, several candidates for self-rule suddenly materialised out of the blue. Members of the old establishment, particularly within the military, reacted negatively towards what they saw as a decentralisation process running out of control, and even many democratically inclined politicians were critical of the rapid proliferation of autonomy ideas in areas where such demands had no past history.³ Matters came to a head with a military coup attempt in February 1981; at that point Spanish politicians decided that greater top-down control was needed and they effectively took over the job of completing and sealing the country's federal map, including the demarcation of the federal regions of central Spain.⁴ A compromise on federalism was thus an integral part of the package that facilitated Spain's transition to democracy – in fact, in the 1990s Spain was able to "reopen" the federalism debate in a less frenzied atmosphere, now with the European Union as a stabilising external factor.

² For problems of political stability related to this, see Reidar Visser, "The Draft Law for the Formation of Regions: A Recipe for Permanent Instability in Iraq?" 27 September 2006, <http://historiae.org/aqalim.asp>

³ To some extent, this echoed reactions seen under the Second Republic (1931–1939), see Luis Moreno, *The Federalization of Spain* (London: Frank Cass, 2001) p. 56.

⁴ Elite demarcation was instrumental in creating the region of Madrid and determining the new borders of the two Castilles. Effectively, Extremadura was also affected by elite-level decisions, as it had not seen municipality-level initiatives prior to 1981. The early initiatives for regionalisation outside the traditionally autonomist areas (Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia and, arguably, Andalusia) are often overlooked; for some interesting examples see Lukas Oldenburg, *Recht auf Gleichheit vs Recht auf Differenz: Dezentralisierung und peripherer Nationalismus am Beispiel Kataloniens*, thesis submitted to Europa-Universität Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder) 2005, p. 62, n. 171.



MAP 1. Spain's pre-democracy regional structure (left); regions demarcated before 1981 through municipal-level initiatives (centre) and the final elite-level design of 1981 (right).

The second important aspect of the Spanish experience has to do with the relatively high influence of regional administrative divisions of the past even in this setting of extreme flux and theoretical openness to change. Thus, ten out of the twelve mainland regions that were defined by bottom-up initiatives from the municipal level before the 1981 compromise on federalism had been readily identifiable as regions in the times of General Franco and earlier. Only two of the regions established prior to 1981, Cantabria and La Rioja (both uni-provincial "secessions" from larger regions), represented radical departures from this general picture. Arguably, one important reason why the instability of the Spanish transition could be contained was the relatively strong and unequivocal historical legacy that pointed towards a particular configuration of territorial entities.

Federalism from below in Iraq

These two points offer historical lessons of relevance to Iraq's current situation. Firstly, federalisation is destined to become an extremely contentious issue in a state that emerges from a centralistic path. Clearly, reactionary attitudes to federalism should not be allowed to block the progress of genuinely popular desire for radical decentralisation. But the Spanish example shows that moderation and compromise in federalism issues can be the key to a successful democratic transition, even if this may mean that no group obtains exactly the state structure it was hoping for at the outset.

Secondly, the importance of strong regional historical legacies should not be underestimated. Whereas most of Spain's federal units can refer to long experiences of administrative separateness, only Kurdistan and possibly the projected small-scale region of the south known as *iqlim al-janub* (Basra, Maysan and Dhi Qar – the old Ottoman vilayet of Basra) exhibit anything remotely comparable to this in Iraq.⁵ (Kurdistan's special position on this score was recognised through the enshrinement of Kurdish autonomy in the

⁵ On the history of various regionalist attempts in Iraq south of Baghdad, see Reidar Visser, *Basra, the Failed Gulf State: Separatism and Nationalism in Southern Iraq* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2005).

Iraqi constitution – a parallel to the Spanish recognition of long-standing self-rule demands through the “fast track” route to autonomy in article 151 of the 1978 constitution, but in the Iraqi case done in classic top-down style.) Throughout the rest of Iraq, historically there has been unity and subordination to Baghdad for long periods.⁶ Thus, some of today’s schemes, such as the project of a nine-province Region of the Centre and the South, do not correspond to any substantial historical precedent.⁷ Of course, this in itself is no argument against the legitimacy of these projects – modern, voluntaristic federal entities may be just as successful as “historical” ones. In Spain, creations like Cantabria and La Rioja were ridiculed for their alleged “artificiality”, but one might also turn that logic on its head and argue that creativity may indeed be necessary to break centralist hegemonies of the past. But the point about historical endurance is worth bearing in mind when it comes to dangers of political instability, and it is one which the protagonists of the “modern” regions should heed so as to secure the safest possible transition to federalism for their citizens. This is doubly important because of the extremely low thresholds for initiating and repeating referendum initiatives under the Iraqi system, something which makes the entire process even less predictable than was the case in Spain.

Possible problems in the new Iraqi law on implementing federalism

These general observations on the limits of existing models of federalism “from below” are relevant to analyses of the new legal framework for implementing federalism in Iraq, adopted on 11 October 2006 – and, in particular, to discussions of possible complications that may arise once that law is put into practice. One remarkable feature of the Iraqi discussion of this legislation project is that very little of what has been said has been based on readings of the actual text adopted. Indeed, for a long time it has been almost impossible for the general public to obtain copies of the considerably modified version of the law that was agreed on after an original draft had been introduced on 26 September.⁸ This in itself suggests that the public debate on the subject cannot be considered to have been truly exhaustive.

There are apparently several grey areas in the Iraqi law on the implementation of federalism. They include subjects such as the procedure for defining the referendum parameters in the case of mutually conflicting

⁶ Even though Mosul technically formed a separate entity in certain periods, its politics was on the whole tightly linked to Baghdad; see for instance Stephen Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Oxford, 1925), pp. 209–210.

⁷ One might perhaps argue that there are certain parallels, albeit tenuous ones, between today’s project of a grand all-Shiite entity and the ephemeral Hilla-based Mazyadid tribal Shiite emirate of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries. The latter has a rather marginal place in Iraqi historiography and so far has not been evoked by today’s proponents of a single Shiite federal unit.

⁸ The subsequent discussion is based on the original draft plus the descriptions of new amendments given in *al-Ittihad*, 12 October 2006 (requirement for consent by all affected governorates in referendum, and with at least 50 per cent participation), and *al-Adala*, 14 October 2006 (regions not to merge into super-regions). Texts purporting to represent the final version but failing to incorporate these changes continued to circulate in October 2006.

federalism visions for the same area (if, say, some in Najaf wish to become part of a three-governorate Middle Euphrates entity, whereas others favour a larger nine-governorate all-Shiite super-region). Here the law does not go into much detail beyond a single keyword – *istibyan* – or a (governorate-level) “poll” to determine which particular alternative should be put to the test in a referendum. Similarly, it is unclear to what extent there is any timeline for the start of the race, once the law has entered into effect in April 2008: if someone in Amara requests a referendum on day one, is there any deadline for others to submit a challenge and thereby prompt a pre-referendum “poll” within the governorate?⁹

Perhaps most problematic of all is the question of how to proceed in case several incompatible autonomy initiatives are launched and successfully survive the poll pre-selection process. Basra citizens may decide for a referendum on a uni-governorate Basra region. Residents of Maysan may come out in favour of a vote on a slightly larger Region of the South involving Basra and Dhi Qar as well. The people of Dhi Qar, in turn, may want to give a chance to the idea unifying all the Shiite communities northwards to Karbala – except that the inhabitants of Babel may want a referendum on a small-scale Middle Euphrates region, while those of Wasit and Karbala may not be enthusiastic about federalism at all and could fail to produce federal initiatives that would satisfy the minimum legal requirements. Perhaps the people of Diyala and other areas with strong Iraqi nationalist traditions might decide to take a pro-active stance to the challenge of decentralisation, by introducing a surprise nationalist-federalist project: a “Region of Mesopotamia” – *iqlim al-rafidayn* – stretching all the way from Basra to Mosul, and with the potential to put a stop to what could otherwise become an endless string of autonomy bids.

This is all theory and hypotheses, but it is clear that a considerable mess – as shown in Table 1 – can emerge at the “poll” level, even before any referendum is held. The natural question would then be this: should there be any kind of inter-governorate coordination of the subsequent referendums? In this theoretical case, no group would be able to vote for exactly the project it initially favoured, except those of the governorates that opted for uni-governorate solutions. Would Najaf residents still be interested in voting on a four-province Shiite region if it became clear that oil-rich Basra as well as Maysan and Babel were likely to go their own ways, and Karbala and Wasit would hold no federal referendums at all? Might that outcome not throw the whole federalisation process into confusion, given that Najaf is the richest of the remaining Shiite provinces and could perhaps consider a uni-governorate model instead? And what about Qadisiyya – perhaps it would follow Babel’s example and try for union with affluent Najaf, instead of being part of a larger entity in which Muthanna and Dhi Qar would milk the same federal budget? What if a referendum on a “rump region” of four Shiite governorates does

⁹ According to the draft law, there is a two-month deadline for holding a poll in the case of multiple federal schemes. But if the poll is to be held earlier than this, the question of the final date for challenges will be highly pertinent.

indeed go ahead, but some governorates later change their minds – do they then have any options for secession?

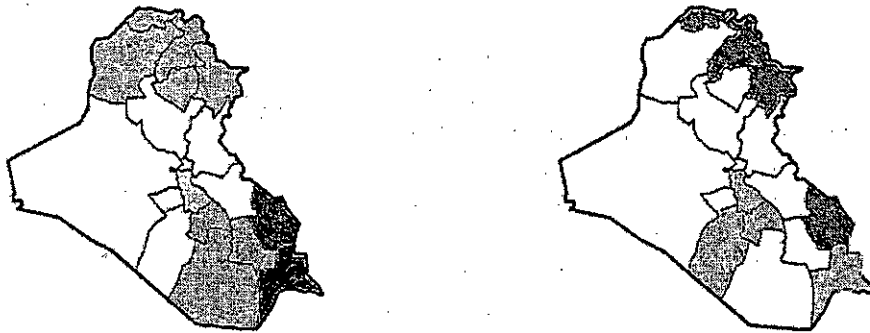
TABLE 1: SIMULATION OF POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF PRE-REFERENDUM POLLS (ISTIBYANS) UNDER THE NEW IRAQI LAW FOR IMPLEMENTING FEDERALISM

Governorate	Available alternatives ¹⁰	Winner of pre-referendum poll (or sole initiative launched)
Basra	Iqlim al-Janub Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub Iqlim al-Basra Iqlim al-Rafidayn	Iqlim al-Basra
Maysan	Iqlim al-Janub	Iqlim al-Janub
Dhi Qar	Iqlim al-Janub Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub
Muthanna	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub
Wasit	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub Iqlim al-Rafidayn	[Neither initiative reaches threshold]
Qadisiyya	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub Iqlim al-Furat al-Awsat	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub
Babel	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub Iqlim al-Furat al-Awsat	Iqlim al-Furat al-Awsat
Najaf	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub Iqlim al-Najaf	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub
Karbala	Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub	[Initiative fails to reach threshold]
Diyala	Iqlim al-Rafidayn	[Initiative fails to reach threshold]
Salahaddin	Iqlim al-Rafidayn	[Initiative fails to reach threshold]
Anbar	[No initiative]	[-]
Nineve	Iqlim al-Rafidayn	Iqlim al-Rafidayn
Kirkuk	Iqlim al-Rafidayn	Iqlim al-Rafidayn

At least two very different scenarios can be inferred from this theoretical example. One alternative would be for all the referendums to go ahead on the basis of their original formulas, even as voters in Najaf and Muthanna would know perfectly well that some of the governorates listed in their preferred nine-governorate scheme would be barred from joining their entity – because in those governorates a different and mutually exclusive small-scale regionalist vision had triumphed in the local pre-referendum poll. A possible result might be the further fragmentation of the large-scale federalist project, with majorities in relatively poor Qadisiyya, Muthanna and Dhi Qar voting in favour, but with Najaf voters changing their minds and saving their vote for a

¹⁰ Two real and two more hypothetical federal visions are employed here: firstly, the existing projects of Iqlim al-Janub (Basra, Maysan, Dhi Qar) and Iqlim al-Wasat wa-al-Janub (all nine Shiite-majority provinces from Basra through Karbala); secondly, the more theoretical schemes of a Middle Euphrates region, Iqlim al-Furat al-Awsat consisting of Najaf, Babel and Qadisiyya – this actually has some tentative precedents dating back to 2005 – as well as an imaginary all-Iraq region designed as a nationalist response to the decentralisation challenge, Iqlim al-Rafidayn or the old Iraq minus Kurdistan and Baghdad (under the Iraqi constitution the latter is specifically prohibited from joining any region).

uni-governorate federal entity at some future stage. The outcome would be a mix of uni-governorate entities, "rump" regions consisting of remnants of large-scale projects that failed to acquire support in all of their targeted governorates, and a rump Iraq without devolution to the regional level (Map 2, left).



MAP 2. Left: Rump Iraq with remnants of partially successful regions; right, rump Iraq with uni-governorate and small-scale regions formed on the basis of pre-referendum elimination polls.

An alternative method would be to take more seriously the concerns of the voters: there is little point in staging a referendum for a project if its infeasibility is implicitly acknowledged ahead of the vote, as a result of the rise of incompatible schemes in one or more of the targeted governorates. Accordingly, should a situation arise along the aforementioned lines with mutual incompatibility between the various proposed schemes, it would make sense to ask voters to restate their preferences in light of the new realities, in a second pre-referendum poll. (To be workable, this kind of elimination race would require coordination and indeed synchronisation between governorates.) In such a poll, wealthy and autonomy-minded governorates like Najaf might elect to recast themselves as uni-governorate regionalists, thereby repeating the problem of exclusion on a smaller scale vis-à-vis poorer provinces like neighbouring Babel, Qadisiyya and Muthanna (who might still wish to pursue a second amalgamation bid, this time on a smaller scale, as a Middle Euphrates region). Najaf's desire to go it alone would then perhaps impact on popular sentiment in the remaining Euphrates governorates during a third pre-referendum poll; Babel and Qadisiyya might conceivably agree on a joint two-governorate project, leaving Muthanna out in the cold. The end result with this kind of procedure would be a combination of small-scale regions, uni-governorate regions, and a rump Iraq of anti-federalists and governorates excluded during the initial poll rounds (map 2, right).

Potential areas for legal clarifications or adjustments

As of today, the legal framework for the implementation of federalism in Iraq does not appear to have the robustness and clarity required for dealing with this sort of challenge. It ought to have so, because international political history has shown that federalism from below is a particularly challenging venture. Two remedies are available: the existing law on implementing federalism could be elaborated in areas where it currently leaves question marks, or the committee charged with revising the Iraqi constitution could undertake a more thorough rethink of the basic framework for the country's federalisation process.

Whatever road is taken, some key priority areas seem clear. Firstly, it would be desirable for the modalities of the pre-referendum polls to be specified in greater detail, especially the question of inter-governorate synchronisation and how to deal with regional visions that become technically impossible after having failed at the poll level in one or more of the "affected" governorates. But also some very basic questions need to be addressed at the poll stage, like what level of participation, if any, should be required for this exercise, and what kind of appeals procedures should be available. Secondly, consideration might be given to the alternative of radically tightening up today's lax requirements for calling a referendum – so as to avoid a multiplication of federal alternatives with limited popular support, repeated pre-referendum polls, and, ultimately, voter exasperation and contempt for the entire process of federalisation.¹¹ Here it is worth bearing in mind that Spain got into trouble even with relatively strict requirements for the initiation of autonomy projects. In fact, even if Iraq should decide to imitate the Spanish model, for instance by requiring pre-referendum consensus by a two-thirds or three-fourths majority at the lowest existing administrative level (i.e. all municipalities plus those rural subdistricts or *nahiyas* without municipal institutions), there would remain a considerable difference in the level of popular support behind the autonomy initiatives in the two countries. By the early 1980s, Spain had a population of some 35 million distributed in around 8,000 municipalities, i.e. on average 4,000 voters behind every decision on an autonomy initiative; by contrast, the perhaps 25 million citizens of today's Iraq have a local-level layer of government limited to around 500 entities, which yields a voter/entity ratio of approximately 1 to 50,000. Clearly, such an arrangement would have represented an improvement on today's proposed procedure and its roughly 1,400,000 voters per governorate, but it would still be far from Spanish

¹¹ Another obvious argument in favour of tighter rules is the prospect of outsider interference: in a society dominated by militias it will be relatively easy for political powers outside the governorates to engineer factions large enough to satisfy the current regulations for launching an autonomy initiative. Another alternative would be to re-impose limits "from above", for instance such as a ceiling on the number of governorates allowed to amalgamate (the 2004 Transitional Administrative Law has a limit of maximum three governorates), or a requirement about territorial contiguity (as in the Spanish precedent) – both of which would serve to cut down the number of potential combinations and thus reduce the scope for chaos and political instability.

standards with regard to local-level control of the federalisation process.¹² A simple juxtaposition of the administrative maps of Iraq and Spain illustrates the salient differences in “democratic density” between the two cases of bottom-up federalism.¹³



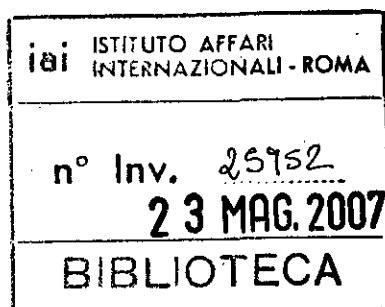
MAP 3. Left, Spain's fine-grained system of some 8,000 municipalities and the starting point for federalisation in the 1980s; right, Iraq's provinces which form the suggested and comparatively crude framework for federalisation by way of “popular” initiatives. The relevant population figures are 35 million for Spain in the 1980s and 25 million for today's Iraq.

Finally, it would be wise to think through the feasibility of any kind of further federalisation pending the completion and institutionalisation of the central government structure laid down in the Iraqi constitution. It has been suggested that at one point, during the putsch in February 1981, the persona of King Juan Carlos was the single factor that saved Spain from a relapse into authoritarianism. Under a republican system, this kind of safety valve of traditional authority is not available, and, in the Iraqi case, the scope for conflicting interpretations of the relevant legal codes for the federalisation process is such that the role of the arbiter will exceed what is normally expected from an independent electoral commission. Hence, it seems ill advised to enter this kind of legal grey-zone area without at least a

¹² The Iraqi model of local administration, largely inherited from the Ottomans, is asymmetrical in that whereas the entire country is divided into governorates, districts and subdistricts, municipal administrations have been carved out within the subdistricts in urban areas, but without any corresponding administrative structure in the countryside. A US-led venture to create a further layer of local-level politics of more than 1,000 “neighbourhood councils” was launched after 2003 but has reportedly partly disintegrated since 2004. On the other hand, many of the *nahiyas* and municipalities can be considered among the oldest elements of the state machinery of modern Iraq, with their roots and administrative borders in many cases dating back to the late nineteenth century.

¹³ These statistics also point to the dual-edged nature of federalism from below. It is the beauty of such a system that local communities are accorded increased control of their destiny: the higher the number of local-level entities whose consent is being sought, the more difficult it will be for outsiders to rig and manipulate the federalisation process. But small localities can also create hiccups, as names from Spain's political history attest to: Almeria delayed the formation of the Andalusia region through abstentions; Teruel protested against the federalisation process in Navarra; and Segovia voiced resistance against inclusion in the re-constituted Castille and León.

constitutional court that is up and running.¹⁴ The experiences of Spain strongly suggest that candidates for bottom-up federalism will need to prepare for the unexpected and for worst-case scenarios if their ambitious ideas are to prosper.



¹⁴ Under the Iraqi constitution a special law on the composition of the court must be adopted with a two-thirds majority.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi - Abstract 2 - LNCV Workshop and Round Table on
"Iraq after the New Government: Stabilization, Security Problems and the
Regional Scenario"

November 24-25, 2006
Como, Italy

Emerging Media in Iraq

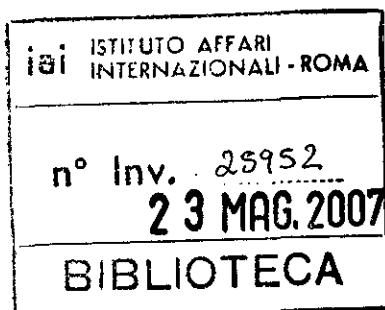
Ibrahim Al-Marashi - Koc University

Outside observers of the situation in Iraq often predict the nation will face an imminent civil war among ethnic Kurds and Arabs, and among the Sunni and Shia Muslim sects. The public discourse in Iraq, especially during the recent constitutional debate featured the increasing use of ethno-sectarian terminology. This paper analyzes how can freedom of the press thrive in Iraq, yet not give in to ethno-sectarian prejudices that are prevalent in the post-war situation. Studying the rise of ethno-sectarian terminology and frames in the Iraqi media can serve as an effective barometer in determining whether the nation is on the road to a civil war. The results seek to determine how Iraq's Fourth estate is reinforcing its ethno-sectarian divisions and offer recommendations on how to counter its employment of negative images and stereotypes of other communities, yet without curtailing free speech in Iraq.

The literature on the emerging media in Iraq is non-existent, and such research can pioneer further analyses of this developing institution. This paper seeks to address the need for a proactive analysis of the Iraqi media and its portrayal of ethno-sectarian differences in Iraqis society. Such research can isolate how the media is exacerbating cleavages in Iraq, and offer suggestions on how it can facilitate a positive attitude in fostering free speech in Iraq while bridging the differences between its communities.

Iraqi legislation and media regulations have been inherited from the Coalition Provisional Authority that had vested American interests. Such rules ban media outlets that incite violence, however it does not deal with portrayal of ethno-sectarian differences that are often subtly reported with vague and obscure metaphors and images at times. The conclusions of this paper seek to answer whether the solution to this dilemma rests not in legislation but educating media professionals and increasing their awareness of how ethno-sectarian differences can manifest themselves in the media. One must keep in mind, that professional

standards and practical training for journalists is relatively new in a society that repressed its media in the past. Schools of journalism were non-existent in Iraq, and such guidelines that would emerge from this study could serve as a valuable tool for media practitioners, as well as media related bodies. The prejudices between Iraq's sectarian and ethnic communities needs to be addressed in the media to serve as a safety valve for the nation. The key for the future of Iraq's stability is transforming this debate into a constructive one, with the local media finding a role in this transformation.



The New Iraq and Federalism

In 2006 Iraq's population was estimated at 26783000 and 75 to 80 percent of the population Arab and 15 to 20 percent was Kurd. Other significant minority groups together constituting less than 5 percent of the population were Assyrians, Chaldeans and Turkmens.

Some 97% of Iraq's population is Muslim, of that number, 60 to 65 percent is Shia and 32 to 37 percent is Sunni. Although the Shias have constituted more than half of Iraqi population throughout the twentieth century, until 2003 all governments excluded them from proportional political power. The regime of Saddam systematically repressed the Shias and Kurds. The Kurds are predominantly Sunni and of less militant religious orientation. In 2003 an estimated 700000 to 900000 Christians were in Iraq mostly belonging to the Eastern-rite Chaldean catholic church and nearly half of them left Iraq during the last three years. Relations between Iraq's ethnic and religious groups have often been contentious. From the end of the first world war when European allied powers drew borders to suit their own economic interests to the current struggle for democracy, the Iraq's ethnic population has never been homogenous.

Since the creation of the modern state of Iraq the history of the Iraqi Kurdistan has been one of underdevelopment, political and cultural repression, destruction, ethnic cleansing and genocide. Al-Anfal (The Spoil) was the codename given to an aggressive planned, military operation against Iraqi Kurds. It was part of an ongoing larger campaign against Kurds because of their struggle to gain autonomy within the republic of Iraq. More than 4000 communities were destroyed including towns of more than 50000 Iraqi Kurds citizens. Hundreds thousands of citizens were detained and killed.

The people of Iraq endured decades of corrupt and totalitarian rule under Saddam regime, squandered the nation's natural and human resources on himself and his cronies. With Saddam gone, Iraqis are now demanding a more just economically viable future.

Federalism is the most promising approach for Iraq and democracy constitutes the distribution of political power between the centre and the regions. One proposal being given serious consideration is to divide Iraq into five or six federal states under a central national government. The two or three federal regions be formed in Iraq from nine southern and central governorates where the population is mostly Shia Muslim. Another federal region could be formed from four central and western governorates that predominantly is Sunni Muslim. One more federal region might be carved from three mainly Kurdish governorates (Kirkuk and the disputed regions will be included in future). Baghdad would stand alone.

These federal regions should be based on geographic and common interest's criteria, not on ethnic or a sectarian division. Establishing federal regions would mean imposing formal borders on social, geographic and psychological differences that already present. Iraqi Kurds would support the division of Iraq into any number of federal units, under a federal system as long as Iraqi Kurdistan itself constitutes one of these federal units.

In fact the Kurd population has enjoyed federal conditions in Kurdistan of Iraq after the first Gulf war in 1991.

Federalism was introduced into the new Iraqi constitution to allow similar considerations for the Shia and Sunni Arabs, this is clearly appears in the articles 116, 117, 118, and 119 of the new Iraqi constitution (2005).

Article 116: The federal system in the republic of Iraq is made up of a decentralized capital, regions, and governorates, and local administrations.

Article 117

First: This constitution shall approbate the region of Kurdistan and its existing regional and federal authorities, at the time this constitution comes into force.

Second: This constitution shall approbate new regions established in accordance with its provisions.

Article 118: The council of representatives shall enact in a period not to be exceed six months from the date of its first session, a law that defines the executive procedures to form regions by a simple majority.

Article 119: One or more governorates shall have the right to organize into a region based on a request to be voted on in referendum submitted in one of the two following methods:

A- A request by one –third of the council of members of each governorate intending to form a region.

B – A request by one-tenth of the voters in each of the governorate intending to form a region.

Most of Iraqi people recognize that application of federal system in Iraq is the best way to keep the unity of Iraq and establishing stability and security.

The Sunni Arabs reject the idea of a federal Iraq as a threat to their existence and fear it will split up Iraq and deprives them from the oil revenues and will they remain as a minority in Iraq.

The oil revenue management and distribution are mentioned in the new Iraqi constitution; the article 111 and 112 and 121 (third)

Article 111:

Oil and gas are the ownership of all the people of Iraq in all the regions and governorates.

Article 112:

First : The federal government with the producing governorates and regional governments shall undertake the management of oil and gas extracted from current fields provided that it distributes oil and gas in fair manner in proportion to the population distribution in all parts of the country with a set allotment for set time for the damaged regions that were unjustly deprived by the former regime and the regions that were damaged later on ,in a way that assures balanced development in different areas of the country and this will be regulated by a law.

Second: The federal government with the producing regional governments and governorates shall together formulate the necessary strategic policies to develop the oil and gas wealth in a way that achieves the highest benefits to the Iraqi people using the most advanced techniques of the market principles and encourages investment.

Article 121:

Third: Regions and governorates shall be allocated an equitable share of the national revenue sufficient to discharge its responsibilities and duties, but having regard to its resources, needs and percentage of its population.

Many analysts warn of the serious danger that a post-Saddam Iraq could split into three parts along ethnic lines: Kurdish, Shia Arab and Sunni Arab.

One reason why Iraq is likely to remain intact is that, it is entirely dependent on oil income. Control of Iraq's oil income means control of Iraq itself; it is a powerful glue holding the country together. This factor would become all the more important if Iraq were able to increase oil production to at least six million barrels per day within the first decade after Saddam's removal; even at the modest price of \$15 per barrel, this production level would generate nearly \$ 33 billion in annual revenue. None of these major Iraqi ethnic groups would be willing to forego a share of such revenue by seceding.

The neighboring countries of Iraq alleging that under the existing conditions the Kurds attempt to achieve further autonomy within the current political boundaries of Iraq. While the rivalry between the Shia and Sunni is increasing ,the Iraqi Kurds are gradually and smoothly approximating their ultimate objective which is an independent state of their own , and the pretext of having an independent army ,regional government and parliament, economy , foreign policy , constitution , flag , language etc. are all evident example of the attempt made by political Kurdish groups in advancing towards as strong independent state of their own. These allegations are not true because the Kurds have repeatedly and publicly assured the neighboring countries of Iraq that they do not seek independence but prefer a unified federal and democratic Iraq with which Kurdistan represents one of the federal political units. Another analyst says: If non-Kurdish Iraqi were too weak and divided to present a Kurdish bid for independence, the Kurds would still face the insurmountable opposition of Turkey. The broad consensus among the Turkish public and elite is that an independent Kurdistan carved from northern Iraq would destabilize the Kurdish-majority southeastern Turkey, rekindling the violence in which 30000 Turks and

Kurds died during the 1990s. Also Turkey would almost certainly use military force to prevent the breakup of Iraq with strong support from the Arab world. According to these factors, Iraq's territorial integrity would probably remain unaffected.

An Iranian analyst says: "if foundation of an independent Kurdistan were to happen in Iraq, hostile forces be stationed around the western border of Iran and become a source of threat to Iran's national security and stability and also encourage the Iranian Kurds, as in Turkey to seek their rights".

The future of Iraq is a matter of people of Iraq to determine their own constitutional deliberations, negotiation. This emphasizes that outsiders can advise but insiders should decide.

As in the United States, federalism in a future Iraq can provide a system of check and balances to moderate the power of any future central government, inhibiting the ability of an autocratic leadership, secularist or Islamist to seize control of the center.

And as in Switzerland, federalism can guarantee the political and cultural rights of Iraq's ethnic-linguistic and religious communities.

Federalism can help to ensure the unity and stability of a new Iraq, there by providing a climate for decentralization and civil society building, such an outcome is clearly in the interest of the Iraqi people.

Finally, a unified, democratic and federally organized Iraq would guarantee the rights of communities within Iraq and promote stability as well.

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BIBLIOTECA

The Language Question in some Arab Constitutions with emphasis on Iraq

Professor Dr. Georges Jabbour
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I- The Significance of the Topic:

The language factor is considered by almost all students of nationalism as the most important determining criterion of whether a group of people constitute a nation, or not. Those who speak one language are usually considered as constituting one nation. This rule has its exceptions, as it is well-known.

In the case of Arab nationalism, Sati Al Husari, the most prominent Arab nationalist thinker, considered the Arab language as the basis of Arab Nationalism. His ideas shaped the thinking of the majority of the Syrians & Iraqis, whom he influenced through the leading educational role he assumed in both countries.

Enhancing the de-Arabization of Iraq is believed, by many, to be the primary, or amongst the most primary objectives of the American Policy in Iraq. In the workshop of last year, I addressed the place of Arabism & Islam in the consecutive Iraqi Constitutions. I noticed that a lesser emphasis on Arabism is coupled with an over- emphasis on Islam & its Shiite component. Does the de-Arabisation process extend to the language? This is the topic that this paper tackles, & its significance is beyond any doubt.

II- The Language Question in some Arab Constitutions.

In 1879 the Arab language was consecrated as the official language in a modern political document. That was on the occasion of the creation of the Consultative Assembly of Deputies in Egypt (Jabbour: **Arabism & Islam in Arab Constitutions**, Tripoli, Lebanon, Jarrous Press, 3rd edition, 1995, p. 35).

Arabic is the unique official language in most Arab Constitutions. This was not the case in Syria up till 1950. In the two Constitutions of the

place

two governments of Latakia & Jabal Al-Druz (1930) in Syria French was equalized with Arabic as an official language. Also, in the Syrian Constitution of 1930, a certain place was reserved for the French, though it was not considered an official language.

French continues to have a place in the present Lebanese, Algerian & Mauritanian Constitutions, though it is not considered official.

In Somalia, Arabic & Somalian are the two official languages.

In the Sudan, the Constitution makes exceptions for languages other than Arabic.

To sum up: Arabic is the unique official language in almost all States members of the League of Arab States, except in Somalia. Exceptions are made for other languages in certain regions or in certain cases, but not throughout the State and in all cases. However, it should be noted that languages other than Arabic are trying more than before to assert themselves. This is the case of the Amazigi language in both Morocco & Algeria, & the Kurdish language in Iraq.

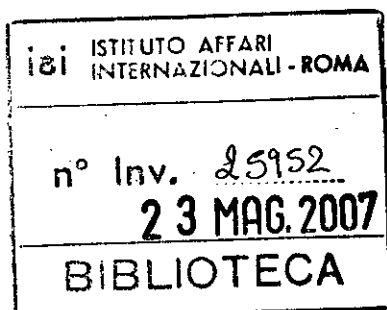
III- The Language Question in consecutive Iraqi Constitutions.

The most important phenomenon in Iraqi Constitutions is the gradual recognition of the Kurdish language.

In the 1925 Constitution the Kurdish language does not appear. Art.17 specifies that Arabic is the official language except when the law provides otherwise. Art.16 allows the use of communal languages for teaching purposes.

The Provisional Constitution of 1958 is a brief document. It considers "Arabs & Kurds as partners" in the homeland & the present constitution approves their "national rights within the unity of Iraq" (Art.3). It also considers Iraq as part of the Arab Nation (Art.2), but astonishingly enough, it does not mention anything about the language. Art.28, however stipulates that all legislation in force before the revolution will continue to be in force.

The Constitution of 1964 enshrined Arabic as the official language. And, although the Constitution mentions the Arabs & Kurds on equal footing in Art.19, yet it does not provide for the Kurdish language or any communal language.



The Presentation will be
continued orally.

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"Iraq after the New Government: Stabilization, Security Problems and the
Regional Scenario"
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The stabilization of Iraq: The role Iran and the US can play

Nasser Saghafi-Ameri

The Middle East is one of the most complicated regions in the world in terms of geopolitics. During the past several decades, its political, security, cultural, economic and social characteristics, on the one hand and the interests of foreign powers in the region, on the other hand, have led to the continuation of tensions and crises in this region.

As became evident after the events of September 11, the security of the Middle East is closely linked to the global security. Thus continuation of insecurity in this region endangers the global security.

Due to the intricacy nature of the Middle East geopolitics, there is interconnectedness between different security developments in this region, be it in the Palestine, Lebanon or Iraq. Therefore, establishment of regional peace and stability requires engagement and cooperation by all regional countries. The case of Iraq is no exception and past experience proves an active role of neighboring countries are essential and any attempt to exclude any major players like Iran from the main process of peace building has a meager chance of success.

At present, with deteriorating security situation in Iraq there are questions to be addressed regarding a peaceful solution to this crisis. The turmoil in Iraq not only threatens that country's territorial integrity but that may spillover to other areas and adjacent regions.

The key questions' regarding the present situation in Iraq includes:

First, how critical is the situation in Iraq?

The growing violence and number of daily casualties in Iraq demonstrates the depressing situation there. Now in its fourth year, the war has claimed the lives

of nearly 3000 American military men and not less than 50 thousand of Iraqi civilians.

Second, what are the roots causes of the crisis in Iraq?

Sectarian clash of interest has emerged following the downfall of the Baathist regime in Iraq. When the regime change came, the minority Sunnis who used to rule over a majority Shiites refused to accept a change in power, and then things went particularly bloody and badly. The Americans were hopeful that by bringing in the moderate Sunnis to the political process it would calm the Sunni insurgencies. They were not successful in that plan.

Although the Constitution of 2005 presented a drastic shift of power and resources from the central to regional governments but did not incorporate a balancing plan of social cohesion and equitable allocations. The Coalition has failed to impose a settlement on Iraq.

As for the growing insurgency in Iraq it should be noted that the number of foreign insurgents has doubled in the past year and stood at 5,380 in March 2006. Their nationalities are indicative of the widespread Arab concern for the future of Iraq: 22 per cent Algerians, 16 per cent each from Yemen and Syria, 12 per cent Egyptians, 11 per cent Sudanese, 10 per cent Saudis, and seven per cent other North Africans.

There are also all kinds of evidence that wealthy individuals in the Arabian Peninsula have been subsidizing the insurgency.

Third, which are future scenarios?

Iraq is facing one of the most challenging period of its history in the coming months when the negotiations for the new constitution concerning the shape of the federalism and distribution of oil revenues starts. These critical issues were postponed during the referendum in 2005 to draw in the Sunnis to that process.

If the negotiations on the new constitution would fail, the Sunnis will probably abandon the political process. And, even if they continue and remain in that process, the things will turn more complicated. The Shiites since 2003 have not only resisted against the Sunni provocation and insurgency but at the same time they have actively participated in the political process.

During this period they have supported American policy since they considered that would serve their interest. However, at this stage if they reach the conclusion that Washington is more interested to buy the Sunnis cooperation rather than rewarding them for their resistance against insurgencies they might

abandon their present policy. This could have the immediate effect of Shiite uprising. For that to happen the Shiites need not take up arms since they enjoy an overwhelming soft power. The sheer number of the Shiite population is able to turn over the political balance in the country. The Shiites have demonstrated their power in the past and Americans are well aware of that.

Some American experts, with the knowledge of US administrations foreign policy directions, believe that there is a constant risk of civil war in Iraq and if the country is going to fall apart it's likely to fall apart in the next two years. There will either be progress toward a political compromise and far better security forces at the end of the next two years, or essentially there will be very little reason to stay the course because the situation will have deteriorated so much.

Yet in other opinions, Iraq will remain messy for years to come, with a weak central government, a divided society, and regular sectarian violence. At worst, it will become a failed state wracked by an all-out civil war that will draw in its neighbors.

Finally, it is predicted that

If Iraq really collapses, it will be difficult to assume that other countries in the region are not going to get involved. So the potential to impact public opinion in the region along sectarian lines and to produce a sort of broader struggle of power and regional competition is there.

Fourth, where solution lies for solving the turmoil in Iraq?

Since last year when we gathered here for a workshop on "The New Iraq: Stabilization, Institution-Building and the Regional scenario", many things have happened in Iraq. Unfortunately at the moment the overall situation in that country is not promising; things have not improved as everybody hoped. To overcome the present spiral downward trend, it seems radical and decisive decisions are to be made especially by the US. If immediate, coordinated and collective measures are not taken by the international community the situation tends to aggravate in the coming days and months.

It is not necessary to emphasize that the events in Iraq and the future of this country could influence positively or negatively the security and stability of the Middle East and the World in a larger scale.

The opportunities for state-building in Iraq during the period after the downfall of the Baathist regime in that country have been missed. This has led to persistent aggravation of the situation giving more ground for terrorist and

insurgency activities.

Deterioration of the situation in Iraq in many ways is a cause of myopic policies of the Bush administration following the foot steps of the Neo-conservatives plans for the region and their vision for using U.S. power to transform Iraq into a liberal democracy. That policy was doomed to fail from the beginning. Now the ultimate nightmare of the leading Neo-conservatives is that the United States may have to come to rely on Iran to help stabilize the dangerously chaotic situation in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

To many analysts, invasion of Iraq in the spring of 2003 was contrary to declared policies of the US administration not to fight terrorism nor to capture and disarm Saddam's WMD arsenal. The real motive was the conquest of Iraq's vast oil reserves and the great geopolitical prize it offered.

Ironically, the recent most major threats to stability in the region, Saddam and al Qaeda, were partially created by the US and some Western powers to contain the perceived dangers of Iranian influence. It seems that now with extensive failures the US is becoming more inclined to accept Iranian influence in both Iraq and Afghanistan and to work with it. Iran from the outset perceived very positively the emergence of the new Iraq who came into power as the consequence of the downfall of the Baathist regime in that country.

Last year in this workshop, I emphasized on a positive role that new Iraq can play as a buffer between Iran and the US. The situation now suggests that both Iran and US should forsake their past grievances and work together for the stability of the new Iraq. This endeavor might look naïve at first glance but remembering the suffering of the people of Iraq and continuation of the present trend that would imply a full blown civil war and possible disintegration of Iraq, compels a realistic approach that involves regional cooperation and coherent engagement by the major powers especially the US. That implies the US should radically revise its current policy of manipulating the Sunni-Shiite fault line in the Muslim world.

Of course, Washington follows this policy on a broader scale as well. Considering new opportunities for Iran as a nation and as the leading Shiite power in a post-Saddam world, the administration turned to Sunni countries like Saudi Arabia and enticed them into accommodation with the United States by allowing them to consider the consequences of an ascended Iran under canopy of a relationship with the United States. In this way, Washington used that vision of Iran to gain leverage in Saudi Arabia. Facing the new realities some US scholars

have suggested that the United States should establish a regional forum for Iraq's neighbors akin to that used to help manage events in Afghanistan following the intervention there in 2001. Doing so would necessarily require bringing in both Iran and Syria.

However, with the current US policies questions have been raised to the effect that: Would the difficulties the U.S. has increasingly been facing in Iraq set the stage for a reduction in tensions between Washington and Tehran, or would it, on the contrary, increase the likelihood of confrontation?

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger while presenting a bleak vision of Iraq, says that a dramatic collapse of Iraq would have disastrous consequences for which we [the US] would pay for many years and which would bring us back, one way or another, into the region," he emphasizes that the U.S. government must enter into dialogue with Iraq's regional neighbors — including Iran — if progress is to be made in the region.

Kissinger's idea is supported by other analysts who say that

The United States cannot address the morass in Iraq without seeing it in a regional context and ... [by]... its unwillingness to hold earnest talks with Tehran - discussions that might yield positive mutual understanding and help defuse regional tensions - the US stumbles toward the disaster that would result from attacking Iran and dooms the dim prospect it has to stabilize Iraq.

The same argument follows that there aren't enough troops in Iraq to defeat the insurgency, disarm the militias, and establish a secure environment that will promote national reconciliation and political reform.

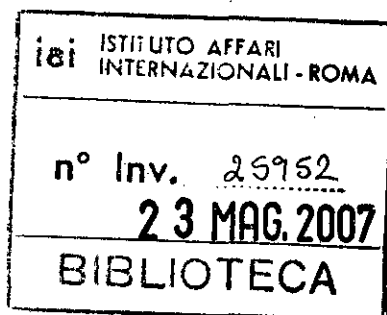
The longer the US delays dialogue with Iran, the less probable it is that other nations will come to its aid in Iraq, and the more certain it becomes that Iraq will deteriorate into all-out civil war. Policy choices become clearer once the US recognizes that a "military option" to deal with Iran is absurd. Bombing Iran would further radicalize that country, inflame the Middle East, and set off a chain of events that might end with Islamic fundamentalists seizing power in nuclear-armed Pakistan.

Any effort to change course in Iraq must first come to terms with Iran's ascendancy in the region. Normalizing diplomatic relations with Iran would be a bold stroke and a clear signal that the US is intent on changing its policy in the region. And it may entice US allies and nations in the region to make significant and sustained contributions to political, economic, humanitarian, and military efforts to stabilize Iraq.

While the US administration has spent all its political capital it has no other option to call for the assistance of Iraq's neighboring countries.

Iran with its powerful position among the Shiite majority in Iraq can play a key role as in the past in the upcoming constitutional negotiations. Tehran intermediation among different Shiite factions could prevent a clash between them which could result in more instability and erosion of central government in Baghdad.

Today the problems in Iraq give a chance to both Tehran and Washington to not only overcome their past differences and to normalize their relations, but to cooperate for the management of the present and looming crisis in Iraq. If they fail to take this opportunity and present crisis persists the risk of a civil war and disintegration of Iraq with ensuing regional war can not be ruled out.



**International Workshop on:
Iraq after the New Government: Stabilization, Security Problems and the Regional Scenario
Villa Olmo – Como
24-25 November, 2006**

organized by
Landau Network Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
Iraqi National Academy of Science (INAS), Baghdad, Iraq

Session 3: Iraq and the Regional Scenario

Roberto Aliboni:

The regional Iraqi environment: Turkey

Turkey is mostly affected by the risk of Iraq's disintegration. As it is well known, the emergence of an independent Kurdish state in the North of Iraq would be regarded by Turkey as a strong threat to its national integrity. The same would be true if a weak Iraqi federation would emerge. The only solution acceptable to Turkey is a compact Iraqi state, well seated on unitarian and or/ federal trends.

Even the present state of turmoil is hardly acceptable to Turkey, as it facilitates the revival of the PKK (although, the current Iraqi Kurdish authorities do not seem involved in that revival).

Turkish perceptions about developments in Iraq are somehow divided. While the kemalist nationalist trend (in particular the military) looks at developments as an existential national challenge to which they would not hesitate to react, even militarily, the religious and liberal trends are less convinced and more hesitant about what Turkey would have to do in case Iraq came to be seriously disrupted or the Iraqi Kurds took the road of independence and irredentism.

An immediate casualty of a conflict for North Iraq in the region would be the Turkish-EU relationship. The religious and liberal trends in Turkey are more afraid of such conflict than the nationalist one because they look at national conflicts in the region in a different way and because they are more interested than nationalists in democracy and the EU (as a support to their democracy).

In general, Turkey is interested in promoting a regional diplomacy to favour Iraq unity. It would be important for the EU countries to support such endeavour. EU has a stake not only in the Middle East and Iraq but also in Turkey remaining close to the EU and pursuing on its path to democracy. EU should become more engaged towards Iraq.

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BIBLIOTECA

Reuven Paz – Abstract 3 – LNCV Workshop and Round Table on
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 Como, Italy

The Effect of the Iraqi Jihadi Insurgency on Global Jihad

Reuven Paz

In recent years, the Sunni Jihadi insurgency in Iraq became the primary arena for developing a Jihadi-Salafi-Takfiri model for the groups of global Jihad, Al-Qaeda (AQ) and affiliated groups. In some way, the period of mid-2003 up till now, resembles the Spanish civil war in the 1930s. The war is supposed to be local, either against an occupying super-power, against the other Iraqi elements—the new government, the new Iraqi law-enforcement elements, and in the past two years against the Shi'a community as a whole. Yet, and not only as a result of a “foreign occupying enemy,” the local war is perceived as a model for a global one.

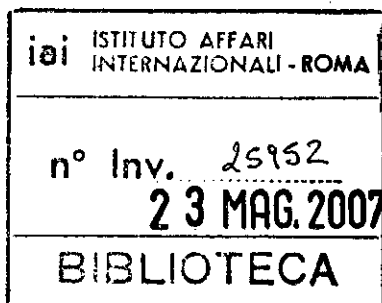
Both sides are fighting the war of “the good against the evil,” each one from its own perspective. Both sides are assisted by foreign elements. In the case of the Jihadi Sunni insurgency these are several thousands of Arab volunteers, who are hotwired by a sense of the apocalypse who come to Iraq to fight not just for the help of their “Sunni brothers,” but first of all for a new kind of “Super-Nationalism” of the entire Muslim Nation-Ummah.

Since Jihadis are making the best use possible of the Internet and modern communication the images of the fight are transferred within few hours all over the world, to become an effective element in the notion of the global fight. The indoctrination and mobilization of support that emerge from the insurgency in Iraq—which is not entirely Jihadist one—is playing on strings that are far beyond pure Islamic elements. The appeal of the Jihadi insurgency is not just to its very small proportion of adherents of global Jihadi ideology, doctrines, and strategy. Elements such as anti-Americanism—fueled by past ideologies in the region as well—sense of socio-political humiliation by the West and the Western political culture; lack of a real nation-state in the Arab world (except for Egypt); lack of democracy, freedom of speech, civil rights; strong sense of tribalism; and many other elements, bring about a growing support for the Jihadi insurgency, despite its murderous nature.

In the past year, there is also among supporters of global Jihad and many Muslims, a growing sense of the success of the Jihadi insurgency, and a sense that the Jihadi strategy is advancing according to a well-organized plan, sketched by AQ and the strategists of the Sunni Salafi Jihad. The declaration of an Islamic State in the Sunni regions of Iraq, the attacks against Shi'is, and the confusion in the American public towards the policy in Iraq, add to this sense. Therefore, the Jihadis are planning their future strategy for the post-American era in Iraq, meaning the fight against what they perceive as the "Safawid conspiracy" in the region. The impact of the war between Israel and the Lebanese Hizballah adds too to a growing sense of confronting a Shi'i-Iranian plot in the region, far beyond Iraq.

An important part plays also the Takfiri ideas that the Jihadi insurgents in Iraq adopted, especially under the leadership of Zarqawi. It provided the Jihadi doctrines with an unlimited definition of the enemy, and hence, unlimited perception of the methods of fighting, legitimized by a more radical generation of Jihadi scholars and clerics.

Add to it the Jihadi insurgency in Afghanistan and the recent developments in Somalia and the Horn of Africa, where the West refrains from being involved, a growing number of sympathizers of global Jihad feel as if the "chain of Salafi Jihad" is growing with more links each period. A significant role in feeding these feelings is played by the Internet, Western media, and the new process of self-radicalized Jihadis among Muslim emigrants in Europe and North America, who look at Iraq as their best model on the way to the revival of the expected Caliphate.



Rete per la cooperazione scientifica
e lo studio di problematiche globali



Centro di Cultura Scientifica
"Alessandro Volta"

LANDAU NETWORK - CENTRO VOLTA

Villa Olmo - Como

International Workshop on:

Iraq after the New Government: Stabilization, Security Problems and the Regional Scenario

Como, Italy, 24-25 November 2006

organized by

Landau Network Centro Volta (LNCV), Como, Italy
Iraqi National Academy of Science (INAS), Baghdad, Iraq

promoted and supported by

General Directorate for Mediterranean and Middle-East (GDMM)
of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Rome, Italy

with also the support of

Municipality of Como, Italy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Landau Network-Centro Volta (LNCV), in collaboration with the Iraqi National Academy of Science of Baghdad and with the support of the General Directorate for the Mediterranean and the Middle-East (GDMM) of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), organized an International Workshop in Como, on 24-25 November 2006 on: *Iraq after the Government: stabilization, security problems and the regional scenario.*

This event, held in the framework of the LNCV Middle East Project, was organized in order to enhance the understanding of the complex Iraqi scenario, to promote dialogue between the main parties involved, and to develop a possible set of suggestions and recommendations aimed at contributing to the stabilization of the country.

In order to achieve such objectives, the event was structured as a real round table and saw the participation of representatives of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives of the Iraqi government, of the Iraqi civil society and of all the main Iraqi political parties/factions, as well as analysts from the region and from important international think-tanks.

The agenda was structured around three main sessions. During each session, the chair addressed - first the Iraqi representatives, then all the other participants- a set of topics/questions related to the following issues:

Agenda

24 November 2006

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 09.15 – 09.45 | <p>Welcome and Opening Address</p> <p><i>Chairperson with addressing remarks: Riccardo Redaelli, Landau Network – Centro Volta, Como</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giorgio Conetti, University of Como • Maurizio Martellini, Landau Network – Centro Volta, Como • Gianludovico de Martino, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Roma |
| 09.45 – 11.00 | <p>Session 1: The Status of Iraqi Political and Security Environment: Main Issues and Concerns</p> <p><i>Chairperson with addressing remarks: Maurizio Martellini</i></p> <p>Luciano Callini <i>“On the Political and Security Situation in Iraq”</i></p> <p>Mosa Al-Mosawe <i>“Academics in Iraq Face Problems”</i></p> <p>Speeches by Iraqi Representatives</p> |
| 11.30 – 13.00 | <p>Session 1: Second Part. Round Table</p> |
| 14.30 – 16.00 | <p>Session 2: Federalism, Ethno-Religious Sectarianism and Oil-Revenues Distribution: Managing Difficult Core-Periphery Relations</p> <p><i>Chairperson with addressing remarks: Riccardo Redaelli</i></p> <p>Reidar Visser <i>“Challenges of Building Federalism from Below in Iraq: Some Historical and Comparative Reflections”</i></p> <p>Ibrahim Al-Marashi <i>“Ethno-sectarian Dynamics in the Iraqi Media”</i></p> <p>Speeches by Iraqi Representatives</p> |
| 16.30 – 18.00 | <p>Session 2: Second Part. Round Table</p> |

25 November 2006

09.30 – 11.00

Session 3: Iraq and the Regional Scenario

Chairperson with addressing remarks: **Franco Zallio**, Institute for International Politics Studies, Milano

Georges Jabbour *"The Language Question in Some Arab Constitutions with Emphasis on Iraq"*

Nasser Saghafi-Ameri *"The Role of US and Iran for the Promotion of Security in Iraq"*

Roberto Aliboni *"Role and Interest of Turkey in the Iraqi Crisis"*

Revueen Paz *"The Effect of the Iraqi Jihadi Insurgency on Global Jihad"*

11.30 – 13.00

Session 3: Second Part. Round Table

13.00 *Closing Remarks*

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. General Observations

- 1.1. Almost all the regional and international analysts attending the Workshop stressed the unusual level of openness and frankness of the debate. All the Iraqi representatives of the different communities, parties and political alliances attending the Workshop discussed all issues and interacted during the round-table;
- 1.2. Many analysts had the impression that – beyond rhetoric – Iraqi representatives were focused mainly on domestically-originated problems rather than focusing on externally-originated threats (such as *jihadism*, terrorism, foreign influences, and so on). In other words: the worsening of the situation in Iraq reflects the worsening of internal political relations. It has repeatedly been stressed that «only Iraqis can save Iraq». It is a problem that lies mainly in their hands.
- 1.3. On the main issues proposed - federalism, constitution, Army and security forces, fight against terrorism, fiscal shares, US role, regional role - the representatives of the different ethno-religious communities had extremely different and diverging views, which it was impossible to conciliate. On some of these issues they do not even share the minimum institutional framework.
- 1.4. In comparison to Sunnis, Shi'ites and Kurds, the representatives of Christian and other small communities (Chaldean, Sabeen, Turkoman) had more flexible and moderate views. They often proposed compromises, stressing that «sticking to their positions, was of no help to anybody», and that reaching a compromise means everyone giving up some requests or demands. On the contrary, the other representatives often presented their positions as being un-negotiable.
- 1.5. Some Shi'ite and Kurd representatives stressed that Iraq has a legitimate constitution and a legitimate government, which needs time to enforce its program. A Shi'ite representative stressed that US/international interference in daily administration should be avoided («give us time and leave us alone»). On the constitutional revision process, however, they showed more flexibility, and some Iraqi MPs express a moderate optimism on the possibility to announce, within few weeks, agreed proposals for significant changes in the constitutional text (especially on the issue of oil-share revenues).

2. Conclusions of the Round Table and Recommendations

- 2.1. The worsening of the security scenario reflects the worsening of the political one. Jihadist terrorism is not the only or the main cause; it is, rather, a problem of ethno-sectarian fighting. The reconciliation policy launched by the al-Maliki

government does not seem to be very effective, also due to the division amongst the political alliances as well as within them (especially within the Shi'ite bloc). A credible and realistic policy of reconciliation is the first step for reducing violence, especially for reducing the foreign *jihadi* activities, since these get popular support from some sections of the local population.

2.2. To reinforce security, it is mandatory that several questions be addressed:

- The problem of the Security forces, which must be loyal to Iraq and not to political factions;
- Restoration of public services and reconstruction need to be implemented; Unemployment fuels insurgency which can provide individuals with means that the government is not always able to furnish;
- Reducing corruption which is spreading all over the Country [some Iraqi representatives dismissed this point]. Others stressed that the US/CPA management style was not appropriate for the Iraqi culture and tradition, and aggravated this problem;
- Amendments to the Constitution, which require time but are necessary to include the Sunnis in the political framework;
- the question of former members of the army and police should be solved, employing the majority of them, since they were not responsible for the crimes of the previous regime.

2.3. For some analysts, the problem of the pensions which are not paid to the families of former soldiers, policemen and officials should be addressed so as to reduce support for anti-government actions. Some Shi'ite representatives, however, pointed out that it is more important for the reconciliation process to start with the victims of the regime, not with the collaborators. They underlined that, first of all, it is mandatory to refund victims and that de-Ba'athification does not proceed along sectarian lines, but is about loyalty to Saddam's regime [These considerations provoked reactions especially from Sunnis and other minority representatives].

2.4. Regional analysts consider the Iraqi government as taking «an excluding approach» rather than focusing on the «inclusion» of groups still outside the new institutional framework. This is considered being a major political mistake.

2.5. Militias represent both a cause and an effect of the deterioration of the security environment: militias create instability, and fear also contributes to the generation of new militias. For some Iraqi representatives their incorporation into the Iraqi Army and security forces is an effective way of reducing violence. For others, this would further reduce the credibility of the Army and police forces as National forces instead of sectarian ones. For some Iraqi representatives, the inclusion of the militias in the Army/Police is the only way

to increase rapidly the number of security personnel, which today is too small for the task. Others consider this inclusion a dangerous blow to the credibility of the Army/police. In order to reduce violence and the creation of militias, it is crucial that people view the security forces not as sectarian but representing the state and all communities.

- 2.6. Problem of leadership: several analysts stressed that «in Iraq there are no Nelson Mandela-like leaders». Iraqi politicians are not considered adequate for leading a real reconciliation policy. They failed to obtain a non-ethnic/sectarian consensus.
- 2.7. Federalism: the different ideas on this concept and how to enforce it on the ground cannot be summarized or reduced to a common position. Kurds seems to think more in term of a "Confederal state", with a very weak centre. Sunni representatives questioned the legitimacy of the new federal structure, asking for a new «national decision» arrived at by consensus and not imposed.
An international analyst pointed out how the "bottom-up" system of decision-making concerning the creation of new regions in Iraq (i.e. in the south), may lead to paradoxical results, with a region that is not geographically homogenous (without any constitutional mechanism of rationalization), which might exacerbate inter-provincial competition for economic and oil-revenue distribution. For what regards the constitutional revision process, which is currently going on, two Iraqi MPs - who are members of the committee for Constitutional revision - expressed their moderate optimism on its results. Within few weeks, they were confident that some significant changes on federal and oil-revenues shares might be announced.
- 2.8. Jihadism: the war against US and the West in Iraq provides jihadists with an «ideological-strategic umbrella», under which insurgency and jihadist leaders can recruit from (mostly) Sunni Arab countries volunteers with different positions and ideas. Al-Qa'eda wants the US to stay in Iraq so as to fight the west on Islamic soil: it is easier, gives better results and represents a formidable form of war-propaganda, attracting young Muslims from abroad. Suicide-attacks also favour the spread of sectarian vendettas and civil war amongst communities. In order to reduce jihadist successes in disrupting Iraqi security, it is crucial to reduce popular (Sunni) support.
- 2.9. Borders: lack of control over the Iraqi borders is a major problem. However, most of the representatives were not in favour of the deployment of foreign troops along them. At the domestic level, the Iraqi government should progressively increase its control over the borders. At the regional level, it is necessary to positively involve all the regional actors, asking - through political and economic compensation - for their support in reducing their permeability to jihadism, illicit trafficking, and so on.

In this regard, most representatives and analysts agreed on the importance of organizing a Regional Security Conference on Iraq, with the participations of all the main regional and international actors (see below, § 3).

3. LNCV Final Consideration on the proposed Regional Conference

- 3.1. The Iraqi crisis involves not only the country itself but the entire surrounding region. A deterioration of the Iraqi security scenario could lead not only to a regional conflagration, but also to the creation of a new safe haven for the new international Salafite jihadism; in this regard the presence of large stocks of weaponry systems might provide jihadists with a tremendous tool to employ in increasing regional violence.
- 3.2. Since 2004, LNCV has been supporting the idea of a Regional Conference on Iraq, without exclusions based on political/ideological grounds, in order to help Iraq stabilize its security scenario as well as to reduce regional tensions. It is fundamental that such a conference is shaped on a real regional format rather than as a wider international event, even if the participation of the main international actors is obviously essential to end the current impasse. In fact, a formal large Conference, with an undefined and wide-ranging agenda - would be ineffective. It should, instead, be problem-tailored (i.e., like some initial SCO meetings on security and anti-drug smuggling in Central Asia), and should pave the way for reducing bilateral tensions, especially between the US and some regional countries. These tensions obviously have an impact on the stabilization of Iraq.
This Regional Conference does not represent an exclusive formula suited only to the Iraqi problem; LNCV believes that this conference could be an essential component of a multi-layered system of separated initiatives aimed at addressing the most relevant regional issues (like the future of Afghanistan and the Middle East Peace Process) in preparation for and to nurture a possible future general International Conference on the Middle East.
- 3.3. The unofficial pragmatic collaboration on Iraq between countries with strained relations and profound confrontation (*in primis*, US-Iran) is crucial, and should be considered as one of the most important results of such a conference, also for its possible positive repercussions on other security issues. In other words, we should re-create the attitude Iran had in the aftermath of the Bonn Conference on Afghanistan in 2001, avoiding the rigid ideological stance adopted by both Washington and Tehran, which disrupted their *de facto* cooperation on the stabilization of Afghanistan.
- 3.4. However, a major problem is represented by who will represent Iraq. If only the present government attends this Conference, several Iraqi factions and communities will to be excluded. Instead, the Iraqi delegation should represent

all the ethnic-religious as well as political communities of the country. Another problem underlined by several regional analysts is that the Iraqi delegation could be «the weak element» in this Conference. There might be the risk that it would be dominated by strong regional countries, or that the US would interfere excessively in the process of determining the agenda or in the position of the Iraqi delegation.

Prepared at the Network-Centro Volta(LNCV), Middle East Program, Como, Italy (November 2006)

International Workshop on:

***Iraq after the New Government:
Stabilization, Security Problems and the Regional
Scenario***

Como, November 24-25, 2006

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