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# THE UNCERTAIN SECURITY SITUATION IN IRAQ

## TRENDS IN VIOLENCE, CASUALTIES, AND IRAQI PERCEPTIONS

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# The Uncertain Security Environment in Iraq

Iraq has made significant progress in defeating the insurgency and improving its security. The level of violence in Iraq is sharply lower than the level at which it peaked in 2007, and most of the violence related to the Sunni insurgency is now concentrated in Baghdad, with lesser pockets in the Diyala, Ninewa, and Salah ad Din provinces in central and northern Iraq.

US sources estimated in early January 2010 that the overall number of security incidents in Iraq had decreased by 83% over the past two years, and U.S. military deaths had decreased by more than 90%. Improvised explosive device (IED) attacks in Iraq had decreased nearly 80% during the same time, and car bomb and suicide-vest attacks had decreased by 92%.

Although there have been several extraordinarily bloody bombings against ethnic, sectarian and government targets in 2009 – notably on July 31st, August 19th, October 25th, and December 8th – Al Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) and other Sunni insurgent and terrorist groups have lost much of their strength, influence, and ability to carry out frequent operations. The threat posed by the Sadr militia or Promised Day Brigade, various Shi'ite factions like the Special Groups, and other Shi'ite extremist groups like the Kata'ib Hizbullah (KH) has been sharply reduced. Sadr and the Sadrist party are now part of the Shi'ite political alliance, and some extremist movements like the Asaib Ahl al-Haqq (AAH) have accepted a partial ceasefire and held reconciliation talks with the Iraqi government.[1]

The Iraq War, however, is anything but "won" if this means reducing violence to a level where civil society and the economy can function without bombings, large-scale incidents of violence, or the risk of new outbreaks of major ethnic and sectarian violence.

## *Levels of Violence*

There are a wide range of indicators that show the level of violence in Iraq has dropped sharply since the years of open civil war during 2006-2008. **Figures II.1** to **II.5** portray these trends using a wide range of indicators drawn from MNF-I, US, and Iraqi sources. The impact of the "surge" the US and Iraqi launched against Sunni insurgents in 2007 is clearly reflected in all of these figures, as is the impact of Iraqi-initiated operations against the Sadr forces in Basra and elsewhere in the country in 2008. The average number of security incidents between September and November 2009 was only half that of the same period in 2008. [2]

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[1] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 24. The date on the DoD report is confusing because the actual pages of the report are dated January 29, 2010, and some portions seem to have been updated in early 2010 – long after the formal cut off date for data of November 2010.

[2] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 24.

**Figure II.6** shows that there were no major escalations in violence as the US withdrew from Iraqi cities in June 2009. This figure is particularly important because it shows that there is no longer a direct correlation between the size and presence of US forces in Iraq. It should be noted, however, that most US forces who did remain in Iraq became active in securing the perimeter of Iraqi cities, and continued to support the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in a variety of joint security missions inside urban areas. Furthermore, November of 2009 had the fewest Iraqi civilian casualties since 2003 and December was the first month since the invasion in which no US service members died in combat.[3]

However, insurgents have replaced attacks on civilian population centers for attacks aimed at the state through large-scale bombings of government facilities and hotels where foreign news organizations operate starting with the bombings of the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs on August 19th and continuing with bombings in October, December and January, listed below:[4]

- Ministry of Finance (August 19, 2009)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (August 19, 2009)
- Ministry of Justice (October 25, 2009)
- Baghdad Provincial Council (October 25, 2009)
- Compound Associated with the Ministry of Labor (December 8, 2009)
- Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCC-I Karkh) (December 8, 2009)
- Ministry of Finance facility (December 8, 2009)
- Hamra Hotel (January 25, 2010)
- Ishtar Sheraton Hotel (January 25, 2010)
- Babylon Hotel (January 25, 2010)

The Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), an offshoot movement of Al Qa'ida in Iraq, claimed responsibility for the attacks as well as for the assassinations of several top political figures. ISF officials announced that they had also uncovered ISI plots to bomb other GOI ministry buildings including the Ministries of Defense and Trade.[5] It remains clear that violence in Iraq has scarcely ended. These kinds of large-scale attacks and bombings obstruct foreign investment and development, and could still trigger serious ethnic and sectarian fighting. In fact, the overall levels of violence in Iraq during 2009 have come close to those in Afghanistan – which remains the scene of an ongoing conflict and which has both a larger population and more territory.

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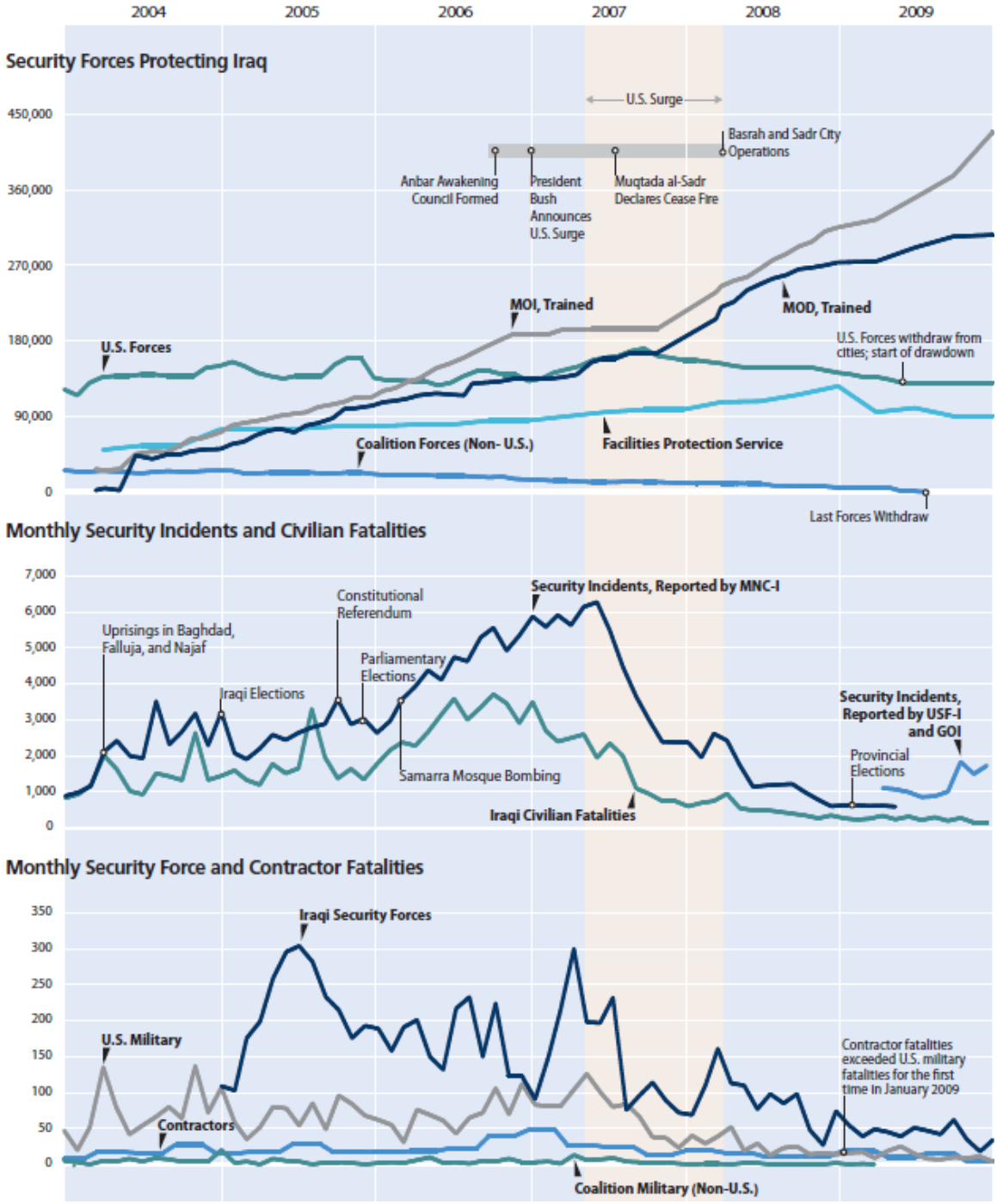
[3] Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), January 30, 2010, p. 3

[4] Adapted from Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), January 30, 2010, p.3

[5] Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), January 30, 2010, p.3

## Figure II.1: Overall Security Trends, Part One:

## An Overview of the War: January 1, 2004 – December 31, 2009




**Note:** Data not audited. Numbers affected by rounding. "U.S. Surge" denotes period when at least 150,000 U.S. troops were in Iraq. The MOI and MOD historical line represents trained forces; the totals represent assigned forces. Total fatalities for the ISF exclude fatalities before 1/1/2005, because of lack of data. Security incidents data from two sources are displayed: MNC-I, for 1/1/2004–5/31/2009, and USF-I for 4/1/2009–12/31/2009 (USF-I incorporates GOI reports). Data supplied by USF-I were incomplete, and

SIGIR projected monthly totals for July and December 2009.
**Sources:** DoD, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, 2/2006–9/2009; DoL, response to SIGIR data call, 1/5/2010; Brookings Institution, *Iraq Index*, 1/7/2010, pp. 5, 6, 15, and 17; OSD, responses toSIGIR data calls, 4/2/2009, 7/1/2009, 9/30/2009, and 12/31/2009; SIGIR, *Quarterly Reports to the United States Congress*, 4/2009 and 10/2009; GOI, response to SIGIR data call, 12/21/2009. Chart taken from Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), January 30, 2010, p. 42

## Figure II.1: Overall Security Trends, Part Two

### Weekly Security Incidents, January 10, 2004 – November 27, 2009

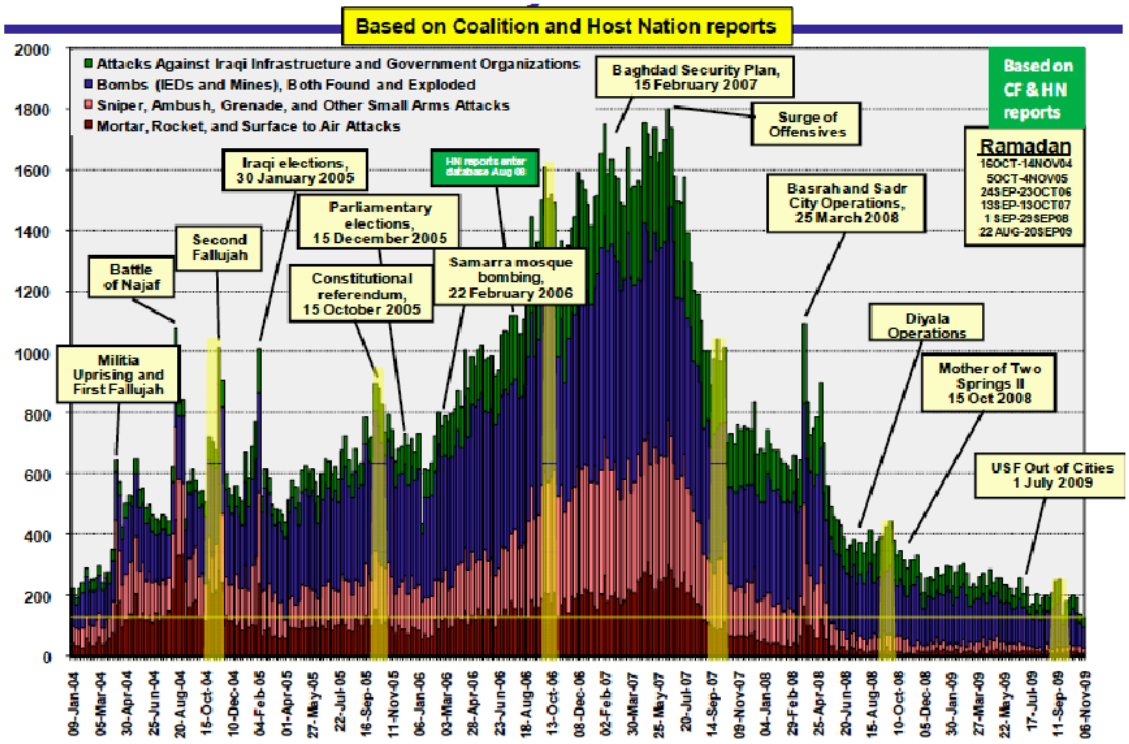
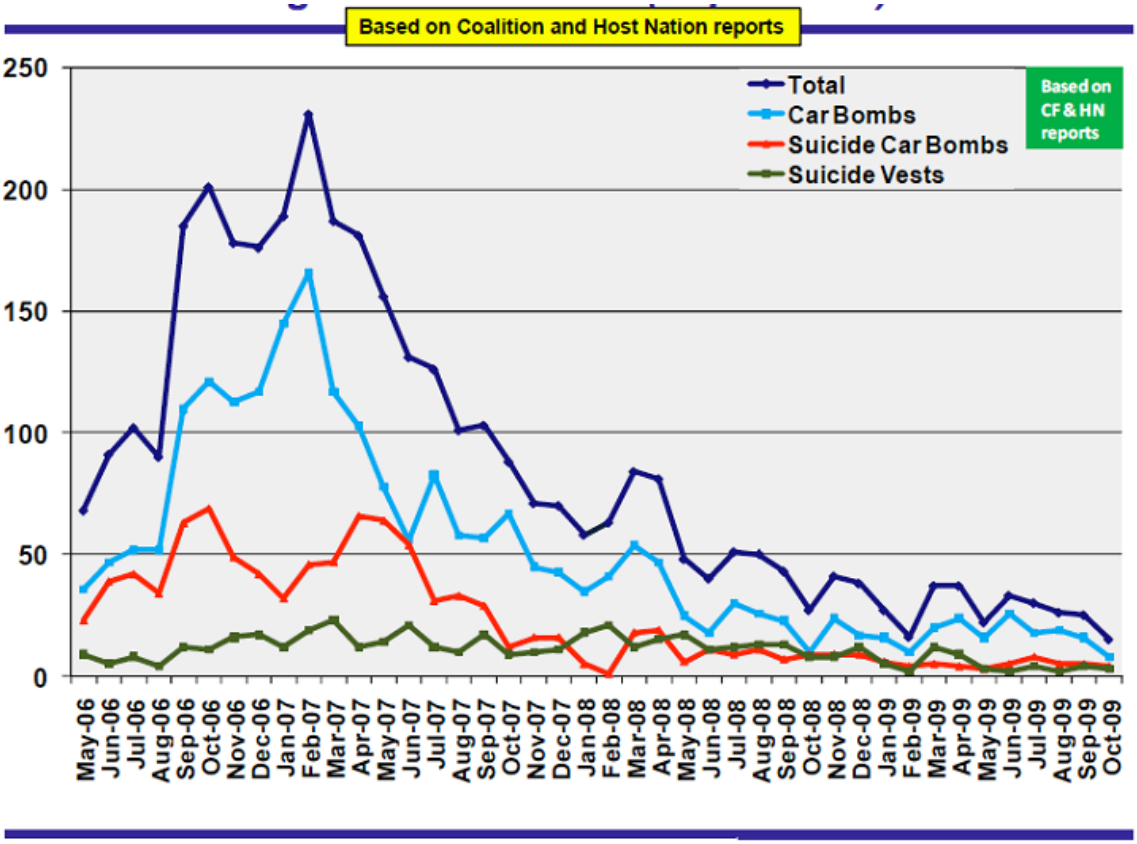



Chart includes potential attacks (IEDs/mines found and cleared) and executed attacks. Data are based upon MNF-I J5 Assessments SIGACTS III Database (Coalition and Iraqi Reports), DoD News Releases and CIDNE as of November 30,2009. Includes deaths within Iraq only. U.S. deaths under investigation are classified as battle deaths. As a result of the June 30, 2009withdrawal from cities, U.S forces must now rely on host nation reporting as the primary data source. Current charts now show a combination of Coalition and host nation reported data. The combination of these reports causes baseline numbers to increase, making it difficult to directly compare these charts with those presented in previous publications

Source: Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 24.

**Figure II.2: Patterns in High Profile Explosions – Part One: Trend from May 2006 to October 2009**




Based on MNF-I J5 Assessments. SIGACTS III Database (Coalition and Iraqi Reports) as of November 30, 2009. Does not include found and cleared. As a result of the June 30, 2009 withdrawal from cities, U.S forces must now rely on host nation reporting as the primary data source. Current charts now show a combination of Coalition and host nation reported data. The combination of these reports causes baseline numbers to increase, making it difficult to directly compare these charts with those presented in previous publications

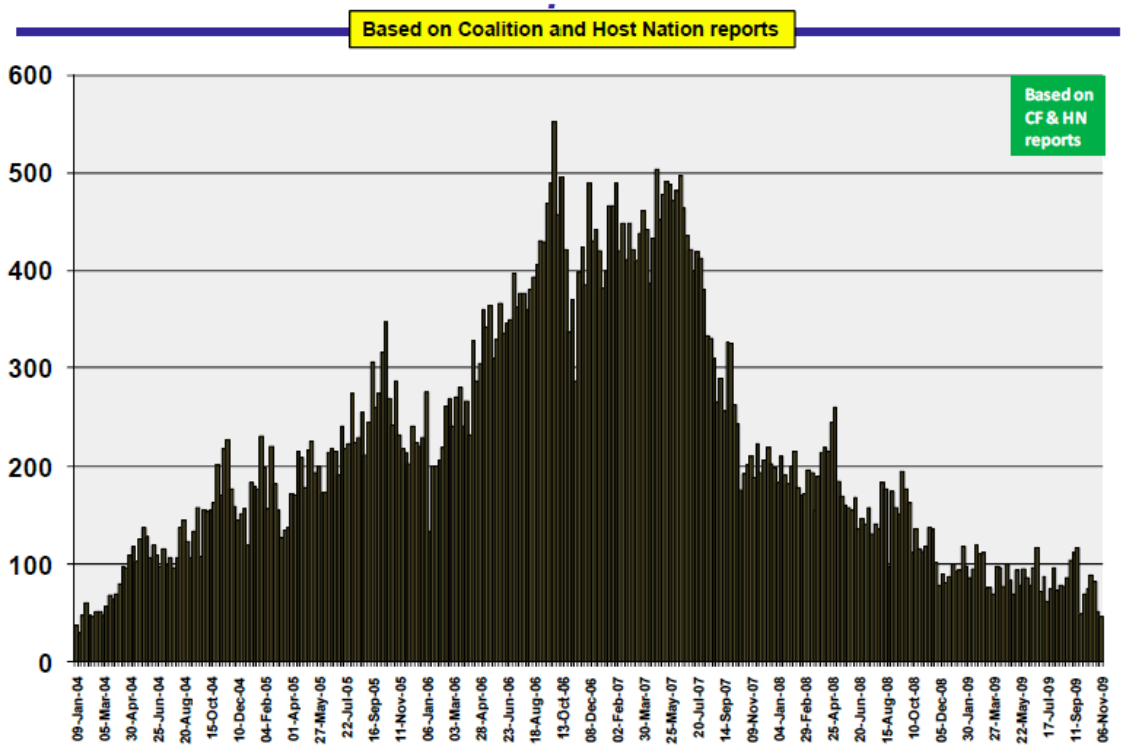
Source: Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 26.

**Figure II.2: Patterns in High Profile Explosions – Part Two: Deaths Associated with Multiple-Fatality Bombings in Iraq, by Group Targeted, 1/1/2007–12/31/2009**

**Note:** Totals correspond with attacks that targeted a particular group or occurred in an area in which the group was in the majority. "Indiscriminate" bombings occurred in areas with mixed sectarian populations. "Unknown"corresponds with attacks where no sectarian information or location was reported.

Source: Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), January 30, 20103 January 31, 2010, p. 43.

**Figure II.3: Patterns in IED Explosions: January 4, 2004-November 9, 2009**




Source: Adapted from material provided by JIEDDO and SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-09

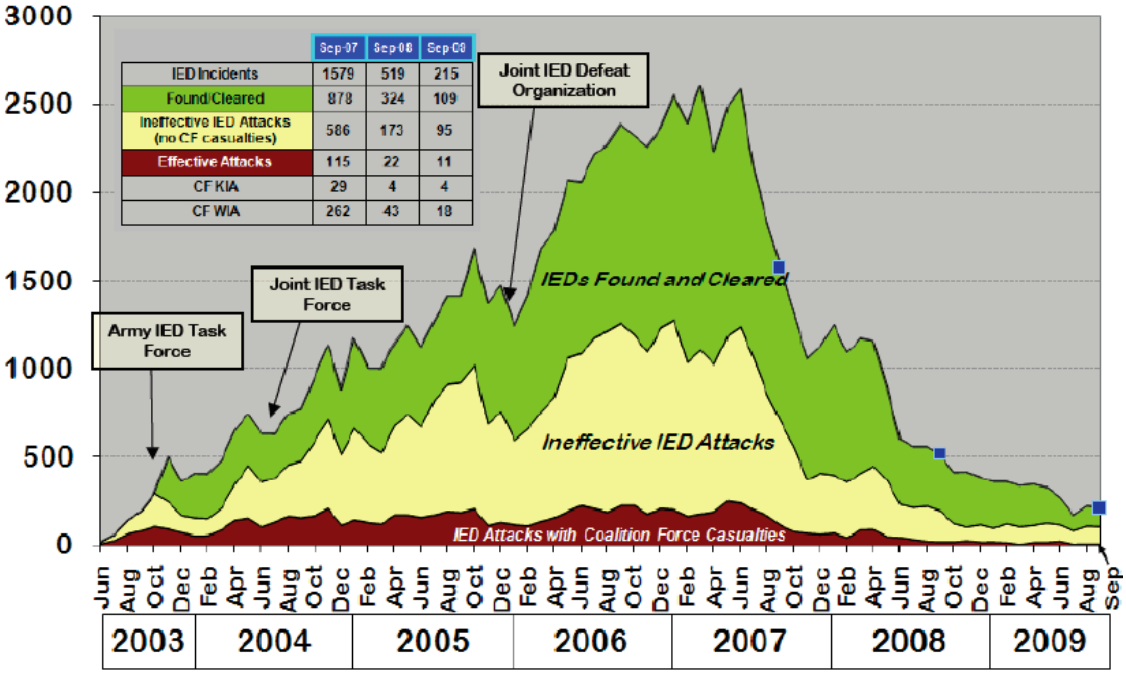
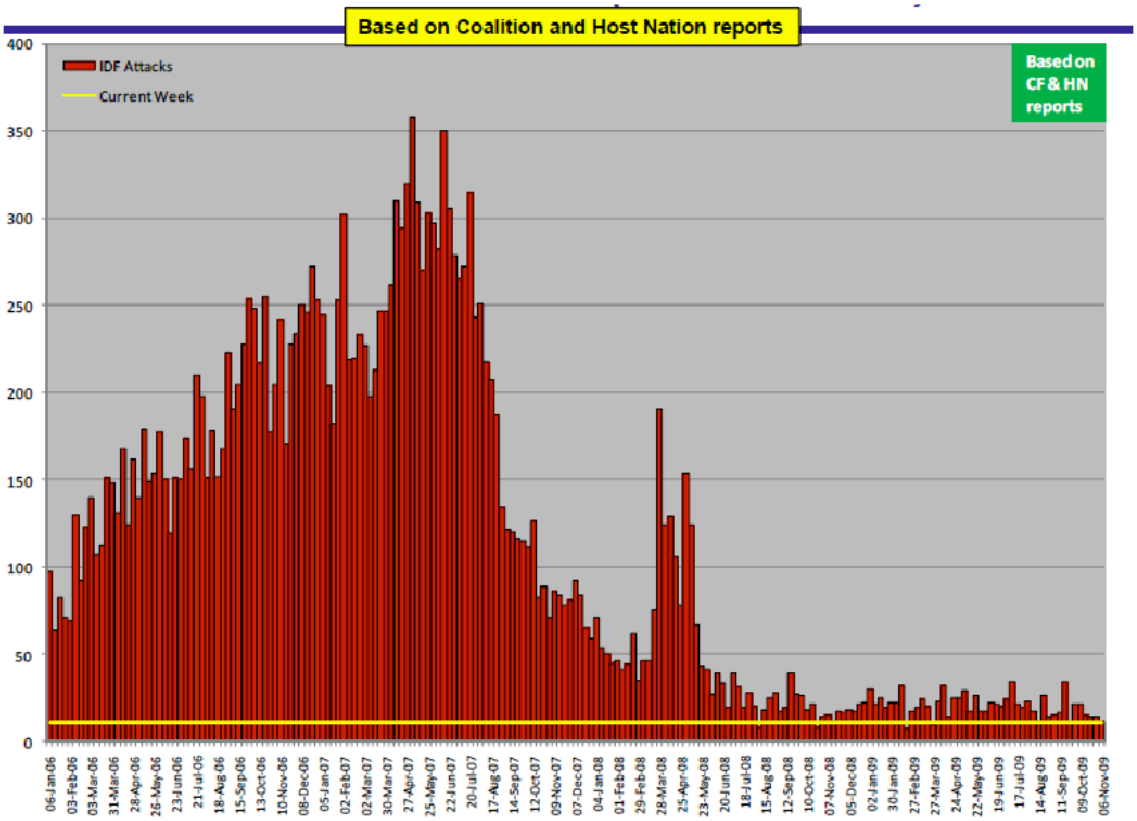
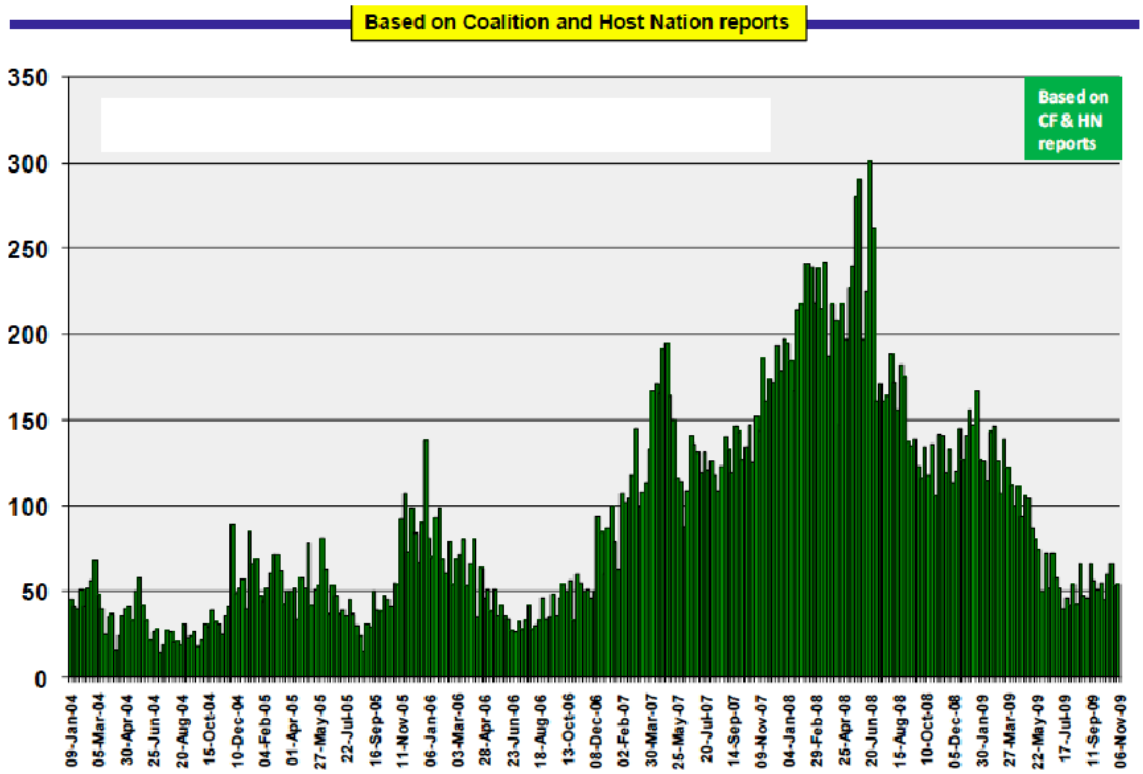


**Figure II.4 Patterns in Indirect Fire Attacks**



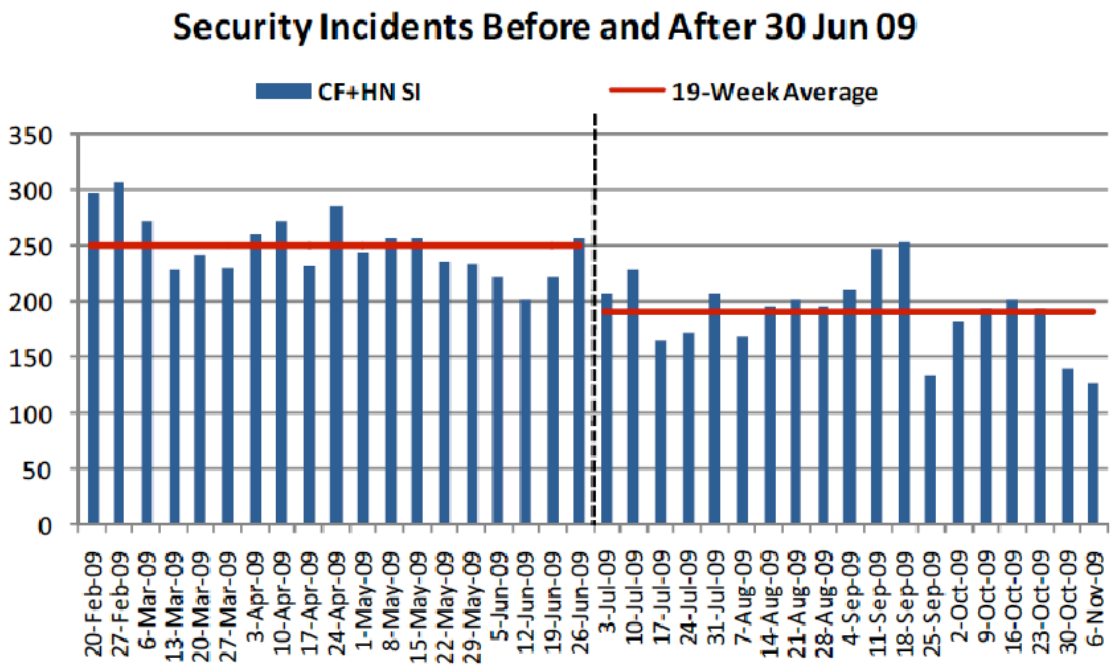

Source: Adapted from material provided by SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-09

**Figure II.5: Patterns in Caches Found**




Source: MNF-I J5 Assessments. SIGACTS III Database (Coalition and Iraqi Reports) as of November 27, 2009. Chart includes caches and explosive remnants of war. As a result of the June 30, 2009 withdrawal from cities, U.S forces must now rely on host nation reporting as the primary data source. Current charts now show a combination of Coalition and host nation reported data. The combination of these reports causes baseline numbers to increase, making it difficult to directly compare these charts with those presented in previous publications.

**Figure II.6: Patterns in Violence Before and After US Withdrawal from Iraqi Cities**




Source: Adapted from material provided by SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-09

### *Levels of Casualties: Overall Assessment*

Figures II.7 to II.10 show that similar patterns emerged in the decline in civilian, ethno-sectarian, and military casualties. General Raymond Odierno, the commanding general of the Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF-I), testified before the House Armed Services Committee in September 2009 that overall attacks had decreased 85% over the past two years from 4064 in August 2007 to 594 in August 2009—with 563 attacks in September (through September 28th). In that same time period, US military deaths decreased by 93%, Iraqi Security Force (ISF) deaths decreased 79%, and ethno-sectarian deaths decreased 88%. Additionally, improvised explosive device (IED) explosions decreased 74%.

He stated that there were only 19 ethno-sectarian incidents in 2009 to date – compared to 978 in 2006. Particularly notable is the decrease during Ramadan, which had theretofore always coincided with a sharp increase in insurgent and extremist activity – although incidents did rise once Ramadan was over. Other reporting showed that the number of civilians killed during September 2009 dropped to 125, the lowest level since 2003. This figure compared to 224 deaths in July 2009.[6] It was less than half the total of 393 in August (which was driven by two truck bombings in populated areas), and less than half the total of 359 in September 2008.[7]

General Odierno also stated that, [8]

> While statistics do not paint the whole picture, they help provide some context in understanding the progress made to date. The overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people reject extremism...We have seen no indications of a return to the sectarian violence that plagued Iraq in 2006 and 2007...

Odierno did warn, however, that the violence was not over – a warning that became all too accurate as Iraq moved towards its national election on March 7, 2010. High profile explosions and bombings have steadily decreased, but "remain a concern especially following the two bombings in Baghdad on 19 August which targeted the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs. These were horrific attacks, claimed and perpetrated by Al Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) and aimed specifically against Government of Iraq (GoI) institutions in order to undermine the public's faith and confidence in the GoI." He also expressed concern over Arab-Kurdish tensions, which he said were now the "number one driver of instability."[9]

> Although security is improving, it is not yet enduring. There still remain underlying, unresolved sources of potential conflict. I call these drivers of instability. From the beginning, security in Iraq has been a complex problem that has required nuanced, evolving approaches—and our strategy has reflected this. In this environment, we cannot focus on immediate and traditional security threats alone, especially as the United States continues to assist Iraq in rebuilding the foundations of their security, civil, political and economic institutions. We continue to assist the Government of Iraq (GoI) in addressing and finding ways to mitigate these root causes of instability.

---

[6]Tim Cocks, "Iraqi Civilian Deaths are Highest Since April" *Reuters* (1 Sept 2009)

[7] Reuters, "Iraq Says September Civilian Deaths Lowest Since War Began," *Washington Post*, October 1, 2009.

[8] Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden, "*Odierno: Continued Progress in Iraq Could Speed Withdrawal,***"** American Forces Press Service, September 30, 2009.

[9] Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden, "*Odierno: Continued Progress in Iraq Could Speed Withdrawal,***"** American Forces Press Service, September 30, 2009.

Current drivers of instability include communal and factional struggles for power and resources, insufficient GoI capacity, violent extremist groups, and interference from external state and non-state actors. Iraq is a nascent democracy emerging from over 30 years of authoritarian rule based on ethno-sectarian privilege. Its future as a stable, multi-ethnic, representative state rests upon its ability to deal with the myriad of these challenges—and some of these issues will take time to resolve.

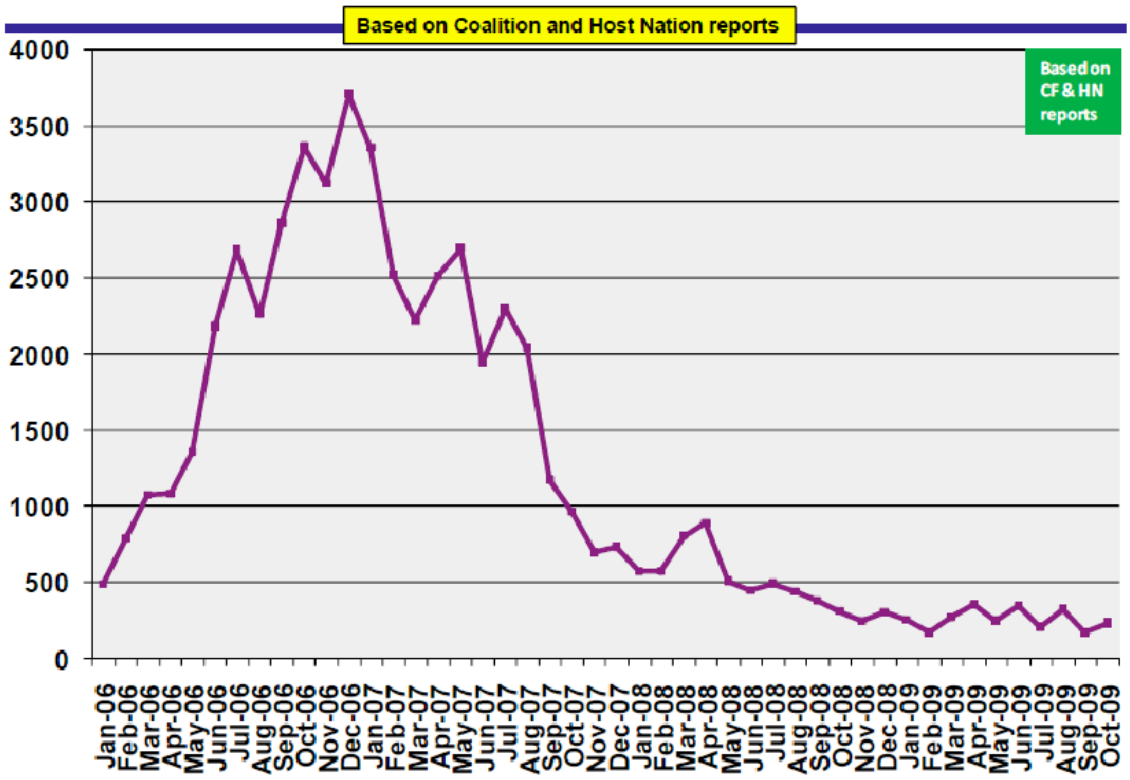
The national elections in early 2010 are critical to determining the path that Iraq will take into the future. The rules of the game are being debated in the Council of Representatives. Having just returned yesterday from the Eid holiday, they have a condensed timeline to pass an election law and many issues to discuss, including Kirkuk, open versus closed lists and a single versus a multiple district election. There is the potential to build a competent, capable and representative government, but there is also the potential to exacerbate societal divisions by appointing people based on their affiliations rather than their abilities.

Even as Iraqi political system continues to mature, there is not yet consensus on the exact nature of Iraq's representative government that is accepted across ethnic, sectarian, and regional lines. Issues include the role and power of the central Iraqi government vis-à-vis the provinces, the integration and balance of ethnic and sectarian groups within the government, revenue sharing, and long-standing Arab-Kurd issues.

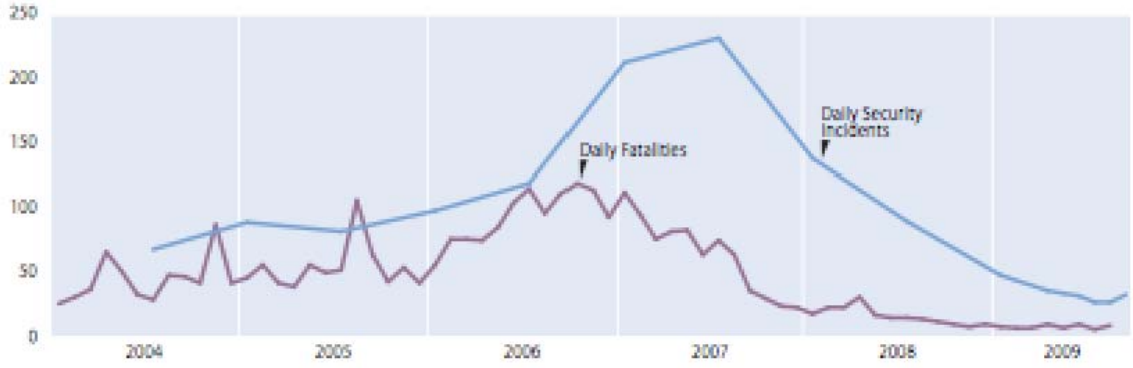
Iraqi governmental institutions continue to evolve and their ability to provide essential services is improving; yet, it will take time to develop the institutional processes and bureaucratic expertise necessary to sustain programs over time. Also, decades of infrastructural neglect require substantial capital investment, and the recent decline in the price of oil—the mainstay of the Iraqi economy—has resulted in budget shortfalls, negatively impacting the GoI's ability to fund its many requirements.

Violent external groups and external influences take advantage of seams within Iraq—such as the Arab-Kurd tensions. Al Qa'ida in Iraq, Sunni extremist groups, and Shi'ite militant groups continue to pose threats to stability as they seek to exploit political fissures, destabilize the Government of Iraq and undermine the progress made to date. Interference from external actors continues to exacerbate the security situation within Iraq through either tacit or direct support to extremists and proxy groups. Both enhanced security and diplomatic measures are required to secure Iraq's borders with Iran and Syria.

**Figure II. 7: Patterns in Civilian Casualties in Iraq: 2004-2009**




Source: Adapted from material provided by SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-09, and Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009 p. 28.



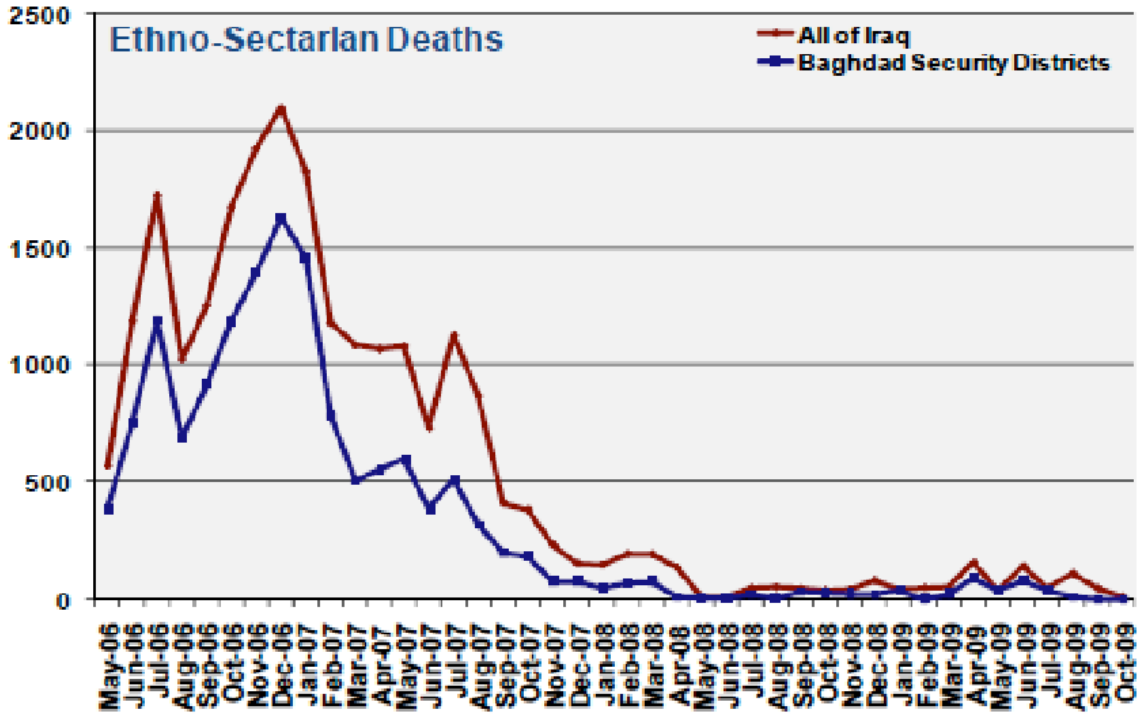

Note: Incidents include attacks against Iraqi infrastructure and government organizations; bombs that are found and cleared (including IEDs and mines); detonated bombs; sniper, ambush, grenade, and other small arms attacks; and mortar, rocket, and surface-to-air attacks. After June 30, 2009, the GOI began providing information on security incidents as part of the bilateral Security Agreement. MNF-I now includes this data as part of its reporting.

Based on MNF-I J5 Assessments SIGACTS III Database (Coalition and Iraqi Reports) as of November 30, 2009. Does not include civilian deaths due to accidents unrelated to friendly or enemy actions. As a result of the June 30, 2009 withdrawal from cities, U.S forces must now rely on host nation reporting as the primary data source. Current charts now show a combination of Coalition and host nation reported data.

Sources: MNF-I, response to SIGIR data call, 9/30/2009;; Commander, MNF-I, testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, "The Status of Ongoing Efforts in Iraq," 9/30/2009, p. 2; and Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction

(SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), October 30, 2009, p. 44.

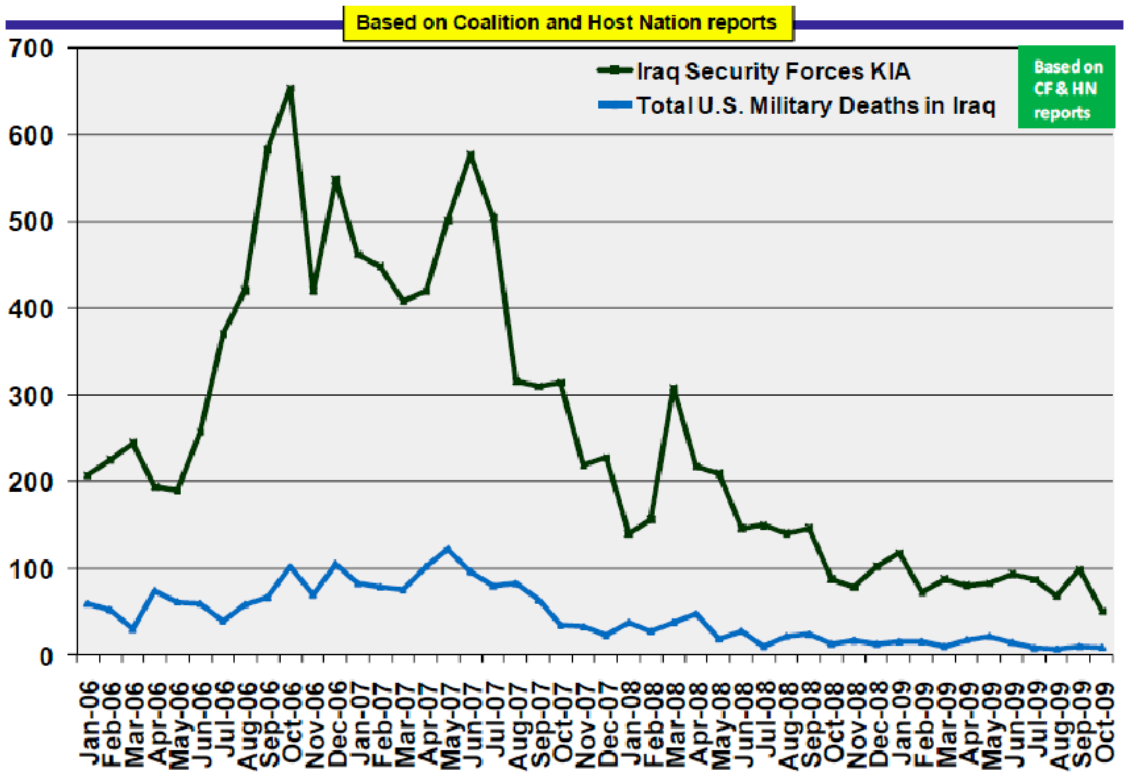
**Figure II. 8: Patterns in Ethno-Sectarian Violence: Nationwide Trends in Deaths – May 2006 to November 2009**




Based on MNF-I J5 Assessments CIOC Trends Database (Coalition and Iraqi Reports) as of November 30, 2009. As a result of the June 30, 2009 withdrawal from cities, U.S forces must now rely on host nation reporting as the primary data source. Current charts now show a combination of Coalition and host nation reported data.

Source: Adapted from material provided by SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-09, and Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009 p. 27

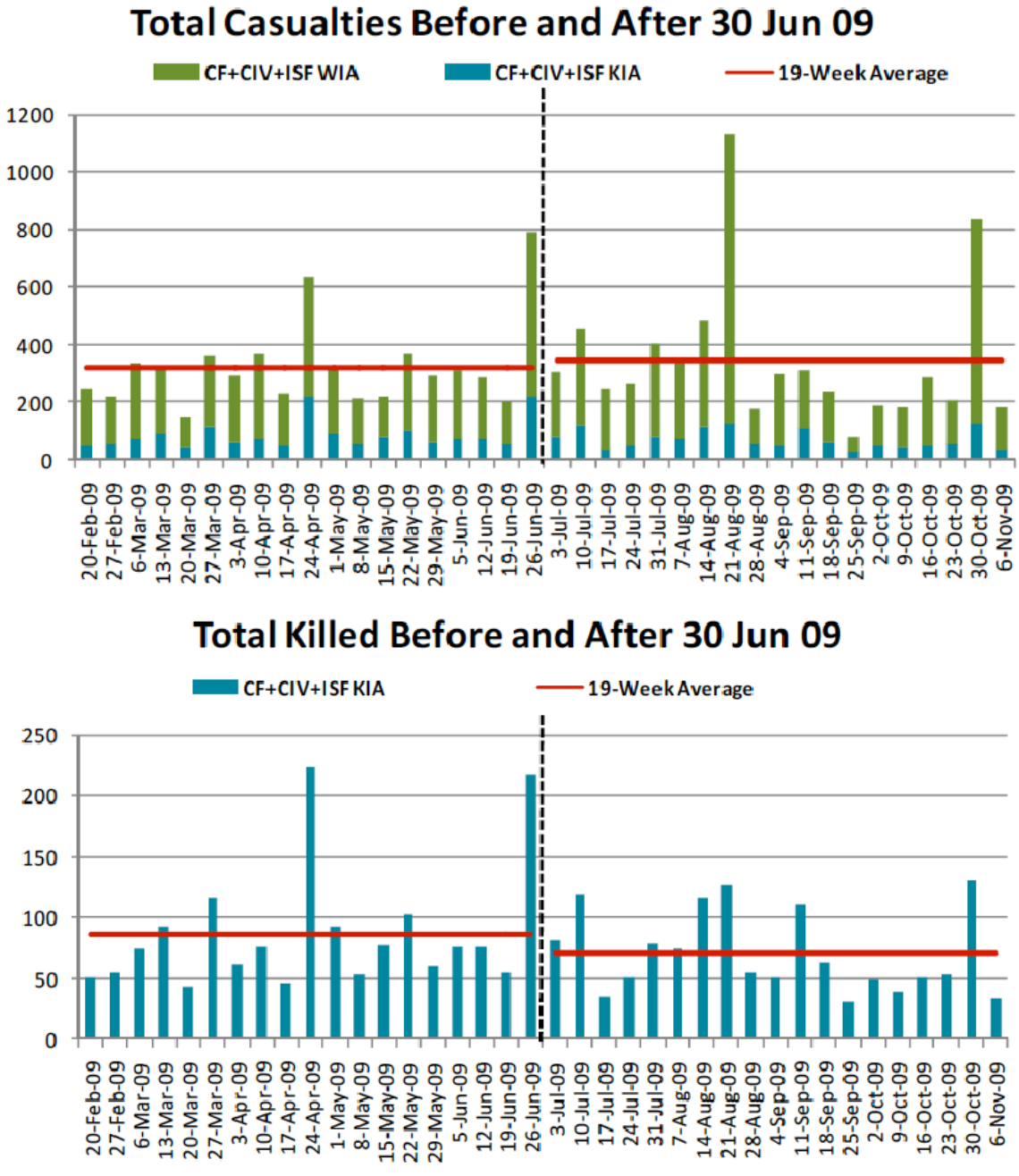
**Figure II.9 Patterns in ISF and US Military Deaths in Iraq**




Based on MNF-I J5 Assessments SIGACTS III Database (Coalition and Iraqi Reports), DoD News Releases and CIDNE as of November 30, 2009. Includes deaths within Iraq only. U.S. deaths under investigation are classified as battle deaths. As a result of the June 30, 2009 withdrawal from cities, U.S forces must now rely on host nation reporting as the primary data source. Current charts now show a combination of Coalition and host nation reported data. The combination of these reports causes baseline numbers to increase, making it difficult to directlycompare these charts with those presented in previous publications

Source: Adapted from material provided by SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-09, and Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009 p. 25.

**Figure II. 10: Patterns in Casualties Since US Withdrawal from Iraqi Cities in June 2009**




Source: Adapted from material provided by SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-0

## *Continuing Violence: The "Irreducible Minimum"*

General Odierno's warning proved all too accurate by the end of 2009. **Figure II.11** shows how the patterns in violence focused on targets designed to divide Iraq along ethnic and sectarian lines, and to discredit the Iraqi government and security. **Figure II.12** shows more recent security incidents – from October, 2009 to January, 2010 – that resulted in the death of two or more people. At the same time, **Figure II.12** validates the warnings General Odierno gave in his September 2009 testimony, and his past warnings that the levels of violence might plateau at an "irreducible minimum."

As a SIGIR report issued in January 2010 noted,[10]

> The August 19, 2009, bombings of the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs heralded an ominous trend in the pattern of insurgent violence, which continued this quarter, most notably with bombings in Baghdad striking the following targets: [11]
>
> - Ministry of Justice (October 25, 2009)
> - Baghdad Provincial Council (October 25, 2009)
> - Compound associated with the Ministry of
> - Labor (December 8, 2009)
> - Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCC-I Karkh)
> - (December 8, 2009)
> - Ministry of Finance facility (December 8, 2009)
> - In the wake of the December 8, 2009, attacks,
>
> Prime Minister al-Maliki demoted the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) general in charge of the Baghdad Operations Center.5 The Council of Representatives (CoR) also asserted itself by summoning the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Defense and Interior to appear before it. Figure 1.3 shows the locations of some of the major bombings of GOI installations in Baghdad. [12]
>
> On January 12, 2010, ISF officials announced that they had uncovered and broken up a large scale plot to bomb GOI ministry buildings and assassinate high-level political figures. Reportedly, the Ministries of Defense and Trade were among those targeted for destruction. Iraqi authorities detained at least 25 suspects for allegedly participating in this conspiracy. [13]
>
> A wave of targeted political violence swept Iraq...with the apparent aim of destabilizing Iraq's government and exacerbating sectarian and ethnic tensions. Targets included judges, significant security officers, and leading public officials in prominent cities, including Mosul and Telafar. These attacks took an especially severe toll in Anbar province, where a suicide bombing on December 30, 2009, seriously wounded the governor and killed several other Anbari officials...prominent political figures...appear to have been targeted for death...Significantly, members of the Sunni Awakening Movement, which evolved into the U.S.-financed Sons of Iraq (SOI), have often been the victims of these attacks. [14]

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[10] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress,* December 31, 2009, 3, 5, 6, and 41.

[11] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress,* December 31, 2009, pp. 3, and 5-6..

[12] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress,* December 31, 2009, pp. 3, and 5-6..

[13] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress,* December 31, 2009, pp. 3, and 5-6..

[14] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress,* December 31, 2009, pp. 3, and 5-6..

> ...the al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) terrorist network has been degraded and its funding reduced by 50%. Nonetheless, high-profile bombings continue, such as the multiple attacks in October and December 2009 near Iraqi government sites in Baghdad. These attacks claimed the lives of hundreds of people and injured more than 1,000. Many underlying sources of instability persist, potentially putting recent security gains at risk. Internal ethnosectarian divisions remain at the forefront of disputes over political borders in the contest for natural resources. The AQI, as well as Kurdish, Sunni, and Shia militants, appear to be targeting mixed urban areas—including those in Ninewa, Tameem, Diyala, and Baghdad provinces—with the intent of inciting sectarian violence as well as undermining public perception of the Iraqi government. [15]

Similarly, the Department of Defense reported in January 2010 that,[16]

> During September to November 2009, the number of monthly HPAs decreased 50% nationwide from the previous reporting period. AQI, however, retains the intent and capability to carry out these attacks as demonstrated by the August 19, October 25, and December 8, 2009, bombings targeting GoI ministries in Baghdad. During this reporting period, 43% of all casualties were caused by HPAs, although over half of the HPA casualties during this period were from the one attack on October 25, 2009. Approximately 60% of HPAs are vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) and these remain AQI's weapon of choice. Suicide attack trends remain low, and female suicide attacks are approaching zero. There was only one reported in the last four months.
>
> Target focus continues to be on GoI institutions, as well as ethno-sectarian and ISF-based in order to discredit the GoI and increase ethno-sectarian tensions. Suicide attacks primarily occur in mixed urban areas such as Baghdad, Mosul, and Kirkuk. Although HPAs and attack trends in general remain low, a single, effective HPA can disproportionately influence perceptions in Iraq. This was demonstrated, once again, by the attacks on August 19, October 25, and December 8, 2009. These attacks, however, have not rekindled a cycle of ethno-sectarian violence.

The data in **Figure II.11** do need to be kept in perspective. They do not alter the fact that the levels of violence fell in each province over the course of 2009 – with the decline ranging from 48 percent in Tameem to 77 percent in Diyala. Security incidents in Baghdad and Salah al-Din decreased by 78 and 79 percent, respectively, indicating a decline in Sunni-Shi'ite violence.[17] These trends reflect an overall improvement of security in Iraq, though there were provinces in which the number of average monthly security incidents had risen from 2007 to 2009.[18]

Moreover, other aspects of the situation did not deteriorate in statistical terms in late 2009. The same DoD report notes that,

> "[W]eekly overall security incidents and including all reported attacks against civilians, the ISF, and U.S. forces...remained at low levels from September to November 2009, averaging 177 security incidents per week, which reflects a 13.2% decrease from the last reporting period. Baghdad, Diyala, Ninewa, and Salah ad Din contain approximately half of Iraq's population and accounted for 75% of these security incidents. The decrease in security incidents contributed to a drop in civilian deaths due

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[15] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress*, December 31, 2009, p. 41.

[16] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 26-27.

[17] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (30 July 2009)

[18] A more up to date "snapshot, without a trend line, is provided in Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), October 30, 2009, pp. 102-131.

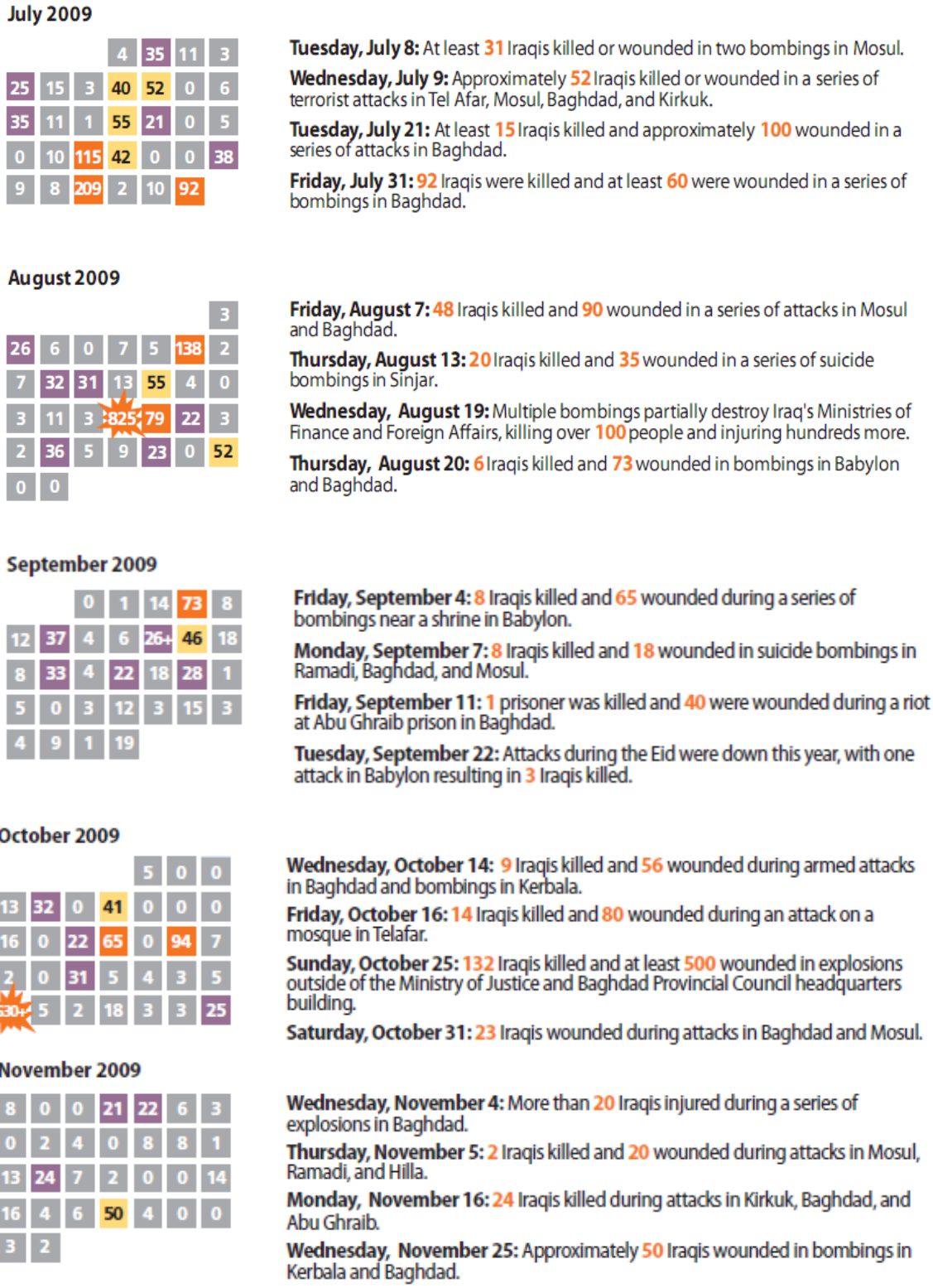
> to violence. The daily average number of civilian deaths due to violence decreased from 9.5 per day to 5.5 per day. Although the HPAs on October 25 and December 8, 2009, caused a large number of civilian deaths and injuries, thus far, these attacks have not rekindled a cycle of ethno-sectarian violence." [19]

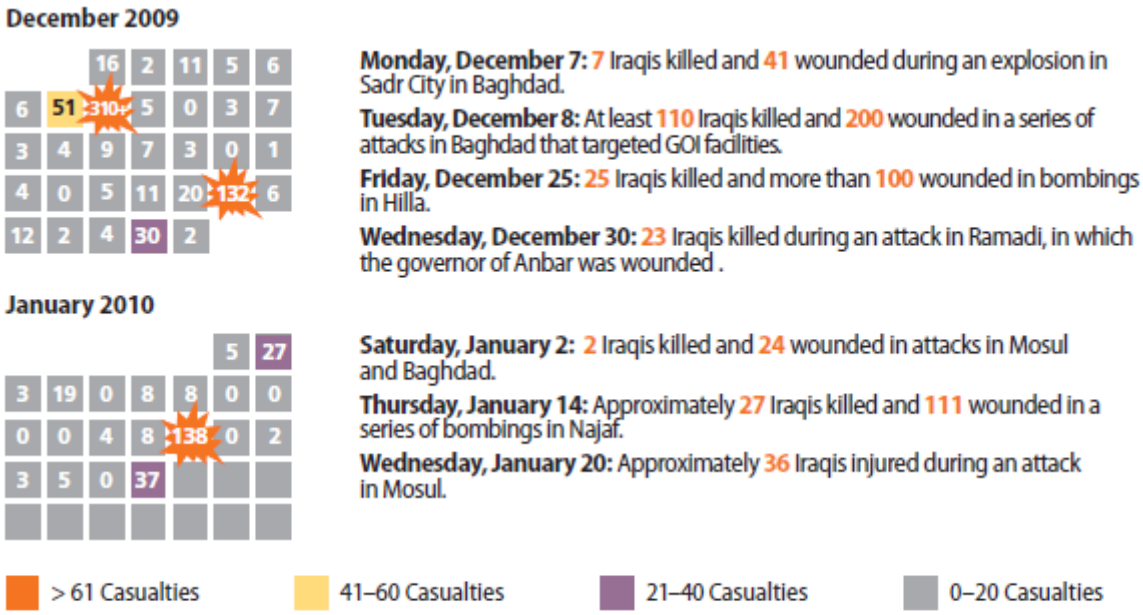
None of this means, however, that the patterns in **Figure II.11** do not reflect a serious level of violence continuing through the religious holidays in late 2009 and early 2010, nor those that will continue to occur throughout the Iraqi election campaign. The numbers, however, are still far lower than they were at the height of sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shi'ites in 2007 – 1,773 Iraqi civilians were killed in August of that year.

It is far from clear that it will be possible to eliminate these types of attacks and casualties without more political accommodation, more progress in defeating the remaining insurgents, further improvements in the quality and strength of Iraqi security forces, and the establishment of an effective, nation-wide rule of law. Moreover, a number of foreign companies – including some major US corporations – have made it clear in interviews that they still see Iraq as presenting serious security risks to outside investors.

[19] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 26-27.

**Figure II.11: Key Security Incidents from 7/1/2009 to 1/20/2010**






**Adapted from sources:** Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), October 30, 2009, p. 5.

Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), January 30, 2010, p. 5

## Figure II.11: Key Security Incidents in 2009: Part Two

### Selected Incidents of Apparently Targeted Political Violence, 10/21/2009-1/20/2010

| Targets / Victims | Location (Province) | Date | Circumstances | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anti-insurgent Sunni cleric | Anbar | 10/9/2009 | Bomb attached to car | Cleric killed |
| National Reconciliation Meeting | Anbar | 10/11/2009 | Multiple car bombings | At least 14 killed, dozens injured |
| MOI Major investigating 10/25/2009 bombings | Baghdad | 10/29/2009 | Gunshot | MOI Major killed |
| Leading Sunni political figure | Anbar | 11/15-16/2009 | Kidnapped, then executed | Sunni politician and more than 10 others killed |
| Awakening leader | Diyala | 11/17/2009 | Small-arms fire | Awakening leader killed |
| Judge | Ninewa | 11/17/2009 | Ambush, small-arms fire | Attack failed |
| Awakening leader | Diyala | 11/18/2009 | Ambush, small-arms fire | Attack failed |
| Two Sunni religious leaders | Baghdad, Anbar | 11/24/2009 | Bombs attached to cars (separate incidents) | Both religious leaders killed |
| Kurdish politician | Diyala | 11/26/2009 | IED | Kurdish candidate killed |
| Military-Intelligence General | Tameem | 11/30/2009 | Ambush, small-arms fire | General killed |
| Police counterterrorism official | Salah Al-Din | 12/3/2009 | Suicide bombing | Police official and bodyguards killed |
| Awakening leader | Baghdad | 12/16/2009 | IED | Awakening leader killed |
| Telafar District Council leader | Ninewa | 12/21/2009 | Suicide bombing | Council leader killed |
| Sunni parliamentary candidate | Anbar | 12/23/2009 | Bomb attached to car | Candidate killed |
| Mayor of Mosul | Ninewa | 12/24/2009 | IED | Attack failed |
| Anbar police official | Anbar | 12/25/2009 | Ambush, small-arms fire | Attack failed |
| Tribal Sheik | Anbar | 12/27/2009 | Bombing | Sheik killed |
| Judge | Tameem | 12/29/2009 | Ambush, small-arms fire | Judge injured |
| Anbar Provincial Governor and police leaders | Anbar | 12/30/2009 | Multiple bombings | Governor seriously wounded, at least 24 dead |
| Anti-terrorism Lieutenant Colonel | Anbar | 1/7/2010 | Multiple bombings | Colonel wounded, multiple associates and relatives killed |

Source: Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, (Public Law 108-106, as amended, and Public Law 95-452), January 30, 2010, p. 6.

## Violence by Province and Ethnic and Sectarian Impact

These points are reinforced by the data in **Figure II. 12** and **Figure II. 13**. They show just how much the patterns in Iraqi violence have, and continue to, vary by area. They also show the areas where improvements in security have been most striking and the areas that are now relatively secure and where development and outside investment assume the least risk.

At the same time, they reinforce the fact that much of the violence in Iraq still has an ethnic and sectarian character, and is designed to divide Iraqis along ethnic and sectarian lines and to discredit government claims to have provided improved security via the ISF. Most of the violence in Iraq remains concentrated in provinces with mixed ethno-religious demographics, particularly in the areas surrounding Baghdad and in Northern Iraq, in territories shared by both Arabs and Kurds. Shi'ites and Kurds have been the most frequent targets in these attacks, most likely carried out by Sunni insurgents or AQI.

If **Figures II.12 and II.13** are compared to the data on the ethnic and sectarian distribution of the population in **Figure II.14**, it becomes clear that the provinces where the number of security threats remains highest tend to be the most ethnically and religiously diverse regions, or ones tied to the presence of significant insurgent activity. The incidents are not the result of random violence or of an insurgent search for "visibility." Most reflect a pattern directed at creating a broad climate of insecurity, efforts to discredit the government, and attacks that probe at ethnic and sectarian fault lines in an effort to provoke reprisals and new outbreaks of major ethnic and sectarian violence.

These areas have been prime targets for insurgent groups trying to destabilize the government and reignite ethnic violence. This is especially true of high profile attacks in areas where different ethnic groups lay claim to the country's valuable natural resources. Political and social disputes over oil sharing contracts and foreign contracts are still the driving force behind ethnic tensions, particularly between Arabs and Kurds, and groups like AQI have tried to exploit these political divisions through their use of targeted attacks.

Insurgent groups like AQI have tried to exploit tensions between Arabs and Kurds in Northern provinces like Ninewa, Tameem and Diyala by deliberately targeting ethnic minorities to spark some type of sectarian violence. In the Ninewa province an average of 6 to 8 incidents were reported per day in 2009, most of them in the areas surrounding the main city of Mosul. In the province of Tameem, crime, corruption and ethnic disputes also contribute to daily reports of violence. Largely Sunni provinces like Salah al-Din and Anbar, past centers of Sunni insurgent activity, also experienced a relatively high number of attacks over the past few months. Again, these have mostly been attacks by Shi'ite insurgency groups and AQI trying to incite large-scale ethnic violence, although so far these attempts have not been successful.

The average number of monthly security incidents did rise in four other provinces: Karbala, Najaf, Sulaymaniya and Missan from 2007 to 2009. However, in each of these cases the number of incidents rose by fewer than eight attacks and each province reported fewer than 10 attacks per month in 2009. Therefore, the main areas of concern in Iraq remain provinces

in which the number of violent incidents ranges in the hundreds, particularly in Baghdad and Ninewa. Although parts of these provinces have calmed down and experience relatively little turmoil, security conditions still vary by neighborhood in cities like Baghdad and Mosul.

At the same time, violence in cities like Baghdad has taken place mainly between Sunni insurgents and the predominantly Shi'ite police. Although the number of security incidents increased from 181 in July to 231 in August, this increase came mainly from insurgents and Sunni civilians reacting to the Iraqi Army's counter-terrorism operations and to Shi'ite police patrolling predominantly Sunni neighborhoods.[20] There have been far fewer incidents of civilian-on-civilian violence, indicating that the chance of a return to large-scale sectarian violence remains low.[21]

Furthermore, unlike many of the suicide bombings from earlier in 2009, the most serious attacks in Iraq after the US withdrawal from the cities, including the October 25th bombing of government ministry buildings that killed over 155 people, seem to be aimed directly at the government and not at a particular group of civilians.[22] Rather than attack Shi'ite mosques or Sunni marketplaces, bombers are now targeting government offices and police outposts with increasing regularity.

Iraqi officials suspect that neighboring Syria is harboring Sunni insurgents or their recruiters and supporters, including both Al Qa'ida operatives and former Ba'athists still loyal to Saddam Hussein's regime.[23] The two countries recalled their ambassadors in August in response to Iraq official's allegations that Syria played a part in the August 19th and 25th bombings – another set of bombings targeting government facilities. Iraq has not shut down trade with Syria or placed further restrictions on travel to and from the country, nor does it have the number of security personnel necessary to completely secure the border, even if it were to shut down trade routes. Either way it seems that the ISF are in need of greater funds to hire and train additional troops and police to ensure that bombers targeting the government cannot sail through checkpoints as easily as they have.[24]

Attacks on Iraqi security forces continue with significant frequency, but have not had a major impact on Iraqi politics and governance. Moreover, the transfer of power from coalition forces to the new Provincial Councils has gone relatively smoothly – without large-scale violence or a renewed threat of civil war. Although there was an initial spike in violence after the first mass withdrawal of US troops it does not seem to have sparked a broader conflict. Instead, the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Baghdad has been able to turn its attention to more mundane issues like recycling, garbage landfills and funding for a trash-collection program. [25]

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[20] Ben Lando "Q&A: Security Snapshots" *Iraq Oil Report* (24 Sept 2009)
[21] **Figure IV.2,** shown later in this report**,** shows this general downward progression of ethno-sectarian violence, comparing four different months from 2006 to 2009.
[22] Ana Maria Luca "Eyes on Syria" *Lebanon News* (27 Oct 2009)
[23] ibid
[24] ibid
[25] SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (30 July 2009), p. 135

## Violence By Region: An Unclassified Intelligence Assessment

Only a major intelligence effort can assess the regional patterns shown in Figure II.12 in any depth. The Department of Defense has such an unclassified estimate in its December 2009 Quarterly Report, and it helps put the current level of violence and risk in further perspective:

**Baghdad**

The August 19, 2009, bombings of the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs, the October 25, 2009, bombings against the Baghdad Provincial Council and MoJ, and the December 8, 2009, bombings targeting government buildings in Baghdad demonstrated that AQI remains a viable and capable group. The Baghdad bombings and several smaller attacks throughout the district in the past several months demonstrate that AQI continues to pursue its campaign to undermine ISF in an effort to create uncertainty in the GoI's overall security capability and incite sectarian violence. AQI and Shi'a extremist elements remain responsible for most violent activity within the Baghdad Security Districts. Militant Shi'a groups, including the PDB and KH maintain active cells in Baghdad. AAH cells, although capable and present, as of late November 2009, have been adhering to the AAH cease-fire. The difficult operating environment has caused many leadership figures to stay in Iran, while encouraging subordinates to prepare for future operations in Baghdad, especially as U.S. forces transfer security operations to the ISF. Although AAH has agreed to a cease-fire, it and other groups have not renounced armed violence and continue attempts to re-establish networks despite arrests and disruptions. These and other militant groups continue low-level operations, indicating residual will and capability to operate in Baghdad. Overall, attacks by the PDB and KH, possibly aided by AAH members, occur intermittently and mostly target U.S. forces in Baghdad in the form of EFP and IDF attacks.[26]

Sunni resistance activity in Baghdad has steadily declined since early 2008, with more activity on the periphery than in central Baghdad. However, AQI maintains cells in and around Baghdad with the intent to remain relevant and undermine the GoI and with the residual capability to conduct HPAs. AQI's ability to operate is significantly constrained by GoI security initiatives. While AQI's presence has declined inside the capital, the group seeks to re-establish itself in Baghdad and the surrounding areas and maintains the ability and desire to carry out periodic HPAs designed to cause high levels of casualties. [27]

**Anbar and Western Iraq**

...[A]ttacks in Anbar Province remain constant at approximately one per day. Many elements of the Sunni insurgency appear to have transitioned to either political activity or participation in the SoI, or to have otherwise ceased attacks. U.S., ISF, and tribal initiatives continue to make significant progress in western Iraq against the capabilities and operations of AQI. AQI has lost the support of the Anbar population, who now demonstrate trust and confidence in the local ISF. Additionally, discoveries of caches and key AQI member arrests have made it difficult for AQI to carry out large-scale operations or regain a foothold in the area. However, AQI continues to maintain a presence in the province, particularly as the leadership views Anbar as a significant and symbolic element of their hold in Iraq. AQI in the West continues infrequent attacks in an effort to discredit the ISF and the political process. The group seeks to re-establish itself and maintains the

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[26] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 29-30.

[27] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 29-30.

ability and desire to carry out periodic HPAs as seen with their limited resurgence and increase in HPAs in Anbar in July, August, and September 2009. [28]

**The Kurdish Regional Government Area**

The KRG remains the safest and most stable region of Iraq, although isolated acts of terrorism occasionally occur. The relatively homogenous Kurdish population and the presence of the KSF mitigate the threat of AQI or other terrorist attacks in the North and reduce ethnic tensions that plague other cities in Iraq. [29]

Turkish and Iranian operations against Kurdish terrorist groups along their borders with the KRG have not led to significant numbers of refugees, collateral damage, or political fallout, but they remain potential flashpoints in the GoI's efforts to improve bilateral relations. [30]

The results of provincial elections in January 2009 reduced Kurdish influence in the disputed areas, including Ninewa, Salah ad Din, and Diyala. In particular, the transfer of power from the Kurds to the mostly-Sunni al-Hadba Gathering in Ninewa has been destabilizing. Al-Hadba has called for the removal of Peshmerga and Kurdish Assayish security forces from the province, which has increased tensions in the area. However, ongoing efforts to establish a joint security architecture in the disputed territories appear to have reduced the potential for inadvertent clashes between IA and Peshmerga forces. [31]

In many disputed areas adjacent to the KRG—Ninewa, Tamim, and to a lesser extent, Diyala—tensions remained high between the Peshmerga and the ISF. Many of these areas are ethnically mixed and resource-rich, and both the KRG and GoI are attempting to assert security primacy in the absence of a clear political arrangement. Currently, it appears unlikely the IA or Peshmerga will intentionally instigate a military confrontation, preferring to negotiate acceptable results. However, as U.S. forces depart and the profile of ISF units, such as the 12th IA division in Tamim, rises, opportunities for miscalculation or provocation may rise. Arab-Kurd tensions are multifaceted and will remain accentuated by intractable positions surrounding Kurdish autonomy, hydrocarbons, DIBs, and Arab efforts to curb Kurdish influence outside of the established Kurdish region. [32]

**North Iraq/Central Iraq**

Violence in northern and central Iraq continues to be a challenge, particularly in Ninewa, where AQI remains focused on strengthening its urban foothold and is actively targeting Iraqi and U.S. forces. Consistent with past tactics, techniques, and procedures, AQI continues to employ VBIEDs

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[28] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 30-31.
[29] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32-33.
[30] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32-33.
[31] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32-33.
[32] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32-33.

and suicide attacks to incite political and security-force tensions, as seen with attacks against ethnic minority civilians in the outlying areas of Ninewa Province. [33]

Despite being heavily degraded by U.S. and ISF targeting in the past year, AQI remains capable of conducting HPAs, albeit not as frequently. AQI financial difficulties in Ninewa, caused mostly by the degradation of corporate extortion, have led to the targeting of wealthy civilians and small businesses as alternate sources of extortion income. Along with kidnappings for ransom, these decentralized finance methods may give an impression of degraded security to the populace. Both Sunni insurgents and AQI continue their campaign to intimidate the ISF, local government leadership, and civilians throughout the region with the goal of election disruption in the upcoming months. All Sunni armed groups have propaganda campaigns designed to give the impression of strength to their members and future recruits. [34]

The lack of an agreed mechanism for sharing authority and resources in northern Iraq among Kurds, Arabs, and other groups, including Turkomen, Christians, and Yezidis, continues to exacerbate tensions. AQI and other Sunni insurgent groups seek to exploit this tension. The presence of Peshmerga and Kurdish security forces outside the KRG boundaries further exacerbates tensions. U.S. force presence in the disputed areas continues to play a key moderating role between Peshmerga and GoI forces. MNF-I staff met in Baghdad on August 16, 2009, with GoI and KRG leadership to lay preliminary groundwork for an interim security architecture along the fault line in the disputed areas. [35]

The GoI Ministers of Defense and Interior, and the KRG Minister of Interior and Minister of Peshmerga Affairs took part in these preliminary discussions. The group agreed on the primacy of protecting the Iraqi people. A subcommittee was established with representatives from the GoI, the KRG and U.S. forces to provide a recommendation on the security architecture inside the disputed areas, including intelligence sharing, coordination measures, command and control, and other appropriate security measures. In November 2009, PM Maliki and KRG President Barzani gave their final approval for a joint security architecture. The Minister of Defense and the Minister of Peshmerga Affairs will issue orders to establish combined coordination centers and joint checkpoints in place prior to national elections. U.S. forces will advise and supervise, complying with all measures of the SA. [36]

This initiative will not affect the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq. Attacks in Ninewa have increased slightly since the last reporting period but still remain below pre-November 2008 levels—a good indicator that AQI remains under pressure in a key historical stronghold. Sunni insurgents throughout north and central Iraq remain less active due to Sunni involvement in provincial politics and positive effects from local SoI programs, though the groups will likely continue to stage periodic HPAs, particularly against GoI targets. [37]

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[33] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 31-32.
[34] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 31-32.
[35] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 31-32.
[36] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 31-32.
[37] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 31-32.

**Eastern Iraq: Diyala**

ISF continue to focus on targeting AQI and Sunni insurgents in Diyala. GoI-led operations in Diyala continue to pressure AQI, forcing them into the sparsely populated areas within the Hamrin Mountains, where they still maintain freedom of movement and conduct sporadic attacks in populated regions along perceived ethno-sectarian fault lines. [38]

AQI and Sunni insurgents continue to exploit their perception of the province's ethno-sectarian tensions, an uneducated populace, and rural areas lacking basic necessities for development and agriculture. Although ISF continue to make progress toward the GoI objective of improving security in the province by eliminating insurgent support and setting the conditions for economic recovery and the return of displaced citizens, the perception of disproportionate targeting of Sunnis has strained sectarian relations, allowing Shi'a extremist sand criminal elements much greater freedom of movement. [39]

GoI-led operations in late July through October 2008 intended to defeat militias and extremists and facilitate the return of displaced persons also had the effect of increasing ethnic and sectarian tensions in Diyala. Sunni leaders in the province perceived these operations as an attempt to limit their political development before provincial elections and still complain about intimidation from GoI Sunni politicians in Diyala. [40]

Fortunately, Sunnis in general remain engaged with the GoI and appear to have claimed a representative voice on the Diyala Provincial Council following elections. In a clear sign of progress with Kurdish interlocutors in the area, Operation Glad Tidings of Benevolence II (conducted from May through July 2009) included extensive coordination between IA and Peshmerga forces and featured joint patrols. This level of cooperation, facilitated by U.S. forces, serves as an example of success throughout the disputed territories. [41]

**Southern Iraq**

Reporting from the southern provinces remains positive, and the population supports the GoI's security initiatives, preferring relative normalcy to lawlessness and violence. Shi'a militant groups remain the primary threat to southern Iraq. KH has experienced difficulties in maintaining its networks and conducting operations in southern Iraq, while the tentatively reconciling AAH must keep members from leaving for the Mumahiddun or PDB. The ISF control and positive presence in the Shi'a South help ensure violence remains under control. Despite the improving security environment, Shi'a militant groups seek to rebuild their damaged networks and demonstrate their capabilities through low level residual violence, which will continue to change based on the AAH reconciliation process and the reposturing of U.S. forces. [42]

Improved rocket-assisted munitions (IRAM) attacks on U.S. bases in June and September 2009 demonstrate the Shi'a militants' capabilities and willingness to attack U.S. forces. The Al Basrah

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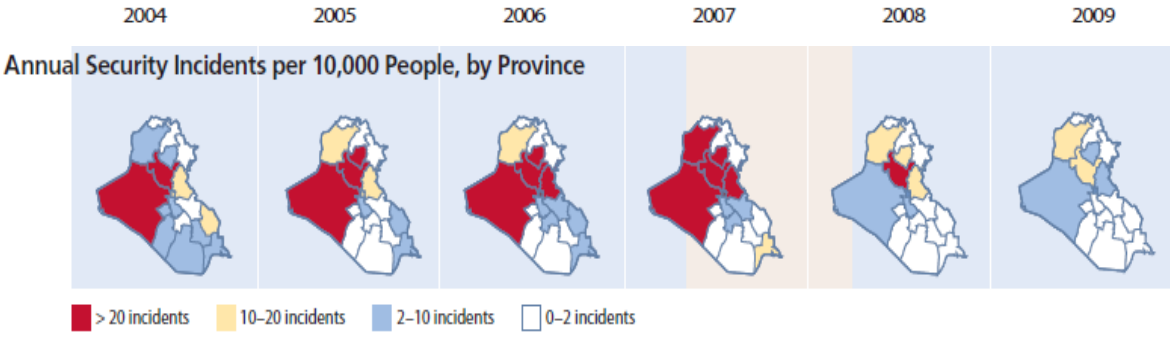
[38] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32.
[39] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32.
[40] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32.
[41] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32.
[42] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32.

(ABOT) and Khor Al Amaya (KAAOT) Oil Terminal offshore oil platforms and their associated pipelines from the southern oil fields are the economic center of gravity for the GoI. The primary threat to the oil infrastructure is the Iranian Republican Guard Corps Navy (IRGCN) operating from Shahid Owlad. Iraqi, UK Royal, and U.S. Navy operations in Iraq territorial waters and on the platforms deter aggression by the IRGCN near the platforms and in the disputed waters adjacent to the Shatt Al Arab. [43]

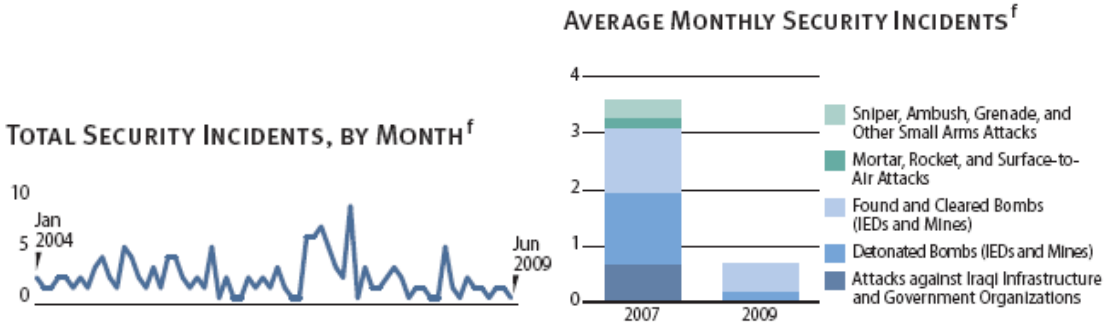
[43] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009, p. 32.

**Figure II.12: Trends in Violence by Province: 2004-2009**

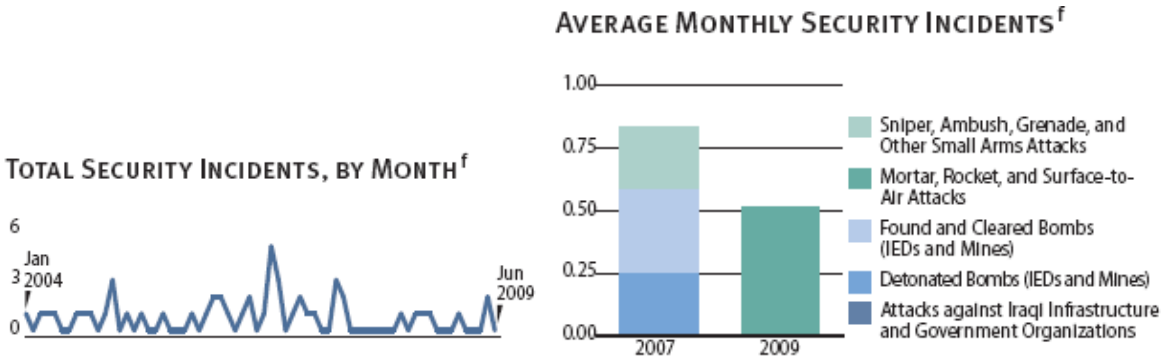
## Overall Trends: 2004-2009




**ERBIL**




**2. DAHUK**



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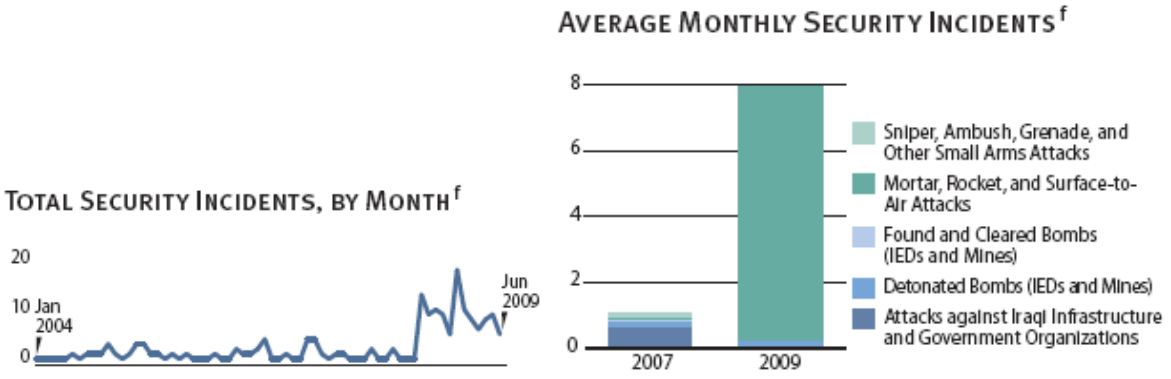


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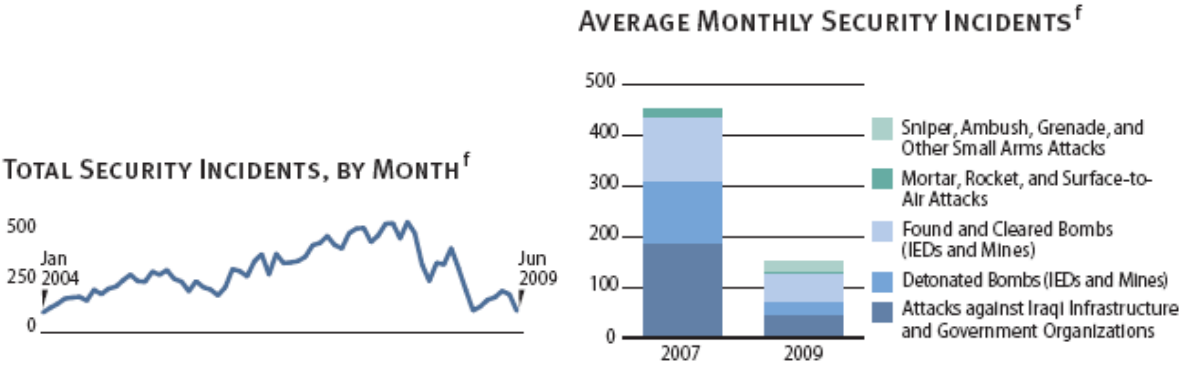


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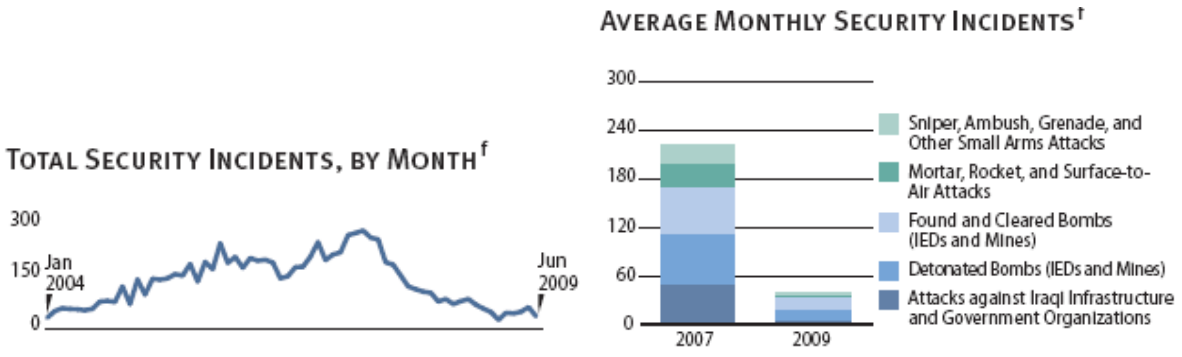

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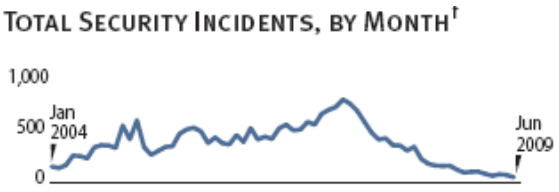


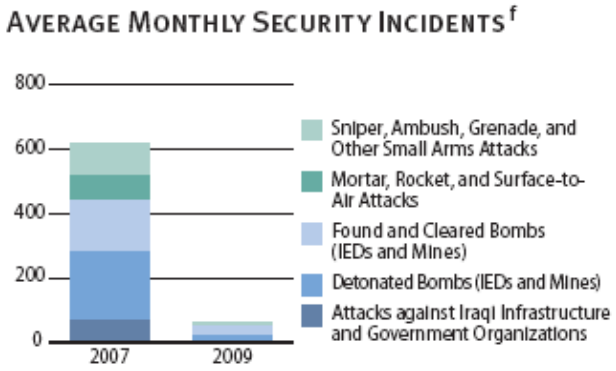


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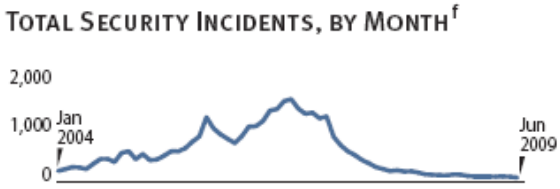


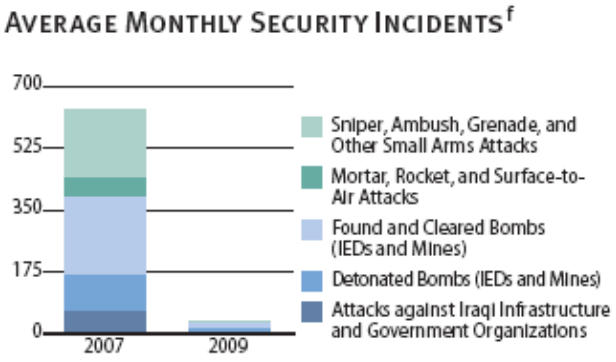


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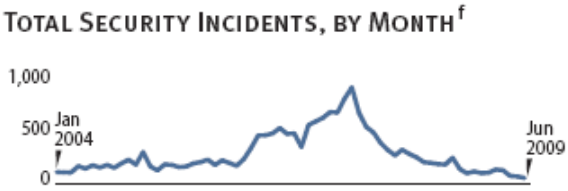
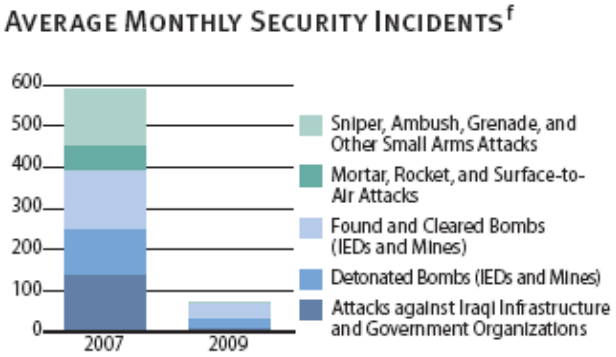
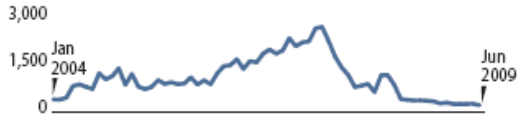


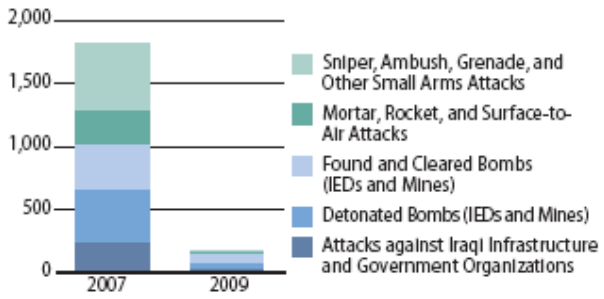



**9. BAGHDAD**

TOTAL SECURITY INCIDENTS, BY MONTH[f]

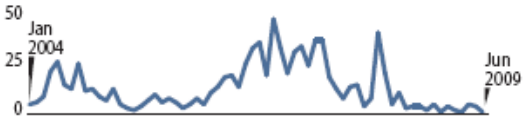



AVERAGE MONTHLY SECURITY INCIDENTS[f]

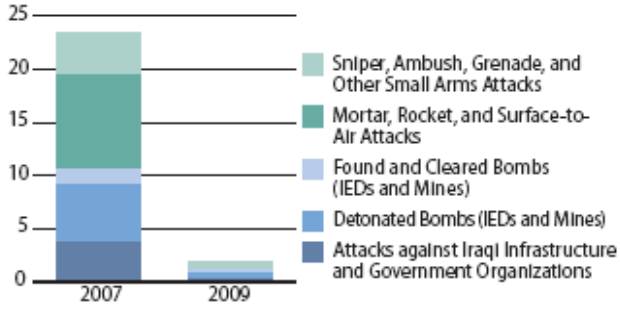



**10. WASSIT**

TOTAL SECURITY INCIDENTS, BY MONTH[f]

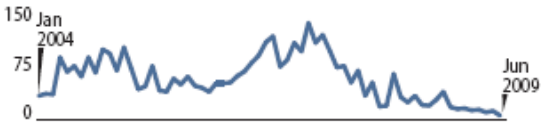



AVERAGE MONTHLY SECURITY INCIDENTS[f]

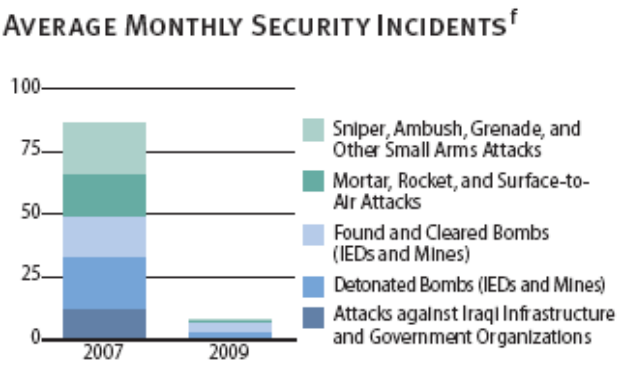



**11. BABYLON**

TOTAL SECURITY INCIDENTS, BY MONTH[f]




AVERAGE MONTHLY SECURITY INCIDENTS[f]



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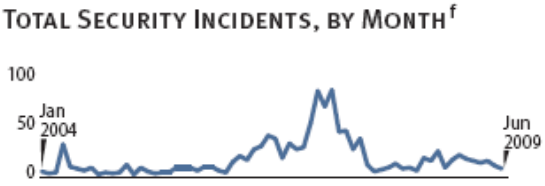


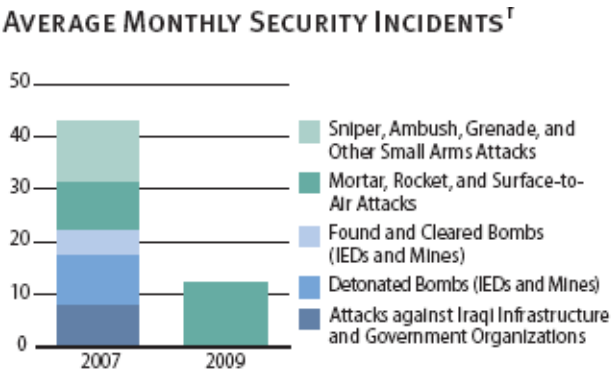


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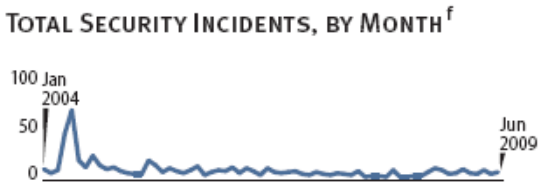


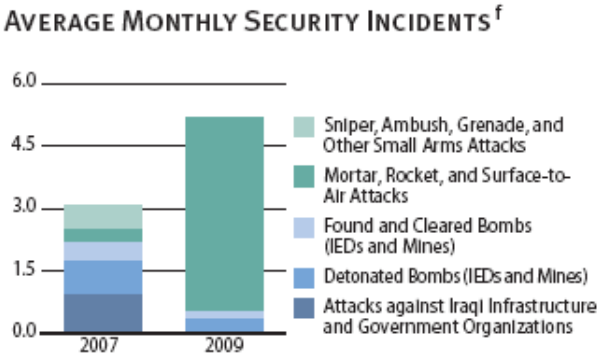


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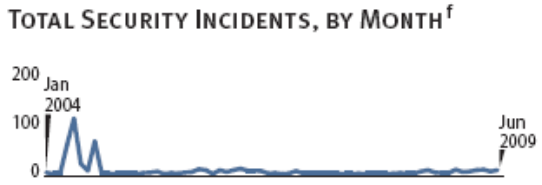


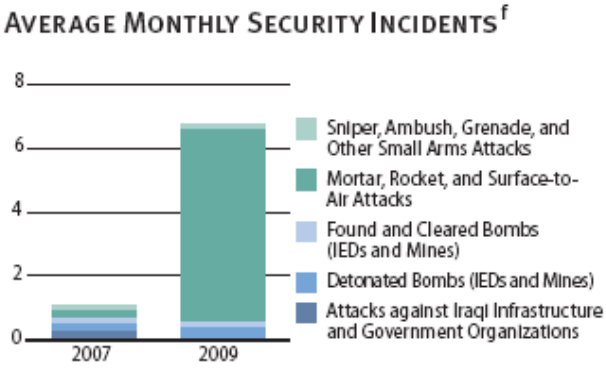

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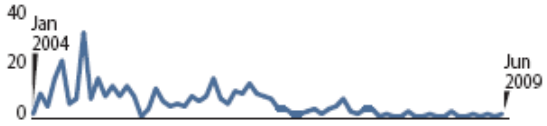


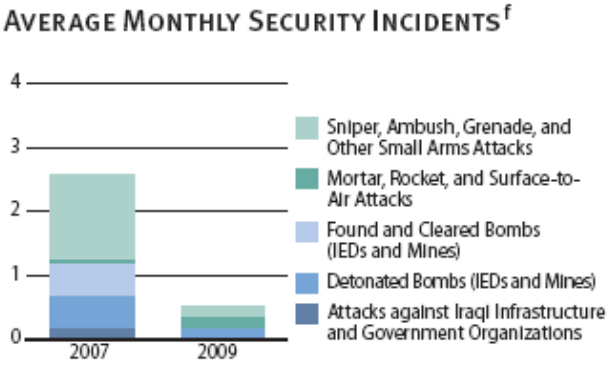


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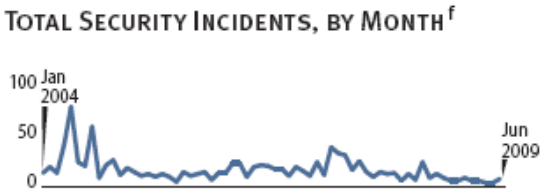


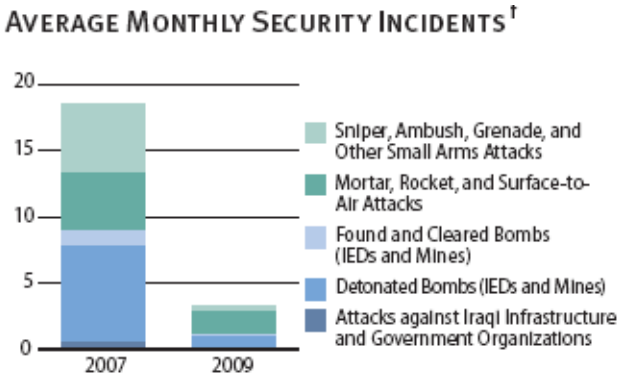


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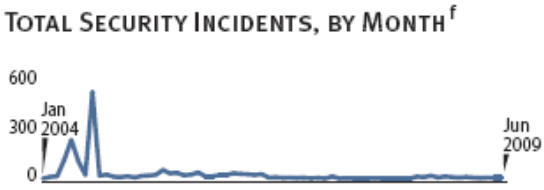


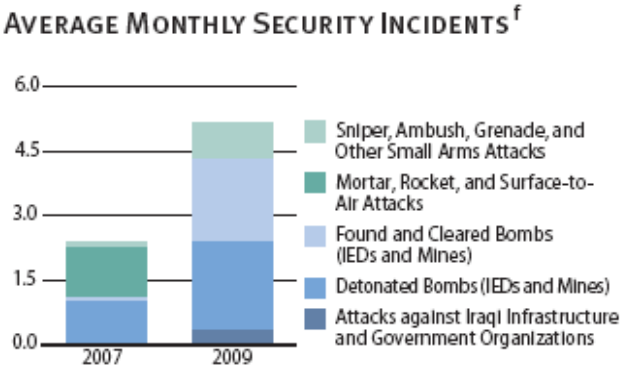

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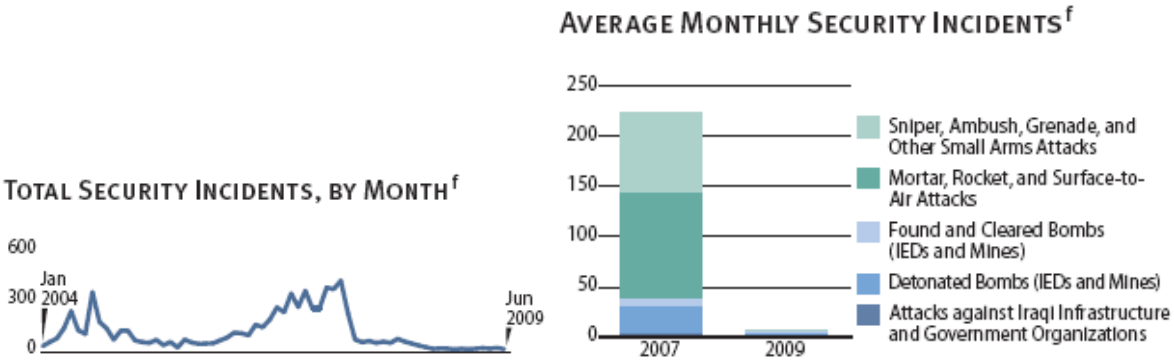


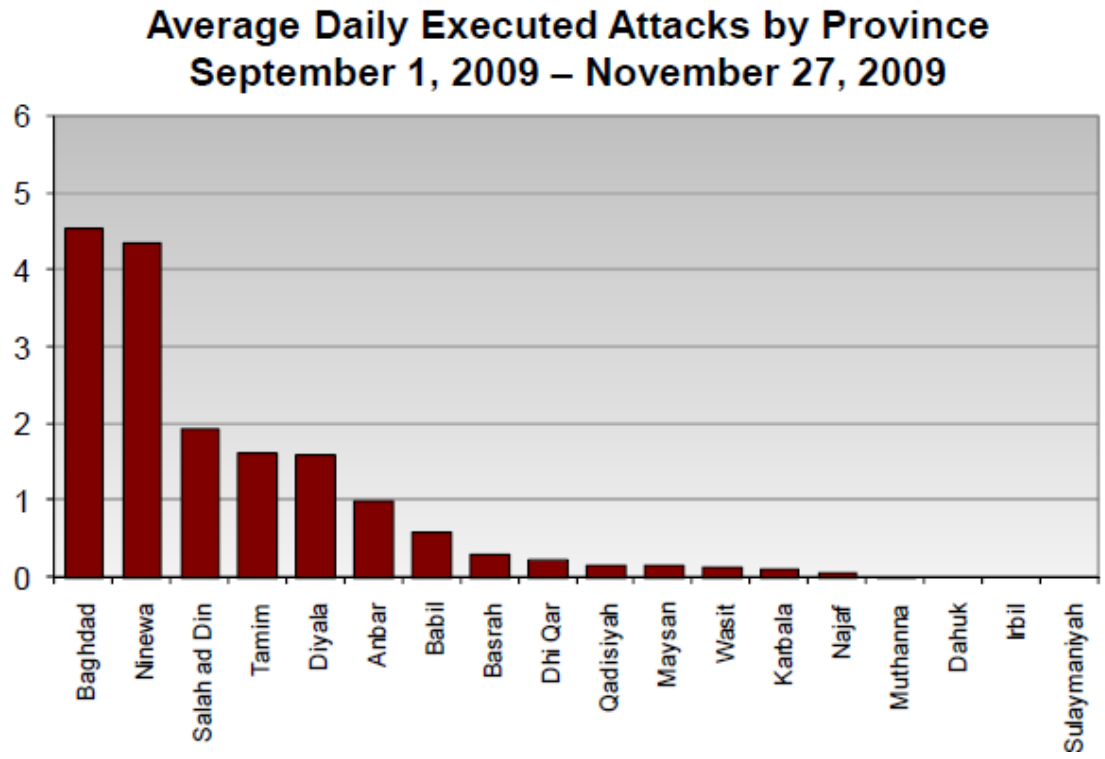

**Sources:** Adapted from SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (30 July 2009); SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (30 October 2009), p. 90; and SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (30 January 2010), p. 42

**Figure II.Significant13: Security Incidents by Region –Province and Region: Developments in 2009 –Part One: Patterns October 21, 2009 US Forces Depart Cities on to January 30, 2010**

| | | Sect | | | | Security Incidents | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Province | Population | Shia | Sunni | Kurd | Other | Total this Quarter | Change over Quarter | Change over Year |
| Dahuk | 895,000 | 0% | 0% | 90% | 10% | 2 | 100% | 100% |
| Erbil | 1,409,000 | 0% | 0% | 95% | 5% | 2 | 0% | 0% |
| Sulaymaniyah | 1,574,000 | 0% | 0% | 95% | 5% | 22 | -8% | NA |
| Ninewa | 2,820,000 | 5% | 55% | 15% | 25% | 454 | 9% | -56% |
| Tameem | 1,129,000 | 15% | 20% | 40% | 25% | 129 | 32% | -48% |
| Salah Al-Din | 1,158,000 | 3% | 96% | 1% | 0% | 150 | -26% | -79% |
| Anbar | 1,427,000 | 5% | 95% | 0% | 0% | 92 | -20% | -67% |
| Diyala | 1,323,000 | 25% | 55% | 10% | 10% | 122 | -60% | -77% |
| Baghdad | 6,995,000 | 70% | 29% | 0% | 1% | 486 | -12% | -78% |
| Wassit | 1,056,000 | 90% | 5% | 5% | 0% | 7 | 75% | -79% |
| Babylon | 1,574,000 | 85% | 15% | 0% | 0% | 15 | -52% | -81% |
| Qadissiya | 1,033,000 | 98% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 29 | -31% | 71% |
| Kerbala | 902,000 | 85% | 15% | 0% | 0% | 15 | 0% | 1,400% |
| Najaf | 1,113,000 | 99% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 22 | 29% | 450% |
| Muthanna | 650,000 | 98% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 2 | 100% | 0% |
| Thi-Qar | 1,687,000 | 100% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 7 | -42% | -59% |
| Missan | 944,000 | 95% | 1% | 0% | 4% | 13 | -24% | 8% |
| Basrah | 2,408,000 | 85% | 15% | 0% | 0% | 18 | 13% | -83% |

**Source:** SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (30 January 102009)

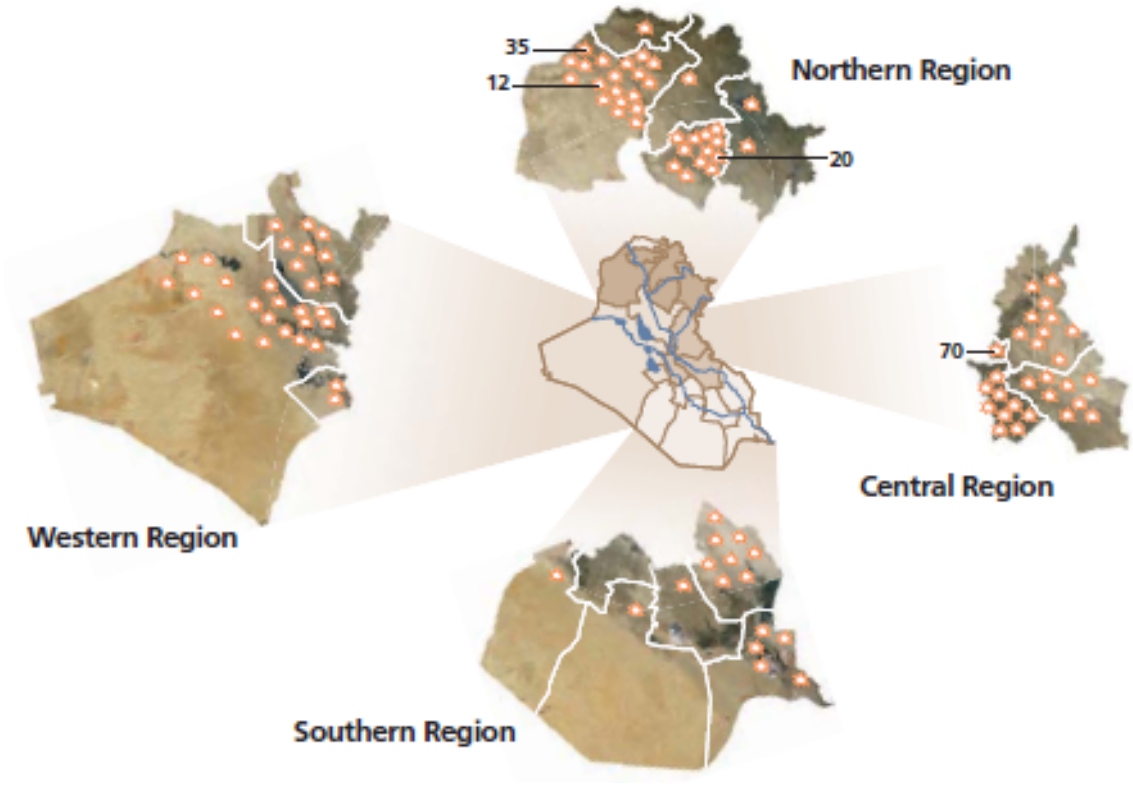
**Figure II.13: Security Incidents by Province and Region: Developments in 2009 – Part Two: Patterns By Provide from September 1 2009-November 27, 2009**




Data are Based on MNF-I J5 Assessments SIGACTS III Database (Coalition and Iraqi Reports), DoD News Releases and CIDNE as of November 30, 2009. Includes deaths within Iraq only. U.S. deaths under investigation are classified as battle deaths. As a result of the June 30, 2009 withdrawal from cities, U.S forces must now rely on host nation reporting as the primary data source. Current charts now show a combination of Coalition and host nation reported data. The combination of these reports causes baseline numbers to increase, making it difficult to directly compare these charts with those presented in previous publications

Source: Adapted from material provided by SIGACTS (CF & HN reports) as of 07-Nov-09, and Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) December 2009 p. 30.

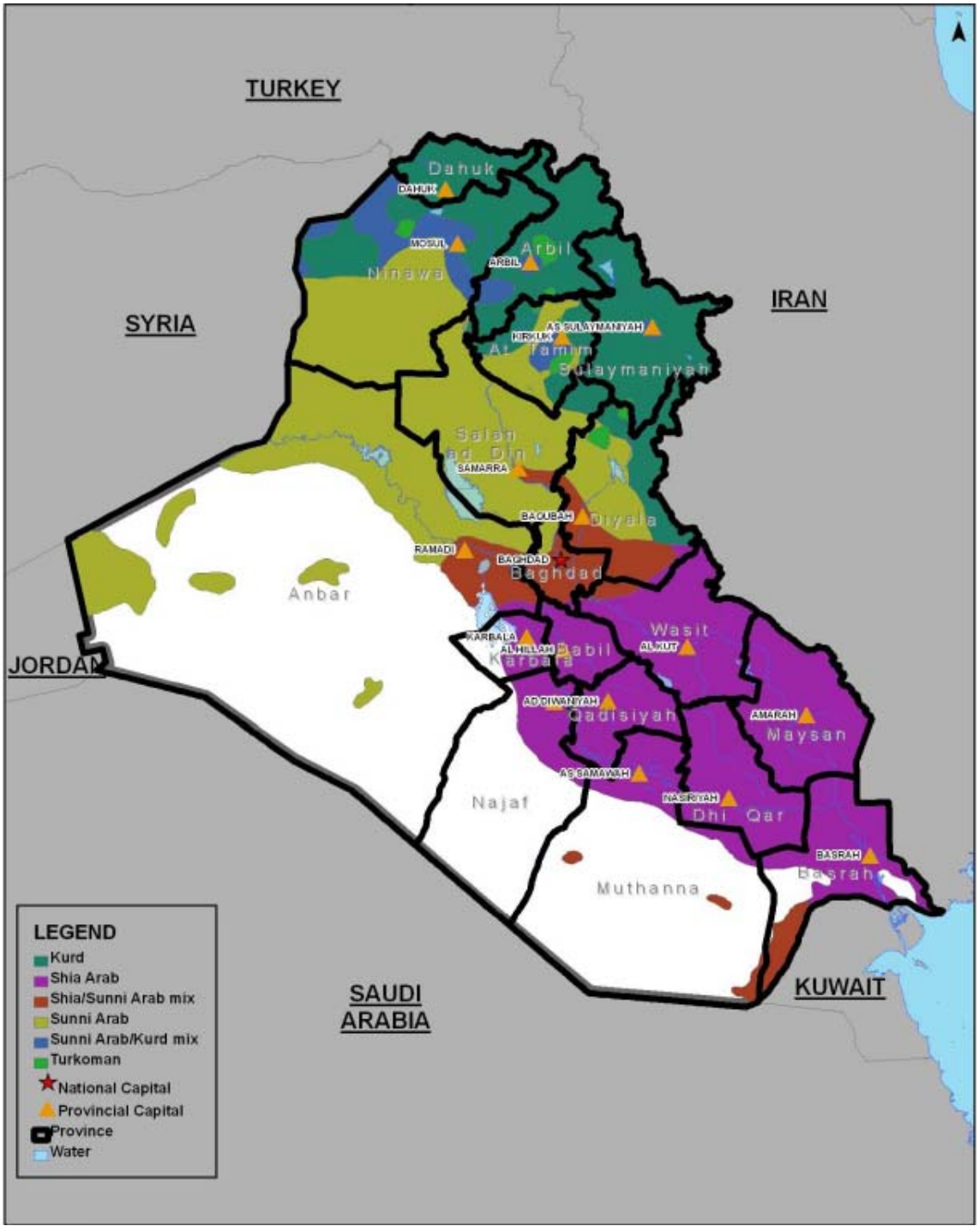
**Figure II.13: Security Incidents by Province and Region: Developments in 2009 – Part Three: Significant Security Incidents Resulting in Two or More Deaths by Region: October 21, 2009-January 13, 2010**




**Based on** SIGIR analysis of open sources as well as official English and Arabic documents, studies, maps, and satellite imagery.

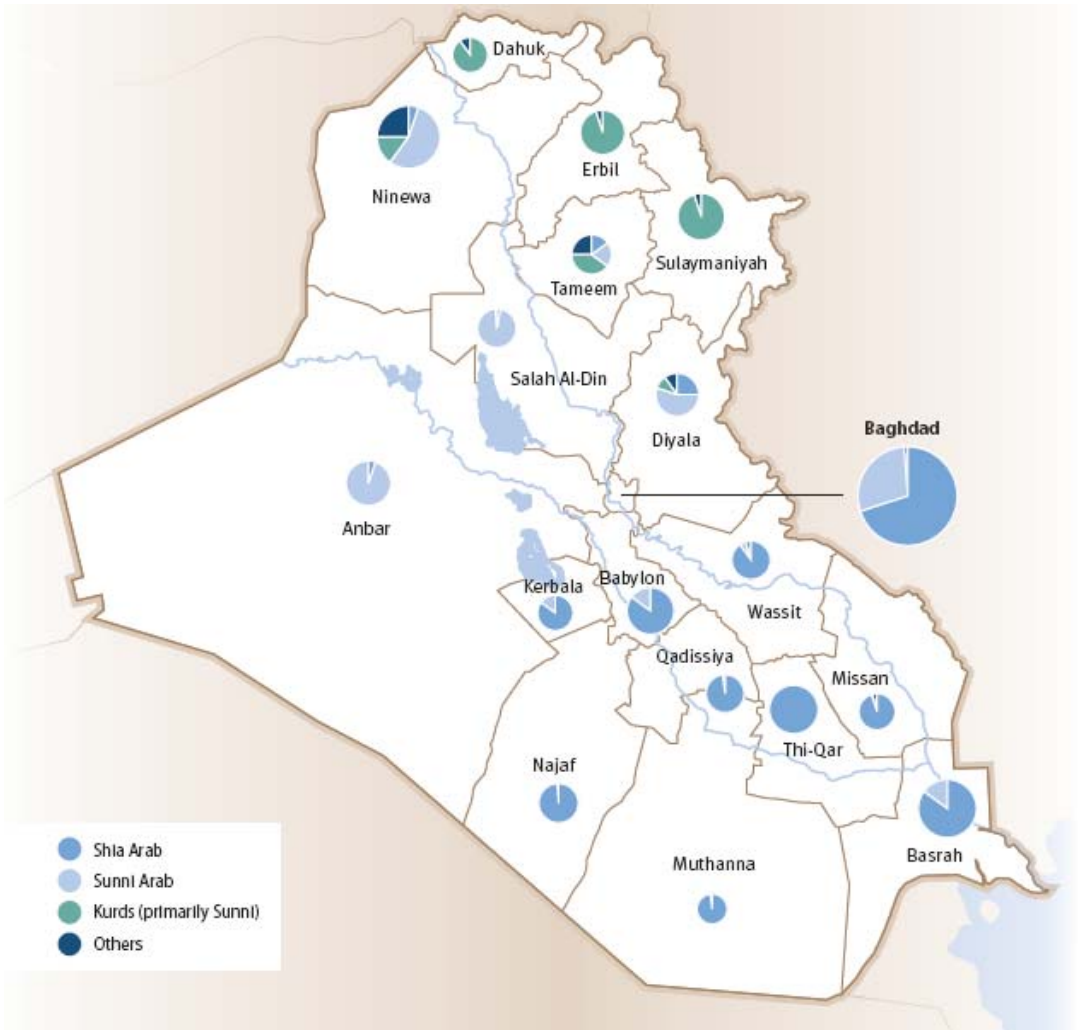
Source: SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (December 31, 2009), p. 43.

**Figure II.13 –Part I: Ethnic Makeup of Iraqi Provinces**




**Source:** USCENTCOM, September 28, 2009)

**Figure II.13 –Part II: Ethnic Makeup of Iraqi Provinces**




**Source:** SIGIR, *Quarterly Report and Semi-Annual Report to the United States Congress* (30 July 2009)

### *Iraqi Perceptions of Security*

Iraqi perceptions of security are improving, but mixed – influenced in part by the dramatic series of high profile attacks and bombings that took place during the second half of 2009. The results of a US government poll taken in November 2009 poll are shown in **Figure II. 14.** The results reaffirm the Iraqi belief that the security situation is better locally than it is nationally.[44] The survey reported that 70% of Iraqis described the security situation in their neighborhoods as calm, although this figure was significantly lower than the 77% reported in a similar poll in January 2009. When asked the same question about their governorate (province) and Iraq as a whole, only 55% said the situation was calm in their governorate, and only 25% of Iraqis said the situation was calm nationwide. This figure reflected roughly the same results as in January 2009.[45]

The majority of Iraqis (90%) felt that the security situation had remained constant or improved in their neighborhood over the last six months. This figure was nearly unchanged when compared to January 2009. When asked about the security situation in the country as a whole, 75% felt it had either stayed the same or gotten better. These results were significantly lower, however, than the results of a survey taken in August (87%).

This may indicate that the bloody high profile car bombs and suicide attacks that had taken place later in in 2009 – particularly the attacks on August 19, October 25, and December 8, 2009 -- were having an effect on the population. The November, 2009 survey also indicated that only 40% of Iraqis felt safe traveling outside of their neighborhoods, marginally lower than in the previous report. Although many Iraqis did feel safe traveling, 65% of these Iraqis reported that their movements were sometimes restricted -- again marginally lower than in the previous survey. [46]

#### Iraqi Confidence in the Government, Iraqi Security Forces, and "Victory"

Iraqis had mixed confidence in the Government of Iraq (GoI). When asked if they believed the GoI was effective at maintaining security, 46% of Iraqis said the GoI was effective; this represented no change from the January 2009 data. When asked to rate the level of peace and stability of the country, 56% of Iraqis said Iraq was stable, a five-percentage-point increase since January 2009. [47]

When asked about their perceptions of whether the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) could now perform the security mission, over 70% of Iraqis said they felt secure when they saw the Iraqi Army (IA) in their neighborhoods, and 68% said they felt secure when they saw the Iraqi

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[44] These results are excerpted from Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252) August 2009, pp. 31-32.

[45] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252), October 30, 2009, pp. 31-32.

[46] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252), December, 2009, pp. 32-34

[47] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252), October 30, 2009, pp. 31-32.

Police (IP) in their neighborhoods. This showed the same in trust in the IA as in January 2009, and a four percentage-point increase in trust of the IP. Nationwide, Iraqis had a 5% higher regard for the IA than the IP. [48]

The November poll indicated that over 60% of Iraqis believed that the IA was winning the battle against terrorists, versus 64% in the previous survey. Some 40% of Iraqis believed the IP was winning the battle against crime, versus 57% in the previous survey. Some 64% of Iraqis believed that the IA wis defeating terrorists.. This was a significant drop in perceptions of the effectiveness of both the IA and IP since April 2009. [49]

## Iraqi Views of the Role of All Security Forces, Militias, and US Forces

The Iraqi people did show far more confidence in the IA and IP than in other groups. The Department of Defense reported in that,[50]

> When asked who they would go to first to report a serious crime, almost 50% of Iraqis said the IP, while more than 25%% stated the IA... Over 45% of Iraqis feel that the IP is most responsible for providing security in their local area while approximately 35% said the IA. Relatively few Iraqis said the SoI (<5%), people from their tribe (<5%), neighbors (<5%), militias, religious leaders, or U.S. forces were most responsible for providing security. As of November 2009, Iraqis had the highest confidence in the IA for protecting them andtheir families from threats (almost 85%). When asked about other groups, approximately 80% of Iraqis had confidence in the IP, over 65% had confidence in their provincial government, over 60% had confidence in their local government, and more than 70% had confidence in the national government.27 Confidence in U.S. forces was much lower at about 25%.

These trends did not show a significant drop in the second half of 2009. When asked in August 2009 if they had confidence in specific groups to protect them and their families from threats, Iraqis had the highest confidence in the IA (87%). When asked about other groups, 83% of Iraqis had confidence in the IP, 72% had confidence in their provincial government, 64% had confidence in their local government, and 74% had confidence in the national government. Confidence in the Multi-National Forces was much lower at 26%. In a continuation of trends from November 2007, Iraqis placed their highest trust and confidence in the IA, the IP, and the GoI to protect them and to provide security.

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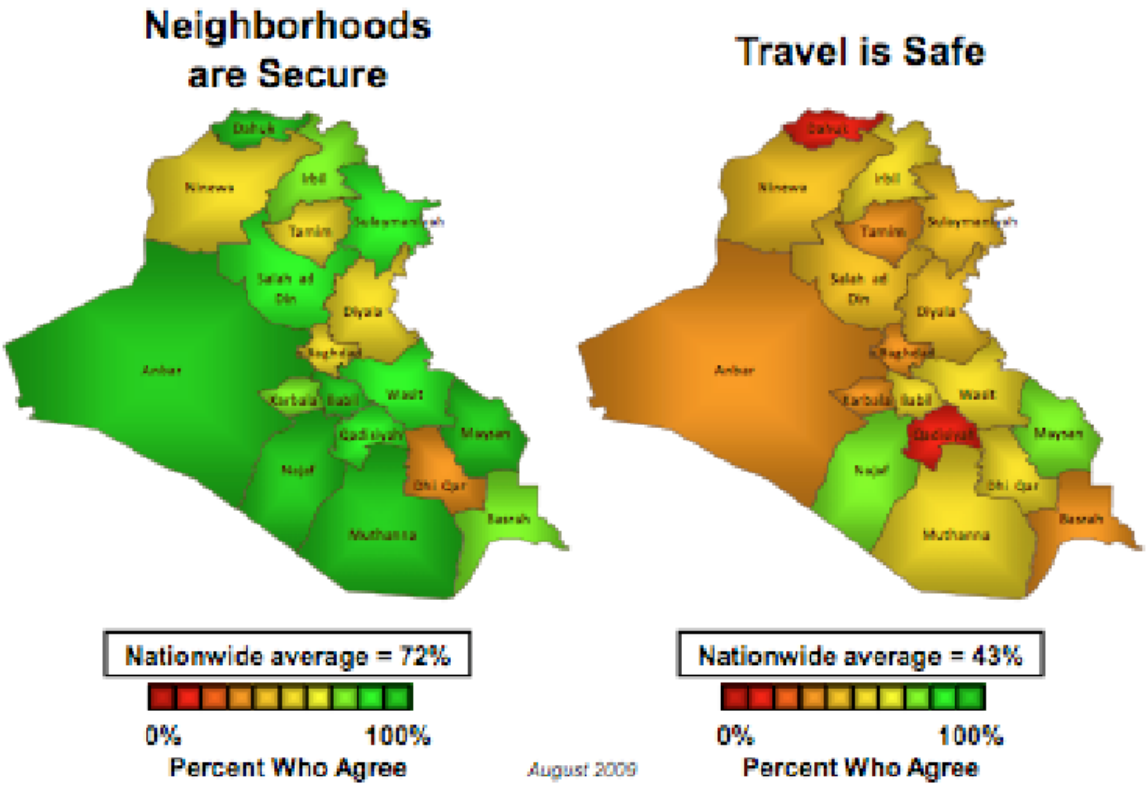
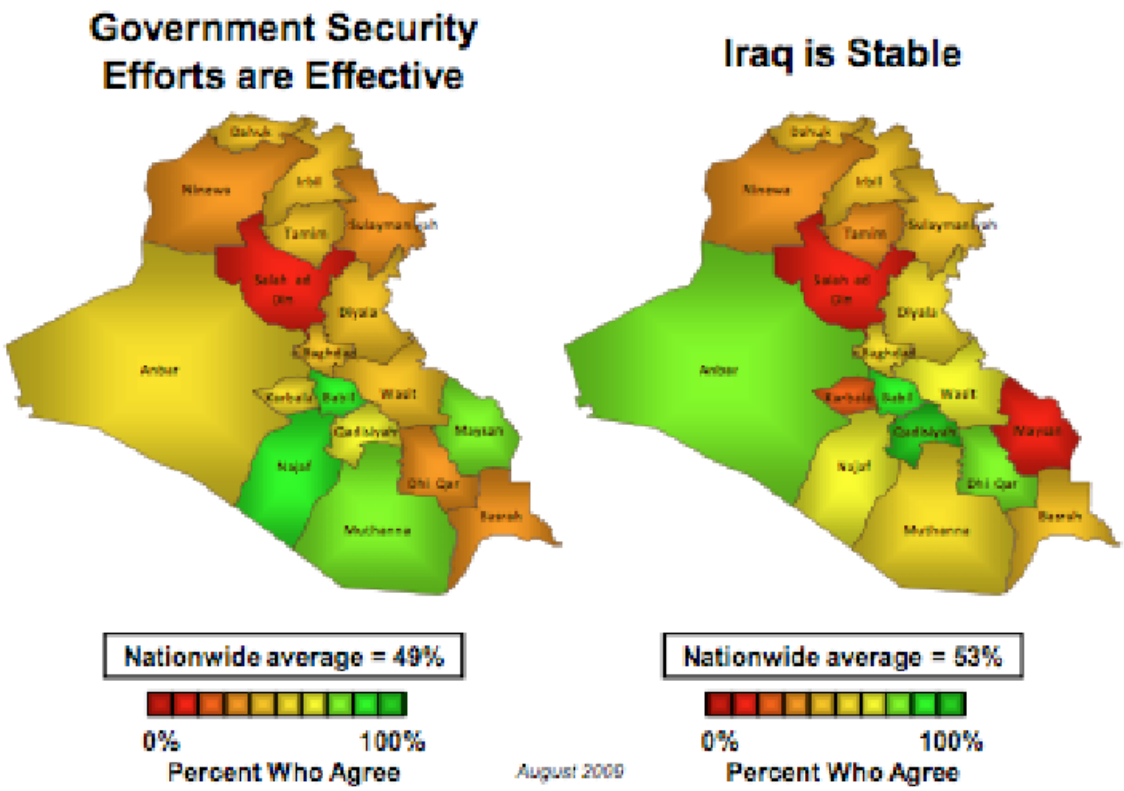
[48] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252), October 30, 2009, pp. 31-32.

[49] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252), October 30, 2009, pp. 31-32.

[50] Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008 (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252), December, 2009, pp. 34-35

**Figure II.14: Iraqi Perceptions of Security: August 2009**






Source: USCENTCOM, September 23, 2009 and US Department of Defense, *Measuring Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Supplemental Appropriations Act 2008, (Section 9204, Public Law 110-252), December 2009, pp. 33 and 34.

### *The Role the US Can Play*

There are sharp limits to what the US can do to decrease levels of violence in Iraq or to address the underlying challenges of political accommodation and governance that caused sectarian conflict to begin with. Iraqi politics and nationalism increasingly restrict the role the US can play in dealing with problems in Iraqi governance at every level, including the rule of law. **Figure II.15** shows that the Iraqi central government has made significant progress, but also that many ministries still have serious problems and limited effectiveness which hinder their ability to guard against large-scale attacks. The same is true in many provinces, key urban areas, and at the local level. These problems in governance interact with Iraq's unstable politics and present a major challenge to Iraq's future security and stability.

It is also far from clear that "democracy" and holding elections is a substitute for effective negotiation and governance. The provincial elections early in 2009 led to broad upheavals in Shi'ite Arab, Sunni Arab and mixed ethnic areas like Ninewa. In many cases the incumbent leaders were voted out, and there are still political struggles for power. The campaign for the Iraqi national elections in March, 2010 also led to destabilizing political struggles, competition, and coalition building at every level.

The United States cannot rely on politics and pluralism if it is to help Iraq achieve security and stability, or focus on "responsible withdrawal" by 2011. It must continue to make every effort to help Iraqis achieve political accommodation – a process that is likely to require active – although discrete -- US diplomacy through at least 2015. The United States should continue to promote political reconciliation, acting as a mediator for conflicts whenever necessary and pressuring Iraqi politicians to put competition aside in order to govern effectively. There is only so much that the United States can do to further this process; it is largely in Iraqi hands now. Nevertheless, if leaders continue to undermine each other for political gain then it will be far more difficult for them prevent future large-scale attacks.

In addition, the United States must shape an advisory and aid effort that will continue to help train Iraqi security forces and police over at least the next half decade, as well as help fund the Iraqi government's efforts to increase the capability of the armed forces and police, and the quality of the rule of law. This sometimes will mean action at a highly detailed level. For example, the ISF has learned the hard way that Iraqi forces need to be well equipped to detect explosive materials and to stop bombers from bursting through security checkpoints and blast walls. Security forces are currently using questionable methods for detecting bombs including the use of the "magic wand," a British-manufactured detection devise used widely in Iraq that has failed several product tests – Britain has since banned exportation of the device.[51] The United States must provide continuing help to the ISF in developing better methods for deterring attacks and upgrade their technology to better detect weapons.

As the following chapters also suggest, the US can reduce the level of violence in Iraq by maintaining aid and advisory programs to promote governance, key sectors of the economy, and a cohesive rule of law. It can do this by showing the strategic patience necessary to sustain its advisory and aid programs to the Iraqi security forces, and by implementing the SFA and SA in ways that build both Iraqi unity and trust in the US. Over time, these roles

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[51] "'Magic Wand' Probed in Iraq" *United Press International* (25 Jan 2010)

may do as much, or more, to achieve the true meaning of victory as the US occupation and counter-insurgency operations.

**Figure II.15: The Trends in the Quality of Iraqi Central Governance: 2006-2008**

| Ministry | Overall Trend | Output Sustainment | Long-term Plans and Processes | Financial Systems | Anti-Corruption | Civil Service | Use of Technology | Information Management System | Customer Outreach | Effective Use of Resources | Leader-ship | Capacity Develop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agriculture | ↑ | ↔ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | ↔ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | 2.50 | 2.00 |
| Education | ↔ | ↔ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↓ | ↔ | ↔ | ↑ | ↔ | 1.70 | 2.00 |
| Electricity | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | 2.33 | 2.67 |
| Environment | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | ↑ | ↔ | No Data | ↓ | 2.00 | 1.50 |
| Finance | ↔ | ↔ | ↔ | ↔ | ↑ | ↓ | ↔ | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ | 2.00 | 1.83 |
| Health | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ | ↔ | ↔ | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | 2.75 | 2.17 |
| Justice | ↓ | ↔ | ↓ | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ | ↔ | ↔ | ↔ | ↓ | 2.25 | 2.67 |
| Municipalities & Public Works | ↑ | ↔ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Oil | ↔ | ↔ | ↔ | ↑ | ↔ | ↔ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Planning | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | 3.75 | 3.00 |
| Trade | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | ↔ | ↑ | ↔ | 2.50 | 2.00 |
| Water Resources | ↔ | ↔ | ↔ | ↔ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | ↑ | ↔ | 2.75 | 1.83 |
| Displacement & Migration | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | ↔ | No Data | No Data | ↑ | 2.75 | 1.83 |
| Transportation | N/A | Review of Ministry of Transportation conducted only in 2008 | | | | | | | | | 2.00 | 1.00 |