



# OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS



APRIL 1, 2022–JUNE 30, 2022

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

A 2013 amendment to the Inspector General Act established the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) framework for oversight of overseas contingency operations and requires that the Lead IG submit quarterly reports to Congress on each active operation. The Chair of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency designated the Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General (IG) as the Lead IG for Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). The Department of State (DoS) IG is the Associate IG for the operation. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) IG participates in oversight of the operation.

The Offices of Inspector General (OIG) of the DoD, the DoS, and USAID are referred to in this report as the Lead IG agencies. Other partner agencies also contribute to oversight of OIR.

The Lead IG agencies collectively carry out the Lead IG statutory responsibilities to:

- Develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight of the operation.
- Ensure independent and effective oversight of programs and operations of the U.S. Government in support of the operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, investigations, or evaluations.
- Report quarterly to Congress and the public on the operation and on activities of the Lead IG agencies.

### METHODOLOGY

To produce this quarterly report, the Lead IG agencies submit requests for information to the DoD, the DoS, USAID, and other Federal agencies about OIR and related programs. The Lead IG agencies also gather data and information from other sources, including official documents, congressional testimony, policy research organizations, press conferences, think tanks, and media reports.

The sources of information contained in this report are listed in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except in the case of audits, inspections, investigations, or evaluations referenced in this report, the Lead IG agencies have not audited the data and information cited in this report. The DoD, the DoS, and USAID review the reports for accuracy prior to publication. For further details on the methodology for this report, see Appendix B.

### CLASSIFIED APPENDIX

A classified appendix to this report provides additional information on Operation Inherent Resolve. This quarter's classified appendix will be delivered to relevant agencies and congressional committees.

## FOREWORD

We are pleased to submit this Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) to the U.S. Congress. This report discharges our individual and collective agency oversight responsibilities pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978.

The United States launched OIR in 2014 to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), while setting the conditions for follow-on activities to increase regional stability. The U.S. Government strategy to defeat ISIS includes military operations, as well as support for local security forces, diplomacy, governance, humanitarian assistance, and stabilization programs.

This quarterly report describes the activities of the U.S. Government in support of OIR, as well as the work of the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development to promote the U.S. Government's policy goals in Iraq and Syria, during the period April 1 through June 30, 2022.

This report also discusses the planned, ongoing, and completed oversight work conducted by the Lead IG agencies and our partner oversight agencies during the quarter. During the quarter, the Lead IG agencies and our oversight partners issued eight audit, evaluation, and inspection reports related to OIR.

Working in close collaboration, we remain committed to providing comprehensive oversight and timely reporting on Operation Inherent Resolve.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sean W. O'Donnell".

**Sean W. O'Donnell**  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Diana Shaw".

**Diana Shaw**  
Senior Official Performing the Duties  
of the Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nicole L. Angarella".

**Nicole L. Angarella**  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Agency for International  
Development



### **On the Cover**

(Top row): A special missions aviator shoots a GAU-18 weapons system on an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter (U.S. Air Force photo); a Dayr az Zawr farmer and beneficiary of a USAID stabilization project grows wheat (USAID photo); coils of razor wire sit at Al-Asad Air Base (U.S. Army photo); U.S. Soldiers operate a Bradley M2A3 Fighting Vehicle during a live fire exercise in Syria (U.S. Army photo). (Bottom row): A Syrian WFP beneficiary heads back home after shopping with hybrid assistance that enables families to purchase food items (WFP photo).

## MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL



**Sean W. O'Donnell**

I am pleased to present this Lead IG quarterly report on U.S. Government activities related to Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) and progress during the quarter toward the U.S. Government's objectives in the region.

Through OIR, U.S. and Coalition forces seek the defeat of ISIS in designated areas of Iraq and Syria. While the frequency and lethality of ISIS attacks continued to decline in Iraq and Syria during the quarter, ISIS remained an ongoing threat to U.S. interests in the region. Of particular concern was ongoing ISIS violence in the al-Hol displaced persons camp in Syria. In June, Coalition forces captured a senior ISIS bomb maker and facilitator, and U.S. forces killed a top ISIS leader in Syria in July, after the end of the quarter. In May, foreign ministers of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS said that ISIS Iraq and Syria remained a priority; but they also expressed concern about the evolving ISIS threat in Africa and the "growing threat" of ISIS-Khorasan in Asia.

U.S. military activity related to OIR focuses on advising and enabling of partner forces as they build their capacity to fight ISIS independently. These partner forces made intermittent progress during the quarter. For example, the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) ground forces directed air-to-ground strikes on ISIS targets using Iraqi aircraft for the first time, but supply chain challenges due to the war in Ukraine and stalled government formation hindered progress in maintenance and sustainment. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) continued to harden detention facilities holding ISIS detainees, but fundamental security vulnerabilities remain, including poor physical conditions, and a guard force with limited capabilities.

Meanwhile, third party actors continued to undermine the OIR mission. Iran-aligned militias continued sporadic attacks on U.S. and Coalition facilities in Iraq. Turkish forces waged a new military offensive against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Iraq, while Turkey announced its intent to launch a new offensive into northern Syria. The SDF warned that a Turkish incursion would shift its focus away from the ISIS fight and jeopardize security at detention facilities and displacement camps housing ISIS family members. The Russian military carried out escalatory activity in Syria, where Russian aircraft struck an outpost near the At Tanf Garrison, which houses U.S. forces.

The Defeat-ISIS mission depends, in part, on addressing basic needs for food, water, and shelter; repatriating and reintegrating thousands of displaced Iraqis and Syrians; and strengthening economic opportunity and hope across the region. The war in Ukraine exacerbated dire economic and humanitarian conditions in Syria and Iraq by increasing food prices in both countries. The Department of State and USAID continued to support stabilization and humanitarian activities in the two countries.

I look forward to working with my Lead IG colleagues to provide continued oversight of OIR, as required by the IG Act.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean W. O'Donnell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Sean W. O'Donnell**  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense







U.S. Soldiers operate a Bradley M2A3 Fighting Vehicle during a live fire exercise in Syria. (U.S. Army photo)

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U.S. Soldiers launch a Javelin shoulder-fired anti-tank missile during a live fire exercise in Syria. (U.S. Army photo)







## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) mission is to advise, assist, and enable partner forces until they can independently defeat ISIS in designated areas of Iraq and Syria, in order to set conditions for long-term security cooperation frameworks.<sup>1</sup> The broader counter-ISIS campaign includes supporting the Iraqi government and Syrian partners with civilian-led stabilization activities.<sup>2</sup>

**ISIS continued to wage a low-level insurgency in Iraq and Syria.**<sup>3</sup> Although ISIS temporarily increased attacks during the Ramadan holiday, the overall frequency and severity of its attacks continued a downward trend.<sup>4</sup> U.S. and Coalition officials said that despite recent losses of senior leadership—such as the June 16 capture of an ISIS leader by Coalition forces—ISIS continued to pose an ongoing threat to U.S. interests in the region.<sup>5</sup> ISIS sharply increased attacks against individuals it believes were spying for the Coalition.<sup>6</sup> ISIS continued to view the populations in detention centers as a potential resource.<sup>7</sup> The group also continued its attempts to indoctrinate and recruit children in the al-Hol displaced persons camp in northeastern Syria.<sup>8</sup>

**The Iraqi Security Forces' (ISF) air-to-ground strike capability improved, but rising costs and supply chain challenges due to the war in Ukraine and stalled government formation hindered progress in maintenance and sustainment.** In May, Iraqi ground forces directed air-to-ground strikes on ISIS targets with ISF aircraft for the first time, a capability enabled by Coalition training that can reduce ISF reliance on Coalition support for target designation.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, rising maintenance costs and supply chain challenges due to the war in Ukraine degraded the ability of the ISF to maintain four Russian-designed aircraft types. The lack of a new Iraqi federal budget limited the Counter Terrorism Service's (CTS) ability to recruit soldiers and stalled the creation of a joint brigade between the ISF and the Kurdish Security Forces (KSF).<sup>10</sup>

**The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) relied on Coalition forces for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, and struggled with logistical challenges.**<sup>11</sup> The SDF said it captured 17 ISIS leaders in targeted raids in June, including one person it said was responsible for murders, transporting ISIS cell members and bombs, and smuggling ISIS-affiliated women and their children from the al-Hol displaced persons camp.<sup>12</sup> The SDF continued to harden and strengthen security at detention facilities holding ISIS detainees, using funds, equipment, and training from Coalition forces.<sup>13</sup> However, fundamental security vulnerabilities remain, including physical conditions and a poorly trained guard force susceptible to bribes.<sup>14</sup>

**Third parties in Iraq and Syria continued to undermine the OIR mission.** In Iraq, militias aligned with Iran resumed sporadic attacks on U.S. and Coalition facilities and interests.<sup>15</sup> Turkish forces launched a renewed military offensive against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), targeting militant hideouts in northern Iraq.<sup>16</sup> Turkish airstrikes in northern Iraq resulted in civilian deaths, including a child.<sup>17</sup> In Syria, Russian aircraft struck a partner forces post in the deconfliction zone around At Tanf Garrison that had been evacuated after Russia alerted U.S. forces in advance of the strike.<sup>18</sup> Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated his intent to launch another incursion into northern Syria to push Kurdish forces from

## Lead IG Oversight Activities

The Lead IG agencies completed six reports related to OIR during the quarter. These reports examined various activities that support OIR, including whether the Army effectively accounted for Government-furnished property provided to the base operations and security support services contractor in Kuwait at facilities that support OIR; whether the DoD and DoS effectively monitored contractors' adherence to policies related to preventing trafficking in persons; and whether USAID effectively managed awards and humanitarian assistance programs in Iraq and Syria.

Ongoing and completed investigations by the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies involve a variety of alleged crimes, including procurement fraud, corruption, grant fraud, theft, program irregularities, computer intrusions, and human trafficking. These investigations resulted in two convictions.

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints specific to its agency. During the quarter, a DoD OIG investigator who coordinates hotline contacts referred 47 cases to Lead IG agencies or other investigative organizations.

the Turkish border in areas between Manbij and Tal Rifaat.<sup>19</sup> A new Turkish offensive could shift the SDF's focus away from combating ISIS and jeopardize security at detention facilities and camps housing family members of ISIS fighters.<sup>20</sup>

**Iraqi politicians continued to jockey for power as summer heat and increased food prices strained public services.** The 8-month deadlock in the government formation process has halted the approval of a new budget.<sup>21</sup> As food prices continued to rise, the Iraqi parliament approved a measure to sidestep the budget impasse and expand food subsidies. Meanwhile, inadequate infrastructure and the demand for power spurred by summer heat caused widespread electricity outages.<sup>22</sup> USAID continued to work with the Iraqi government and regional partners to increase electricity generation capacity.<sup>23</sup> The United Nations announced plans to scale down its humanitarian assistance programs and transition to an Iraqi government-led response.<sup>24</sup>

### **Repatriation and reintegration of displaced persons continued, but slowly.**

U.S. military leaders and the humanitarian community remained concerned about ongoing violence and criminality, including ISIS-related activities, recruitment, and indoctrination in al-Hol, where some 56,000 displaced persons reside.<sup>25</sup> Iraq repatriated 151 families from al-Hol in June.<sup>26</sup> Women and children who are family members of ISIS fighters, were repatriated to Russia, the Balkans, and other European countries. Iraq repatriated 50 adult and 203 juvenile detainees, and Kosovo repatriated 2 detainees from Syria.<sup>27</sup>

### **The economic crisis in Syria deepened, increasing humanitarian need and food insecurity.**

The economy in northeast Syria continued to be challenged by high price fluctuations, the continued weakness of the Syrian pound, and reduced agriculture yield due to drought conditions.<sup>28</sup> Prices for critical commodities including wheat, flour, oil, and fuel continued to rise significantly, in turn increasing the cost of providing humanitarian assistance.<sup>29</sup> Prices for wheat seed and agricultural inputs similarly rose, impacting stabilization efforts.<sup>30</sup> In May, the Treasury Department issued a license that is designed to encourage economic growth in certain non-regime held areas of northern Syria.<sup>31</sup>



**M2A3 Bradley  
Fighting Vehicles in  
northeast Syria.  
(U.S. Army photo)**

## HISTORY OF OIR

Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) began in 2014, after the United States and its partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS initiated military activity to support local partners combatting ISIS in Iraq and Syria.<sup>32</sup> Comprising former al-Qaeda fighters and new recruits, ISIS exploited instability in Iraq and Syria and rapidly seized major cities in the two countries.<sup>33</sup>

Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) executes its mission to achieve the enduring defeat of ISIS according to a four-phase operational campaign plan.<sup>34</sup> (See Figure 1.) During the first three phases of the campaign, Coalition forces conducted offensive operations, such as air strikes and targeted raids, against ISIS. Additionally, U.S. and other Coalition forces trained and advised Iraqi and Syrian partner forces and provided them with equipment and other forms of assistance. By March 2019, ISIS no longer held territory in Iraq or Syria.<sup>35</sup>

In July 2020, CJTF-OIR transitioned to Phase IV (“Normalize”) of the campaign plan.<sup>36</sup> Consistent with Phase IV objectives, CJTF-OIR shifted from tactical-level training—directly training individuals and small units—to enabling partner-led operations and operational-level advising that focuses on institutional capacity.<sup>37</sup>

In Iraq, the DoS promotes a strong democracy, inclusive economic growth, independence from malign influence, a resilient Iraqi Kurdistan Region, and continued Iraqi cooperation with regional neighbors to enhance security, critical infrastructure, and economic development.<sup>38</sup> In Syria, the DoS and USAID seek to advance a durable political solution to the Syrian conflict, support humanitarian access, reintegrate displaced persons, preserve ceasefires, promote justice and accountability, and repatriate foreign terrorist fighters.<sup>39</sup>

Figure 1.


### The OIR Campaign Plan



**Source:** CJTF-OIR, “History of CJTF-OIR,” 9/2020.







A special missions aviator shoots a GAU-18 weapons system on an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter during a combat search and rescue exercise. (U.S. Air Force photo)

# MISSION UPDATE

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# MISSION UPDATE

## INTRODUCTION

Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) is a U.S.-led, Coalition-implemented advise, assist, and enable mission in Iraq and Syria. Approximately 2,500 U.S. forces worked in Iraq during the quarter in a noncombat role, and approximately 900 U.S. forces were in Syria.<sup>40</sup> (See Table 1.) In addition to military, civilian, and contractor personnel in Iraq and Syria, personnel and institutions supported OIR from Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan, and other Middle East countries. Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) reported that there were no changes to the OIR objectives or the approximate number of military personnel in Iraq and Syria during the quarter.<sup>41</sup> (See Table 1.)

For FY 2022, Congress appropriated \$7 billion for OIR, a decrease from \$12.7 billion for FY 2021. The DoD Comptroller reported that \$2.8 billion of the FY 2022 funds had been disbursed as of the end of May.<sup>42</sup>

U.S. diplomacy, stabilization activities, and humanitarian assistance are integral to the success of OIR. USAID, the U.S. Government lead for implementing stabilization activities in Iraq, focuses on restoring essential infrastructure and services by working with local partners to identify priorities for recovery; improve social cohesion; help marginalized and displaced populations return to and rebuild their places of origin; and prevent the resurgence of conflict.<sup>43</sup>

## PROGRESS DURING THE QUARTER

In its 2022 Campaign Plan, CJTF-OIR outlined desired end states for OIR and the ways and means to achieve those end states. While the end states are classified, CJTF-OIR said that generally, the conditions it seeks are: ISIS is unable to resurge in Iraq and Syria; the ISF is able to independently provide security and stability in Iraq; and eastern Syria is stable and secure.<sup>44</sup>

As detailed in this report, progress toward achieving these conditions during the quarter was limited and incremental. While ISIS conducted fewer attacks during the quarter compared to a year ago, the group continued to wage a low-level insurgency, according to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).<sup>45</sup> The ISF continued to conduct counter-ISIS operations but have yet to demonstrate some of the planning, intelligence, command and control, and other skills

Table 1.

### U.S. Military Personnel in Iraq and Syria

	Iraq	Syria
<b>U.S. Military</b>	Approximately 2,500	Approximately 900
<b>DoD Contractor</b>	6,696 (of whom 2,557 are U.S. citizens)	

**Note:** Further information about U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria is available in the classified appendix to this report.

**Source:** ODASD(ME), vetting comment, 7/19/2022.



In Iraq, the stalled government formation process has slowed or halted many Coalition-supported institutional reform efforts and ongoing security cooperation and security assistance activities, leaving funding priorities for some ISF branches in question.

that could be necessary to respond to a complex ISIS attack.<sup>46</sup> In Syria, the security situation is particularly worrying, as price increases and wheat shortages caused by the war in Ukraine have exacerbated an already acute and complex humanitarian crisis.<sup>47</sup>

Further information about the OIR campaign plan, desired end states, and progress toward those objectives is available in the classified appendix to this report.

## OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Iraq and Syria are challenging environments characterized by armed conflict, political instability, natural disasters, humanitarian crises, and several other concerns that challenge U.S.- and Coalition-supported operations on a daily basis. In particular, three persistent challenges affected all aspects of the OIR mission and associated U.S. Government activities during the quarter:

**THIRD-PARTY ACTORS:** Select third-party actors—including militias affiliated with Iran—exploit instability in Iraq and Syria to expand their influence in the region and undermine U.S. and Coalition forces supporting the OIR mission.<sup>48</sup> The United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) views Iran as the greatest threat to regional stability.<sup>49</sup> During the quarter, Iran-aligned militia groups conducted indirect fire, unmanned aerial vehicle, and IED attacks against U.S., Coalition, and partner forces, while Iran continued to influence Iraqi political groups as they jockeyed for power during the government formation process. In addition, Turkish and Turkish-supported armed forces and militias continued operations in Iraq and threatened new operations in northern Syria as part of Turkey’s effort to counter the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).<sup>50</sup> Russian forces continued to conduct operations in Syria in order to bolster its ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.<sup>51</sup>

**POLITICAL INSTABILITY:** In Iraq, the stalled government formation process has slowed or halted many Coalition-supported institutional reform efforts and ongoing security cooperation and security assistance activities, leaving funding priorities for some Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) branches in question.<sup>52</sup> Iraq held parliamentary elections in October 2021 but the parties have been unable to form a government since then. As a result, Iraqi government ministries have continued to operate under the FY 2021 budget, with limited ability to initiate new activities or operations or procure necessary equipment.<sup>53</sup> The political and fiscal stalemate has negatively affected Iraq’s security services as well as efforts to support internally displaced persons (IDP).<sup>54</sup>

**SOCIAL-ECONOMIC INSTABILITY:** In Syria, years of conflict, a collapsed economy, drought, and more recently, the coronavirus disease–2019 (COVID-19) pandemic have led to widespread displacement and an urgent need for international humanitarian assistance.<sup>55</sup> Though comparatively less acute, similar conditions persist in Iraq, threatening political stability and creating environments that allow extremist groups to operate.<sup>56</sup> Most recently, the war in Ukraine, which began in February 2022, had immediate consequences for the people of Iraq and Syria.<sup>57</sup> The prices of staple foods in the region—particularly wheat, but also cooking oil, rice, and sugar—increased dramatically.<sup>58</sup>

Details on progress and challenges related to specific DoD, DoS, and USAID objectives are provided throughout this report.

# STATUS OF ISIS

## The ISIS Threat

ISIS continued to wage a low-level insurgency during the quarter. In April, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III said that ISIS continued to pose a “proximate threat” to U.S. citizens and U.S. interests in the Middle East. In May, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS said that ISIS “represents an ongoing threat,” despite recent Coalition operations that killed or captured ISIS leaders.

**Sources:** DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 22.3 OIR 011, 6/22/2022; Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin, statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, “To Receive Testimony on the Department of Defense Budget Posture,” 4/7/2022; Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, statement, “Joint Communiqué by Ministers of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS,” 5/11/2022.

## ISIS Attack Trends

- ISIS escalated attacks in Iraq and Syria during the Ramadan holiday in April as expected, but total attacks for the quarter continued a downward trend.
- ISIS claimed 201 attacks during the quarter, a decrease of more than 30 percent in Iraq and more than 60 percent in Syria compared to the same period one year ago.
- Most attacks during the quarter were hit-and-runs using small arms and IEDs. ISIS did not claim any car bomb or jail break attacks.
- ISIS sharply increased attacks against individuals it believes were spying for Coalition forces.

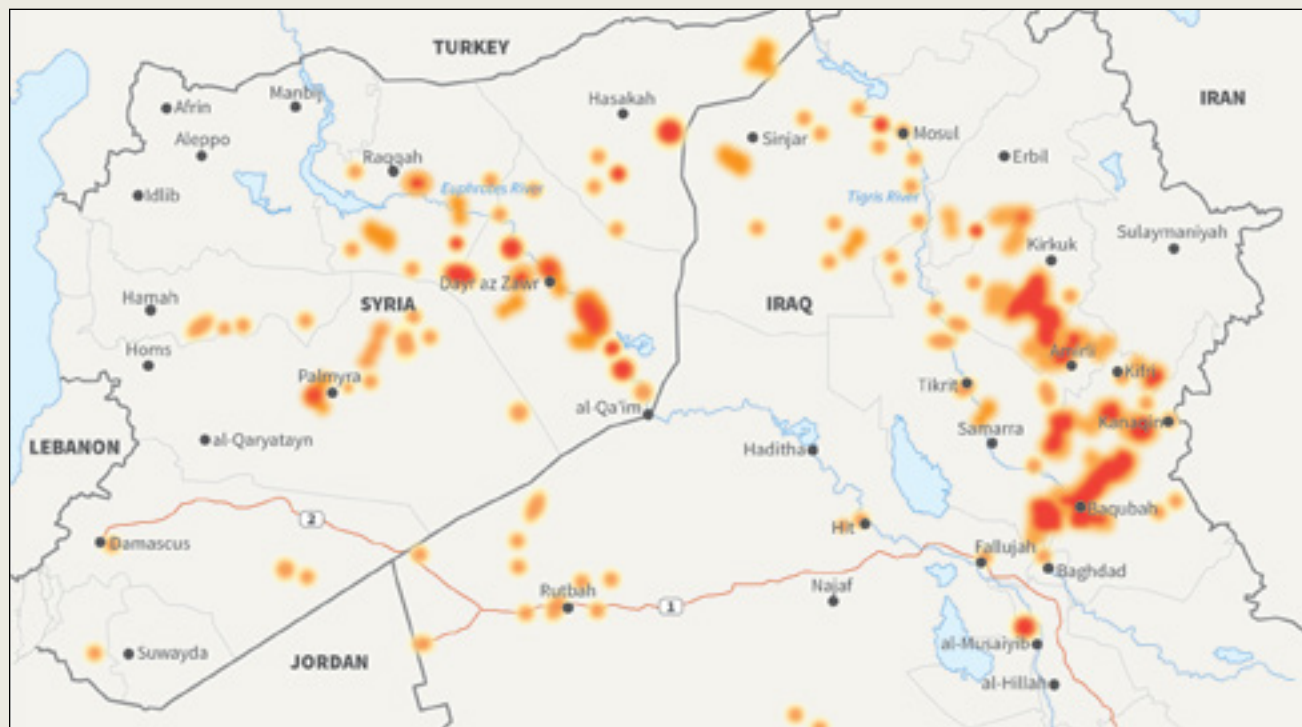
### SYRIA

ISIS **struggled to maintain momentum** following the slight uptick of attacks during the winter months. The majority of attacks remained focused on SDF and regime forces along the Euphrates River.

ISIS continued to conduct **highly lethal attacks on regime forces** transiting the sparsely populated central desert region.

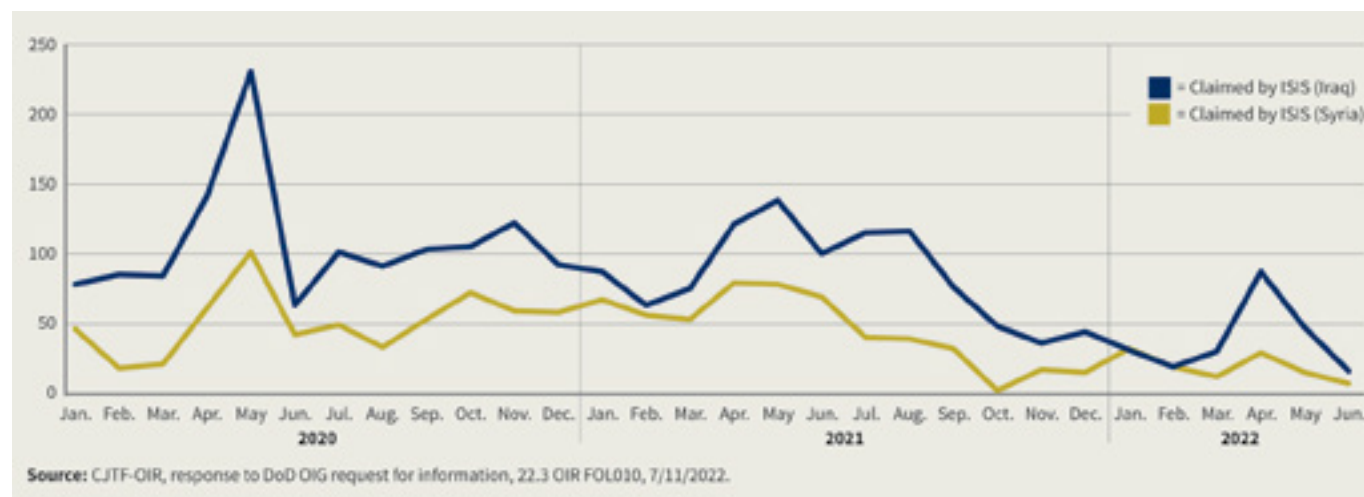
### IRAQ

Attacks remained **concentrated in rural areas** of Kirkuk, Diyala, and Salah ad Din provinces, with additional sporadic attacks in western Anbar in response to ISF operations in the area. Most attacks failed to inflict high casualties.



**Sources:** CJTF-OIR, response to DoD OIG request for information, 22.3 OIR FOL010, 7/11/2022; Janes Terrorism and Insurgency Centre, data for non-state armed group attacks, statements, and actions by Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, 4/1/2022–6/30/2022; Enabling Peace in Iraq Center, “Iraq Security and Humanitarian Monitor,” 4/1/2022–6/30/2022.

## ISIS Attacks by Month, January 2020–June 2022



## ISIS Capability Assessment

**OVERALL:** The January 20 attack on the Ghwayran Detention Facility demonstrated that ISIS was **still capable of conducting large-scale, complex attacks**. However, the group's failure to free most detainees and the high death toll after lengthy preparations for the assault showed that ISIS still struggles to plan and execute large-scale attacks with success. The death of ISIS leader Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi just 2 weeks after the attack **likely offset any morale boost** ISIS gained from attacking the detention facility.

**STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES:** ISIS's overall strategic objective in Iraq and Syria remained to rebuild its organization and **reestablish a viable insurgency** capable of seizing control over the population and territory in Iraq and Syria. ISIS objectives and strategy were likely not impacted in the near-term by the death of the group's leader.

**RECRUITING:** ISIS continued recruitment efforts across northeastern Syria, focusing on **vulnerable youth** including those in al-Hol displaced persons camp.

**EXTERNAL OPERATIONS:** ISIS pledge videos in support of the new leader demonstrated the group continued to seek to conduct attacks in Western countries. But the group probably remained **unable to direct attacks against the U.S. homeland**, and continued to encourage and rely on small-scale, inspired attacks to demonstrate its reach beyond its normal operating areas. ISIS did not claim responsibility for any attacks in the United States or Europe during the quarter.

**Sources:** DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 22.3 OIR 011, 22.3 OIR 013; 22.3 OIR 014; 22.3 OIR 015, 22.3 OIR 017, 22.3 OIR 019 6/22/2022 and 22.3 OIR 020, 6/22/2022.

**FINANCES:** ISIS **continued to raise funds** through extortion of oil smuggling networks in eastern Syria, kidnapping for ransom, targeting civilian businesses and populations, other extortion, looting, and the possible operation of front companies. The group relied on **money services businesses**, including hawalas—informal money transfer channels—throughout Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, to transfer funds internationally. ISIS also continued to use a network of couriers to smuggle cash between Iraq and Syria.

ISIS supporters used **virtual currencies and online fundraising platforms** to transfer funds, including to al-Hol and other displaced persons camps. The group's supporters gathered and sent funds to intermediaries in Turkey who then smuggled the cash into Syria or sent the funds to hawalas operating in the camp. ISIS supporters each received up to \$20,000 per month via the hawala system; the majority of these transfers originated outside Syria.

ISIS probably had **tens of millions of U.S. dollars available** in cash reserves dispersed across the region, but Treasury does not know the amount of money ISIS distributed during the quarter.

**Sources:** Treasury OIG, response to DoD OIG request for information, 22.3 WOG TREAS 03, 22.3 WOG TREAS 04, and 22.3 WOG TREAS 05, 7/13/2022.

## 6,000–10,000

**Estimated number of ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria, down from as many as 18,000 two years ago.**

UN Security Council, "Fourteenth Report of the Secretary-General on the Threat Posed by ISIL," S/2022/63, 1/28/2022.









Coalition soldiers advance toward an objective during a combined aerial response force exercise at Erbil Air Base, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

# IRAQ

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Peshmerga officers verify the serial numbers of weapons during distribution to Kurdish Regional Guard Brigades. (U.S. Army photo)

## IRAQ

In Iraq, the Coalition’s Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) operates at the request of the Iraqi government in an advise, assist, and enable role to support operations to defeat ISIS conducted by Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Kurdish Security Forces (KSF).<sup>59</sup> In addition, the U.S. Government supports the development of a capable and responsive Iraqi government and a strong Iraqi Kurdistan Region; encourages inclusive economic growth; and supports vulnerable communities as they transition from stabilization to recovery.<sup>60</sup>

## SECURITY

### COALITION ADVISING

Coalition forces advise, assist, and enable the Iraqi forces through the Military Advisory Group (MAG) and the Special Operations Advisory Group (SOAG).<sup>61</sup> (See page 16.) MAG advisors work primarily with the ISF’s Joint Operations Command-Iraq (JOC-I), which oversees Iraqi air and ground forces, as well as the KSF’s Regional Guard Brigades, units stood up by the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs as part of the Kurdistan Regional Government’s (KRG) security reform process.<sup>62</sup> SOAG advisors work with the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service (CTS).<sup>63</sup> CJTF-OIR advisors do not advise, assist, or enable the sectarian militias belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) and Tribal Mobilization Forces.<sup>64</sup>

**During the quarter, CJTF-OIR provided \$82.7 million of material and support to the Iraqis from CTEF.**

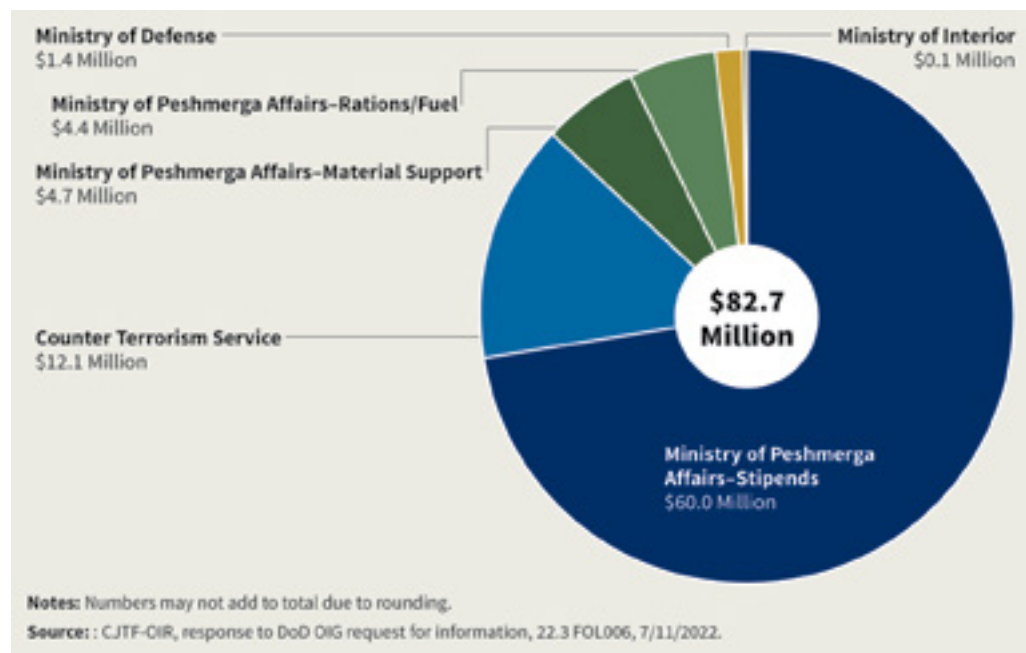
In addition to advisors, CJTF-OIR maintains other forces in Iraq and Kuwait that provide logistics, medical, force protection, and other support to MAG and SOAG advising efforts.<sup>65</sup>

The Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) is the primary vehicle for providing material and other support to Iraqi partner forces. Of the \$500 million CTEF appropriation for FY2022, \$345 million is designated to support Iraqi partner forces. During the quarter, CJTF-OIR provided \$82.7 million of material and support to the Iraqis from CTEF. This brings the total value of FY 2022 CTEF support delivered to Iraqi partner forces to \$415 million as of the end of the quarter.<sup>66</sup> (See Figure 2.)

In addition, Congress appropriated \$250 million for Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Iraq for FY 2021. These funds have a 2-year period of availability and will expire on September 30, 2022.<sup>67</sup> Prior to the enactment of the full FY 2022 Appropriations Act on March 15, 2022, allocations under the FY 2022 Continuing Resolution were already obligated to various FMF cases.<sup>68</sup> Congress approved \$250 million for FMF in fiscal years 2019 and 2020, of which \$178.8 million has been expended in FY 2019 funds and \$91.7 million has been expended in FY 2020 funds.<sup>69</sup> All remaining FY 2019 and FY 2020 FMF funds have been allocated against upcoming Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cases and are awaiting signed Letters of Request and Letters of Acceptance from the Iraqi government.<sup>70</sup> The focus of FMF assistance has been on the development of a security sector that is sustainable, efficient, effective, and transparent. FMF continues to emphasize the long-term professionalization of the ISF, strengthening its institutions, and shifting the burden of maintenance and sustainment to the Iraqis.<sup>71</sup>

Figure 2.

#### CTEF-funded Support to Iraq, April–June 2022





# THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT IN IRAQ

## MAG-KSF Advising

Coalition advisors work with leaders from the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs at the Kurdistan Coordination Center to enhance operational level command and control, promote coordination with the ISF, and support other ministry reform objectives. The advisors occasionally work with lower-level KSF units.

## MAG-ISF Advising

Coalition military advisors have daily contact with Ministry of Defense leaders at Joint Operations Command-Iraq (JOC-I), located at Union III in Baghdad. This advising focuses on the five areas most important for defeating ISIS: target development, air operations, logistics and sustainment, information sharing/command and control, and planning. The advisors do not have regular contact with subordinate ISF units, including the Iraq Ground Forces Command, or ISF personnel outside of Union III.

## Non-OIR Advising and Support

Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq (OSC-I) at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad conducts bilateral security assistance and security cooperation activities, including training, with partner forces. NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) advises ISF leaders at the ministerial level.

**Note:** OCs are not shown in their actual location within each province.

**Sources:** CJTF-OIR, response to DoD OIG request for information, 22.2 OIR 035, 3/23/2022; Michael Knights and Alex Almeida, "Back to Basics: U.S.-Iraq Security Cooperation in the Post-Combat Era," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 10/26/2021.



## SOAG-CTS Advising

Coalition military advisors work with the CTS at the ministerial and operational levels. The advising focuses on air-to-ground integration, ISR, site exploitation, and other areas to develop and assess CTS capabilities.

## Coalition Advisors Support the ISF Across Warfighting Functions

The MAG advises the JOC-I on planning, operations, intelligence and targeting, and logistics and sustainment.<sup>72</sup> The MAG also provides fire support (artillery) advisors, but they do not participate in the planning or conduct of major operations because Iraqis do not maintain artillery representatives at the JOC-I on a permanent basis.<sup>73</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that during the quarter the MAG advised the ISF in the following ways:<sup>74</sup>

**Operations and Planning:** MAG advisors focused on tracking upcoming and current operations against ISIS. Advisors also provided after action reviews following the conclusion of major ISF operations against ISIS.<sup>75</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that while these efforts fostered collaboration between ISF units to counter ISIS at the operational level, the willingness of the JOC-I's planning directorate to accept Coalition mentorship was "assessed as low." CJTF-OIR said that discussions with the directorate were "often one-sided" and that ISF leaders "rarely" asked questions about formalized planning processes.<sup>76</sup>

MAG advisors do not work directly with Iraqi ground forces, but the MAG conducted a planning seminar with attendees from all Operational Commands. Additionally, the advisors provided the JOC-I with a sample concept of operation for Iraqi ground forces that was later used by the ISF to plan a cordon and search operation in the Hamrin Mountains that involved CTS and PMF units, CJTF-OIR said.<sup>77</sup>

**Intelligence and Targeting:** MAG advisors supported the JOC-I's Fusion and Targeting Cell and provided advice on the ISF's battlefield intelligence collection and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, information analysis, and coordination with other agencies in support of operations against ISIS.<sup>78</sup> The Coalition also provided ISR support whenever Iraqi ground forces cleared an area following airstrikes against ISIS targets as long as the Coalition's ISR assets were not needed to support another mission.<sup>79</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that the intelligence directorate of the JOC-I accepts CJTF-OIR's mentorship and advice and has improved in its ability to analyze intelligence and create efficient targeting processes.<sup>80</sup>

**Logistics and Sustainment:** CJTF-OIR reported that the JOC-I's logistics and sustainment directorate, consisting of one Iraqi logistics and sustainment officer, produced a "recognized logistic picture" to support the JOC-I's operational logistics visibility as a method of enhancing the ISF's ability to anticipate the materiel needed to sustain an operation.<sup>81</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that the logistics and sustainment directorate is primarily focused on obtaining material provided by the Coalition and rarely participates in the planning or conduct of operations.<sup>82</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that the MAG advised the JOC-I leadership to increase the number of logistics officers in the directorate, but they have yet to do so. Thus, while the sole officer is receptive to mentorship, his ability to implement change is extremely limited.<sup>83</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that the MAG also works with the SOAG to enable joint operations with the CTS, particularly complicated joint operations along the Kurdish Coordination Line, an area that divides the Iraqi Kurdistan Region from the rest of Iraq and is claimed by both sides.<sup>84</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that this advising has resulted in a more efficient collaboration and more joint ISF-CTS operations against ISIS.<sup>85</sup> The MAG and SOAG also coordinate

to support the Iraqi Terminal Attack Controllers (ITAC), which are individuals within CTS battalions trained to coordinate air support and direct air-to-ground strikes. The SOAG advises on training and implementation of the ITAC program and the MAG advises on close air support and airstrikes, CJTF-OIR said.<sup>86</sup>

## Coalition Trains and Equips Iraqi Forces to Counter ISIS Disinformation

CJTF-OIR reported that the Coalition advises the ISF and KSF on information operations, including methods to counter disinformation by adversaries, exploit messaging opportunities, and synchronize operations.<sup>87</sup> The training focuses on cyber security, the use of open source tools, and methods to monitor adversary propaganda and disinformation and disseminate non-attributable messages online.<sup>88</sup>

The Coalition maintains a train-the-trainer program to enable the ISF to build its own information operations, and this quarter transferred information technology equipment to the Iraqi-led Joint Information Operations Center.<sup>89</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that it is working with the JOC-I to staff the center at Union III.<sup>90</sup>

According to Iraq analysts, ISIS uses propaganda to recruit, boost morale, and inspire attacks in Iraq, Syria, and abroad.<sup>91</sup> It relies on official statements posted through social media to claim attacks and reach sympathetic audiences.<sup>92</sup>

**According to Iraq analysts, ISIS uses propaganda to recruit, boost morale, and inspire attacks in Iraq, Syria, and abroad.**

## CJTF-OIR Delivers Plan to ISF to Reenergize Iraqi Artillery Use, but Little Change Is Observed

CJTF-OIR reported that the ISF continued to demonstrate limited confidence in and employment of its artillery battalions.<sup>93</sup> Factors that contribute to limited artillery use include the lack of an Iraqi artillery officer on the JOC-I staff and the JOC-I leadership's limited confidence in the accuracy of field artillery, even if the Iraqi artillery directorate confirms Iraqi guns are in good condition and their training level is satisfactory. As a result, field artillery support is not planned in Iraqi ground operations, especially the inclusion of 155mm guns.<sup>94</sup>

In late January, CJTF-OIR delivered to the ISF a proposed plan called the Artillery Compendium, which CJTF-OIR described as a tactical tool to improve the ISF's field artillery efficiency. The Compendium outlined plans for each provincial Operations Command based on that command's terrain, gun types, targets, known enemy routes, and firing units.<sup>95</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that Coalition advisors have little ability to improve the artillery directorate beyond what has been accomplished. CJTF-OIR said that the MAG continues to reinforce the need to incorporate indirect fires into the ISF's operational fires plans, but that ISF leaders have not acted on the advice. In an effort to bolster the ISF artillery units' capability, CJTF-OIR said it provided a substantial amount of CTEF-procured artillery materiel to the artillery directorate's school for training and weapons system calibration, as requested by the ISF.<sup>96</sup>

OIR said it provided a substantial amount of CTEF-procured artillery materiel to the artillery directorate's school for training and weapons system calibration, as requested by the ISF.

## OTHER U.S. AND PARTNER SUPPORT

### The MAG Relays ISF Shortcomings to NMI to Support Ministerial-level Advising

NMI is a noncombat advisory mission that seeks to support Iraqi efforts to build transparent and effective security institutions and armed forces. The mission was established in 2018 at the behest of the Iraqi government.<sup>97</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that the MAG continued efforts to integrate information and operations with NMI.<sup>98</sup> During the quarter, the MAG shared information about ISF shortcomings—including logistics, sustainment, and intelligence functions—with NMI so that NMI could work on those shortcomings in its engagements with the Iraqi Ministry of Defense (MoD) and pursue institutional-level solutions.<sup>99</sup>

For example, the MAG told NMI that the ISF suffered from a lack of spare parts and components, a reliable logistics picture, and maintenance capability.<sup>100</sup> The ISF also needs to improve its ability to coordinate intelligence, manage information, and share information between the MoD intelligence agencies. By providing this information, the MAG supported institutional-level NMI efforts such as officer professional development programs, budgeting, and sustainment planning.<sup>101</sup>

Additional information about NMI can be found in the classified appendix to this report.

### OSC-I Plans to Expand End-Use Monitoring in Iraq

During the quarter, Office of Security Cooperation–Iraq (OSC-I) conducted enhanced end-use monitoring inventories at locations that could be accessed by the Embassy's Regional Security Office. The DoS said OSC-I and the Embassy's Regional Security Office had made great strides in increasing site surveys, but still had only limited access to most areas in Iraq due to the security situation.<sup>102</sup> OSC-I said it conducted eight routine end-use monitoring inventories and three enhanced end-use monitoring inventories of Stinger surface-to-air missiles, tanks, and night-vision devices from the MoD.<sup>103</sup>

All ISF units are deployed except for one battalion that is in training. This makes conducting night vision device inventories extremely difficult. OSC-I conducted physical security checks of storage facilities for F-16s, tanks, and Stingers only at storage sites, and not at deployed locations.<sup>104</sup>

The CTS provided to OSC-I a complete night vision device inventory report, accounting for 70 percent of its inventory. The remaining 30 percent was self-reported as lost, broken, or not in the inventory.<sup>105</sup> To increase oversight of night-vision device inventories, the Regional Security Office and OSC-I have increased end-use monitoring activities, including building relationships, developing alternate ways of carrying out their work, and vetting new sites for the Ministry of Interior.<sup>106</sup>



The DoS reported that the MoD and Ministry of the Interior have also provided the requisite quarterly inventories which are being reviewed by the End-Use Monitoring (EUM) Officer. The DoS added that the Iraqi government demonstrated a good effort in accounting for night-vision devices after OSC-I and the RSO established relationships and conducted in-person meetings.<sup>107</sup>

## ISF OPERATIONS

### ISF Launches Large-scale Joint Operations Against ISIS

According to local media reports, in April, the Iraqi Army's Special Forces, the CTS, the Iraqi Air Force, and the Iraqi Army Aviation Command (IqAAC) launched an operation, called "Iron Hammer" against ISIS elements in the Hamrin Mountains in Kirkuk province.<sup>108</sup> The operation consisted of search and clear operations to impose security and stability in designated areas of operation.<sup>109</sup> According to one media report, the operation resulted in the capture of 38 ISIS militants, the seizure of weapons and ammunition and destruction of ISIS bed-down locations.<sup>110</sup>

The ISF also launched the second phase of Operation Willing Resolve in April.<sup>111</sup> The joint operation included the Iraqi Border Guard Command, PMF, Army Special Forces, CTS, and Rapid Response Division.<sup>112</sup> The ISF units sought to route ISIS from strongholds in Anbar, Salah ad Din, and Ninewa provinces, media reports said.<sup>113</sup> In the first phase of the operation, which concluded in March, ISF units destroyed 19 ISIS hideouts, 6 tunnels, and an explosives lab, and captured artillery rockets and rocket propelled grenade launchers.<sup>114</sup>

In addition to these two major operations, the ISF conducted independent basic daily "framework" operations, CJTF-OIR said.<sup>115</sup> CJTF-OIR said that the JOC-I reports on the results of the operations to the CJTF-OIR team on a daily basis and CJTF-OIR will advise the JOC-I on how to improve future framework operations.<sup>116</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that operations Iron Hammer and Willing Resolve II were successful at preventing ISIS from conducting a major attack during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. As a result, ISIS was relegated to conducting lower-level "harassment attacks," CJTF-OIR said.<sup>117</sup>

**Operation Iron Hammer:** CJTF-OIR reported that the ISF displayed success in adapting to the situation, operational branding, and putting pressure on ISIS.<sup>118</sup> Specifically, the JOC-I was able to modify its operational plan following the discovery of a large ISIS hideout, which allowed the ISF to maintain initiative and the element of surprise.<sup>119</sup> The ISF's Security Media Cell successfully used social media platforms to amplify ISF operational successes after getting a slow start, CJTF-OIR said.<sup>120</sup> And the JOC-I consistently alternated target areas to maintain pressure on ISIS, preventing the group from conducting spectacular attacks and disrupting supply routes. CJTF-OIR said that the ISF exploited these vulnerabilities to conduct follow-on strikes on ISIS locations.<sup>121</sup>

However, CJTF-OIR reported that the ISF's search-and-clearance operations were conducted in areas that were too large to effectively dominate the terrain and close ISIS escape routes. As a result, ISIS was able to plant improvised explosive devices (IED) to delay ISF forces

**CJTF-OIR reported that operations Iron Hammer and Willing Resolve II were successful at preventing ISIS from conducting a major attack during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.**

**CJTF-OIR reported that the CTS, Iraq's premier special operations force, conducted 321 operations during the quarter.**

and facilitate their escape.<sup>122</sup> Additionally, JOC-I plans did not rely on ISR and were vague, particularly regarding the integration of air and ground forces, leaving operations commands to execute operations with minimal direction.<sup>123</sup>

**Operation Willing Resolve II:** CJTF-OIR reported that the ISF was successful at gathering intelligence, developing a media plan, and employing a new approach to the operation.<sup>124</sup> The ISF effectively used inter-agency intelligence coordination to refine target areas and target lists, resulting in what CJTF-OIR described as “the most successful large-scale search and clearance operation to date.”<sup>125</sup> During the 5-day operation, ISF units destroyed 36 ISIS hideouts and 47 IEDs, captured significant quantities of weapons and ammunition, killed 4 ISIS members and arrested 19 others, CJTF-OIR said.<sup>126</sup>

Additionally, the ISF developed a media plan for both social and traditional media platforms for the first time during Operation Willing Resolve II, identifying target audiences and developing specific themes to publicize successful results of the operation.<sup>127</sup> Lastly, the ISF employed a new operational approach, incorporating the IqAAC in support of the CTS and improving integration of air assets, ISR, close air support, and aerial medevac.

However, CJTF-OIR said that the ISF needs to improve air assaults so that they are more than just a show of force or conducted in areas abandoned by ISIS. Ground commanders need freedom to operate outside of set start and end times for daily operations, which creates noticeable patterns of ISF movement and allows ISIS to know where and when to place IEDs. Lastly, the ISF continued to rely on Coalition assets to provide cover for ground forces, rather than developing plans to use their own ISR assets.<sup>128</sup>

## COUNTER TERRORISM SERVICE

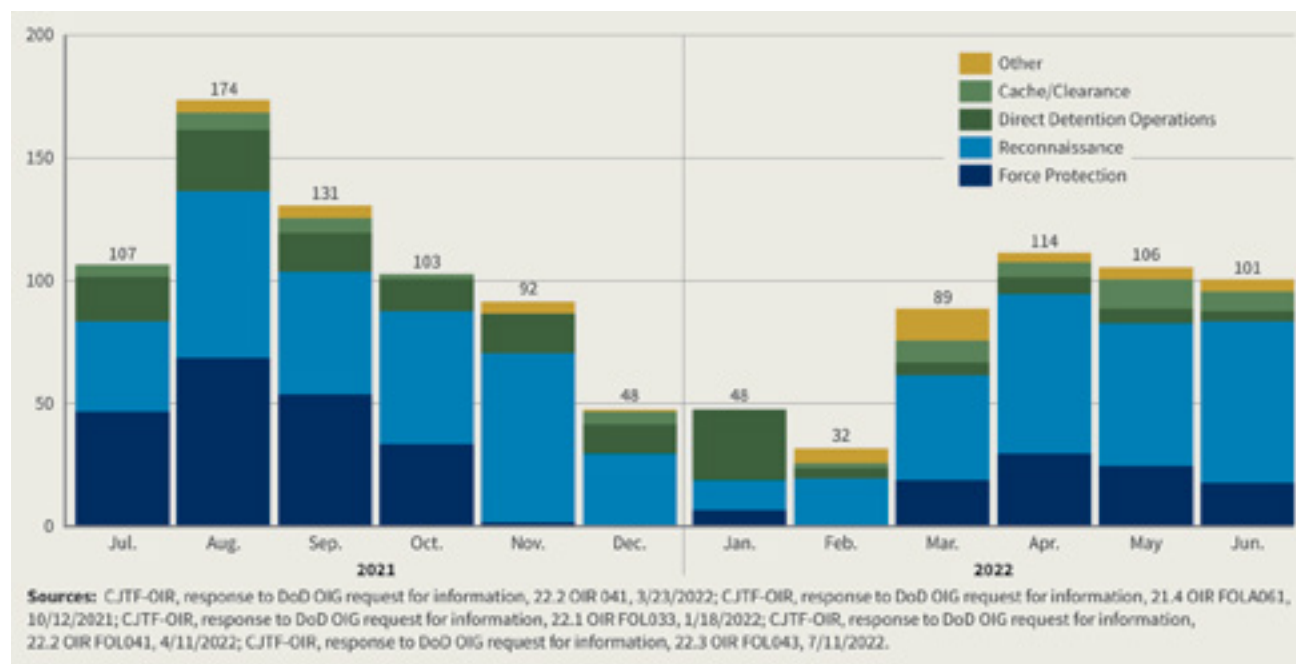
### CTS Operational Tempo Rebounds From Winter Slowdown

CJTF-OIR reported that the CTS, Iraq's premier special operations force, conducted 321 operations during the quarter. Twenty-three warranted individuals were detained during 17 deliberate detention operations resulted in the successful detention of ISIS suspects. Two operations enabled subsequent Iraqi airstrikes that resulted in the deaths of 15 ISIS members.<sup>129</sup> (See Figure 3.)

CJTF-OIR said that there are no accurately reported performance metrics to measure the outcomes of CTS patrols aside from kill/capture statistics or captured enemy material since the majority of ambushes and clearance operations result in no enemy contact. Ambushes and raids are consistently reported inaccurately and are frequently incorporated into statistics labeled “search and clear” or “reconnaissance and sniping.” CJTF-OIR said these inaccuracies in reporting and mishandling of captured enemy material further complicate performance metrics and data analysis.<sup>130</sup>

The CTS partners with MoD, KSF, other ISF units, and Coalition forces during some operations.<sup>131</sup> During this quarter, the CTS reported 22 partnered operations with Coalition forces and other Iraqi services during 321 operations.<sup>132</sup> The CTS does not report cooperation with other ISF units other than partnered kinetic or warrant operations.<sup>133</sup> CJTF-OIR stated that the support provided by ISF elements is limited to the occasional use

Figure 3.

**CTS Operations by Type, July 2021–June 2022**

of tactical infrastructure for basing during some operations. The CTS previously supported large-scale ISF operations. However, it had a defined area to clear, which did not require synchronization with or support from adjacent ISF units. The CTS conducted their portion of the operation and reported back when completed each day.<sup>134</sup>

## Coalition Legal Advisors Support the CTS to Improve Conviction Rate

Last quarter, CJTF-OIR reported that the conviction rate of individuals detained by the CTS was less than 10 percent.<sup>135</sup> To improve the conviction rate, SOAG legal advisors support the CTS to improve sensitive site exploitation methods and the prosecutorial process. Toward that end, SOAG legal advisors oversaw a Law of Armed Conflict and Rules of Engagement training course for Judge Advocate Generals within the CTS. The course provided training to give accurate and effective legal advice to CTS commanders and soldiers from the three Iraqi Special Operations Forces brigades.<sup>136</sup>

Additionally, CJTF-OIR reported that a new CTS judge intends to streamline the prosecutorial process by synchronizing legal training with sensitive site exploitation courses at the CTS school, known as Academia. The intent is to train CTS soldiers in appropriate sensitive site exploitation techniques to avoid contamination and compromise of evidence. CJTF-OIR said Coalition advisors at all levels are engaged with key leaders to stress the importance of appropriate sensitive site exploitation, as it is foundational to improving conviction rates of detained individuals.<sup>137</sup>

**CJTF-OIR reported that the CTS is currently manned at approximately 43 percent (16,506) of its authorized strength (38,591).**

## **CTS Recruitment Is Stalled By the Delay in Government Formation**

CJTF-OIR reported that the CTS is currently manned at approximately 43 percent (16,506) of its authorized strength (38,591). However, the CTS cannot undertake any significant force generation until Iraqis form a new government and the Ministry of Finance approves appropriations for new recruits. CTS uses a website to recruit new applicants and, based on previous efforts, will receive thousands of applicants within the first 24 hours of open recruitment. The recruitment process takes 4 to 6 weeks, followed by training at the CTS school, known as Academia. Academia is capable of running two classes of approximately 750 recruits annually. Each class takes approximately 1 year to complete. The last recruitment class was trained in 2018.<sup>138</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that Coalition forces seek to support the CTS's force generation efforts through two proposed courses of action. First, the Coalition is preparing a course of action to fund an effort to medically retire a portion of the more severely wounded and disabled personnel to free up CTS billets for new recruits. The second proposal includes CJTF-OIR recommending to the CTS leadership alternative courses of action if the budget continues to be delayed or not passed, such as consolidating the CTS into two brigades and revising a modified table of organization and equipment.<sup>139</sup>

Meanwhile, several CTS soldiers graduated from Academia's Iraqi Terminal Attack Controller (ITAC) program during the quarter and conducted the first purely Iraqi Air Force-supported live-fire exercise.<sup>140</sup> CJTF-OIR reported a noticeable increase in the operational employment of the CTS's ITACs, including their first successful mission directing strikes from Iraqi aircraft.<sup>141</sup> CJTF-OIR said that while the increase in usage is promising, the shortfall of capable and proficient ITACs requires the ISOF commanders to use the same controllers on a majority of missions. Of note, the ITACs are demonstrating the ability to adhere to the proper administrative steps necessary to receive the required air support for their operations.<sup>142</sup>

According to CJTF-OIR, the CTS has offered to train Iraqi Kurdish counterterrorism forces for the first time.<sup>143</sup> The CTS has allocated slots for Kurdish counterterrorism forces from Erbil and Sulaymaniyah to attend courses at the CTS school including English language, sniper, commando, navigation, and ITAC courses.<sup>144</sup> The offer of training support followed an intra-Iraqi counterterrorism conference hosted by the CTS in May and will further strengthen relations between Iraqi and Kurdish counterterrorism units, CJTF-OIR said.<sup>145</sup> CJTF-OIR said that the initiative for the CTS to train specific KSF units is a major step in SOAG's efforts to improve coordination between KRG counterterrorism forces and the CTS.<sup>146</sup>

## **The United States and the Coalition Continue to Provide Material Support to the CTS**

CJTF-OIR reported that it provided \$7.7 million in CTEF equipment transfers to the CTS during the quarter, to include items such as personnel protective equipment, equipment parts, and vehicles.<sup>147</sup> By comparison, last quarter neither CJTF-OIR, through CTEF, nor OSC-I, through FMS provided equipment to the CTS.<sup>148</sup>



USCENTCOM said that OSC-I allocated \$12 million in FY 2020 FMF funding to enhance CTS satellite and tactical communications networks.<sup>149</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that the CTS received ten Puma tactical unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) with spare parts packages, target acquisition kits with necessary software, and launchers through FMS this quarter. Additional FMS services, including ongoing forensics laboratory training and vehicle, weapon, and equipment maintenance training at Academia, remained ongoing during the quarter. Additionally, the CTS is scheduled to receive approximately \$90,000 in spare parts for night vision devices, test equipment, and associated technical manuals through FMS in the next 90 days.<sup>150</sup>

USCENTCOM reported that OSC-I also completed nearly three dozen in-person and remote meetings with the CTS and other international supporting partners despite current security restrictions inhibiting routine in-person interaction and evaluation of CTS capability gaps. These engagements are intended to further enhance the CTS's operational and institutional capacities while concurrently supporting U.S. security cooperation and security assistance interests in Iraq. USCENTCOM said the CTS's most urgent capability gaps include intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance capabilities and maintenance and logistics of defense articles.<sup>151</sup>

Table 2.

**Counter-ISIS Airstrikes by Coalition and Iraqi Aircraft, April 1–June 30, 2022**

Date	Aircraft	Location	Target	Munition
Apr. 4	F-16	Ninewa	2 x Bed Down Location (BDL)	2 x GBU-12
Apr. 8	AC-208	Diyala	1 x BDL	2 x AGM-114
Apr. 17	F-16	Diyala	2 x BDL	4 x GBU-12 + 2 x MK-82
Apr. 21	F-16	Salah ad Din	2 x BDL + 1 x Adult Male (ADM)	4 x GBU-12
Apr. 21	AC-208	Salah ad Din	1 x BDL + 2 x ADM	2 x AGM-114
Apr. 25	AC-208	Samarra	1 x ADM	1 x AGM-114
May 8	Bell-407 + EC-635	Ninewa (West)	2 x BDL	12.7mm gun + 70mm rockets
May 8	Bell-407 + Mi-17	Anbar	2 x BDL	12.7mm gun
May 11	F-16	Ninewa	1 x BDL + 5 x ADM	2 x GBU-10
May 12	Bell-407	Kirkuk	1 x BDL	12.7mm gun
May 13	F-16	Anbar (Jazeera OC)	1 x BDL + 1 x ADM	1 x GBU-12
May 14	F-16	Ninewa	2 x BDL + 3 x ADM	3 x GBU-12 + 2 x GBU-10
May 19	F-16	Baghdad	2 x BDL + 3 x ADM	4 x GBU-12
May 22	C-208 + Mi-17 + UH-1H	Salad ad Din	1 x BDL + 5 x ADM	4 x AGM-114 + 12.7mm gun
May 28	F-16	Ninewa	3 x BDL	2 x GBU-12 + 2 GBU-10
May 29	F-16	Diyala	1 x BDL + 4 x ADM	3 x GBU-12 + 2 GBU-10

## IRAQI AIR FORCE AND ARMY AVIATION COMMAND

### ITACs Direct First Successful Airstrike with ISF Aircraft

CJTF-OIR reported that there was no change in the ISF's aerial strike capability, which includes aircraft from the Iraqi Air Force and IqAAC. Operational status of Iraq's aircraft remained largely unchanged, with the ISF's primary strike platforms continuing to be the U.S.-produced F-16 fighters and AC-208 light attack and reconnaissance aircraft.<sup>152</sup> Of note during the quarter, the ISF demonstrated its first successful operational airstrike where Iraqi ground forces from the CTS's ITAC program directed Iraqi aircraft to hit ISIS targets.<sup>153</sup>

During the quarter, the ISF performed 26 airstrikes against ISIS targets, down from 31 strikes reported in the previous quarter.<sup>154</sup> (See Table 2.) Eighteen strikes were conducted by the Iraqi Air Force using fixed-wing F-16s or AC-208s, seven by the IqAAC using Bell-407, EC-635, Mi-17, and Mi-35 helicopters, and one was a mixed operation that lasted for six hours.<sup>155</sup> Eight operational missions were deliberately planned in accordance with the ISF's planning processes.<sup>156</sup> CJTF-OIR attributed the relatively low number of airstrikes during the quarter to bad weather conditions.<sup>157</sup>

Date	Aircraft	Location	Target	Munition
Jun. 3	F-16	Ninewa	2 x Cave + 1 x ADM	2 x GBU-10 + 2 x GBU-12
Jun. 3	F-16	Ninewa	1 x Cave	2 x GBU-10 + 2 x GBU-12
Jun. 3	F-16	Anbar	1 x Truck + 3 x ADM	8 x GBU-12
Jun. 8	F-16	Anbar	1 x BDL	2 x GBU-10
Jun. 14	1 x Bell-407 + 1 x Mi-35	Salah ad Din	1 x BDL + 5 x ADM	12.7mm gun
Jun. 14	Coalition ISR	Salah ad Din	1 x BDL + 8 x ADM	3 x AGM-114
Jun. 16	F-16	Kirkuk	3 x BDL	6 x GBU-12
Jun. 16	1 x Bell-407 + 1 x Mi-35	Baghdad	1 x BDL	12.7mm gun
Jun. 16	1 x Mi-17	Kirkuk	1 x BDL + 1 truck	7.62mm gun
Jun. 16	1 x Bell-407 + 1 x EC-635	Kirkuk	1 x Building	12.7mm gun
Jun. 18	Coalition ISR	Anbar	1 x Truck + 4 x ADM	2 x AGM-114
Jun. 21	F-16	Kirkuk	6 x BDL	6 x GBU-12

#### Munitions Key

GBU-10 – 2,000-pound guided bomb

GBU-12 – 500-pound guided bomb

AGM-114 – Hellfire guided missile

Mk-82 – 500-pound unguided bomb

**Sources:** CJTF-OIR, response to DoD OIG request for information, 22.3 OIR 049, 6/22/2022; CJTF-OIR, response to DoD OIG request for information, 22.3 OIR FOL049, 7/11/2022.

CJTF-OIR reported that one important takeaway during the quarter is the four occasions in which IqAAC assets achieved the successful elimination of multiple ISIS personnel and equipment while executing cost-effective operations that consumed minimal Iraqi resources to achieve the objective. (See Table 2.) In contrast, CJTF-OIR explained that although the targeting of ISIS personnel can be accomplished using costly laser-guided munitions released by Iraqi Air Force fixed-wing aircraft, it is not necessarily the most effective means of striking ISIS personnel in the open.<sup>158</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that 286 sorties were flown during the quarter by Iraq's F-16s, the most sophisticated aerial platform in Iraq's arsenal. This was an average of approximately three training sorties per day by Iraq's two F-16 squadrons. Approximately 12 percent of Iraqi F-16s sorties were combat sorties, while the vast majority were for training where objectives and outcomes focused on ground attack, close air support, counter air, and maintaining pilot currency with basic functions of air operations.<sup>159</sup> The combat sorties during the quarter focused on air-to-ground attacks against ISIS. CJTF-OIR said that in most cases, if an operational tasking arises aircraft are diverted from a training sortie.<sup>160</sup> In June, poor weather and operational taskings resulted in the cancellation of 26 training sorties, a 23 percent reduction to the ISF's F-16 training schedule.<sup>161</sup>

ISF operations were concentrated in areas where ISIS was most active, including in Ninewa, Anbar, Diyala, Salah ad Din, Kirkuk, and Baghdad provinces. CJTF-OIR said that when ISIS activity increased in a location, the JOC-I coordinated to plan and conduct operations to stop ISIS's progress. CJTF-OIR advisors observed an increase in interagency collaboration, coordination, and integration with improved results against ISIS. Ministry of Interior, CTS, and JOC-I leaders and their respective staff officers shared more information and resources, which enabled kinetic strikes by ISF aircraft in Iraq's western region during the quarter.<sup>162</sup>

Operations conducted with resources pooled from various ISF units typically resulted in higher-level ISIS leaders and cells being killed or captured. CJTF-OIR assessed that Iraqi leaders appear to be realizing they can achieve more success by working together toward a common security goal than by remaining insular. For example, on May 14, the JOC-I utilized the emerging CTS ITAC capability for the first operational air-to-ground strikes where an ITAC directed munitions from an Iraqi fighter onto a target.<sup>163</sup> The technique, enabled by SOAG training, will allow target designation by Iraqi ground forces to support an air strike if employed correctly.<sup>164</sup>

## Iraqi Targeting Process Still Dependent on Coalition Enabling

CJTF-OIR reported that the kinetic operations involving Iraqi aircraft were generally conducted with the assistance of Coalition assets, including Coalition ISR aircraft. In at least two instances, Coalition aircraft also conducted strikes, killing a total of 12 suspected ISIS fighters.<sup>165</sup> (See Table 2.) CJTF-OIR reported that the ISF still relies on Coalition ISR assets, when requested and rules of engagement are met, to provide target locations and laser designate targets for ISF precision airstrikes.<sup>166</sup>

CJTF-OIR observed improvements in the ISF's ability to conduct unilateral missions during the quarter. When Coalition assets could not support a strike, Iraq assets would attempt to

**CJTF-OIR reported that 286 sorties were flown during the quarter by Iraq's F-16s, the most sophisticated aerial platform in Iraq's arsenal.**

**According to CJTF-OIR, the JOC-I Targeting/Strike Cell continued to progress towards a more autonomous deliberate targeting process and incremental successes have created more momentum.**

conduct the strike on their own. However, success rates were mixed, with insufficient data available to determine if success or failure was due to individual pilots, missions, or specific platforms. Nonetheless, CJTF-OIR said that airstrikes deemed “unsuccessful” demonstrated the ISF’s ability and desire to conduct independent operations.<sup>167</sup>

However, the ISF still demonstrated a need to improve how it allocates its ISR assets. For example, during phase two of Operation Willing Resolve, the availability of Coalition ISR assets was limited due to poor weather conditions, requiring the ISF to utilize its own ISR from the IqAAC. When Coalition ISR was able to surge back in support of the operation, the JOC-I requested that the aircraft monitor ISF ground force maneuvers rather than support target development. CJTF-OIR said that Iraqi attack helicopters or A/RC-208 aircraft would have been the more appropriate assets to provide timely support to ISF ground forces in contact with the enemy, rather than Coalition ISR. CJTF-OIR added that over reliance on Coalition ISR and requests for monitoring friendly ground forces are unnecessary when comprehensive intelligence collection planning by the JOC-I is conducted to optimize the ISF’s own ISR capabilities.<sup>168</sup>

According to CJTF-OIR, the JOC-I Targeting/Strike Cell continued to progress towards a more autonomous deliberate targeting process and incremental successes have created more momentum. However, the lack of staffing continues to hinder the effectiveness of the Strike Cell and impedes the JOC-I’s ability to make progress towards a more agile or dynamic targeting cycle.<sup>169</sup>

Additionally, Coalition advisors from the MAG and the SOAG remained participants within the Strike Cell to advise and oversee its development of operations through the JOC-I approval process. CJTF-OIR said that to avoid partner force reliance on their presence, MAG and SOAG liaison officers focus on building relationships between key ISF leaders and improving communication across the ISF’s Strike Cell to get the Iraqis to work through their own systems. CJTF-OIR assessed that this strategy has resulted in more joint CTS-ISF strikes against ISIS and a more efficient process, including from the CTS’s ITAC program. While the SOAG is responsible for advising the training and implementation of the ITAC program, any execution of close air support or precision airstrikes requires coordination through the JOC-I. CJTF-OIR said that as a result, the Coalition advisors from the SOAG and MAG work closely together on these efforts.<sup>170</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that while senior ISF leaders continued to seek counsel from the MAG and in most cases are receptive to feedback, their decision to strike lawful military targets is often influenced by what CJTF-OIR called “extraneous factors,” such as retaliation for ISF casualties, competition between intelligence agencies, and a lack of tactical patience.<sup>171</sup>

## **The War in Ukraine Affected ISF Aircraft Availability**

CJTF-OIR reported that it remains concerned about Iraqi aircraft that do not have maintenance contracts, and the overall logistics support effort for air operations.<sup>172</sup> According to USCENTCOM, the war in Ukraine has affected the ability of the ISF to sustain its equipment. Maintenance costs and disrupted supply chains contributed to the ISF’s inability to maintain four Russian-designed airframes that presently cannot be maintained through logistics support contracts due to U.S. and international sanctions affecting those



contracts.<sup>173</sup> Parts scarcity is still a primary concern for the ISF's Russian-designed airframes, such as Su-25 ground attack aircraft and Mi-17 and Mi-35 helicopters, as well as Czech-made L-159 light fighters, with limited availability to repair and replace failed aircraft components.<sup>174</sup>

In particular, the conflict in Ukraine has negatively impacted support for the Mi-17 medium lift helicopter, which serves as the ISF's primary platform to support ground forces with air assault and medevac capabilities and is the most abundant airframe within the IqAAC fleet. CJTF-OIR reported that reduced maintenance and logistical support for the Mi-17 resulted in the most significant decrease in mission capability rate among ISF aircraft attached to ground units.<sup>175</sup> Additionally, given the ISF's desire to frequently utilize the Mi-17 in operations, airframes are exceeding their recommended flight hours, exacerbating their poor mission capable rates.<sup>176</sup> CJTF-OIR said it expects a reduced operational status of these platforms for at least the duration of the Ukraine conflict.<sup>177</sup>

Additional information about the impact of the war in Ukraine can be found in the classified appendix to this report.

## ISF Requests Support for Helicopter Fleet

USCENTCOM reported that the IqAAC, which operate Iraq's helicopter fleet, struggles to maintain and employ 10 different airframes in operations against ISIS.<sup>178</sup> USCENTCOM noted a declining trend in Iraqi pilot proficiency due to the low mission capability rates across most of the IqAAC's platforms.<sup>179</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that the ISF relies heavily on the Coalition for maintenance and readiness of U.S.-produced platforms. For example, the Bell-407 helicopter, used in both reconnaissance and attack roles, is proving to be an increasingly capable platform with respect to endurance, simplified maintenance compared to the F-16, and lethality.<sup>180</sup> CJTF-OIR and the DoS reported that contractors from the U.S.-based helicopter producer Bell arrived in country in July, which should improve the readiness of Iraq's Bell-407 and UH-1H utility helicopters in the near future.<sup>181</sup> Additionally, USCENTCOM stated that the IqAAC seeks to install multiband radios with secure capabilities on its attack and medium lift fleets to enhance air-to-ground integration with Iraqi ground forces.<sup>182</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that the IqAAC, which operates Iraq's helicopter fleet, submitted a request for CTEF assistance to support aircraft and airfield equipment modernization. However, OIR does not have an aviation support program and the CTEF is not used to support Iraqi aviation. Instead, OSC-I provides support through the FMS and FMF programs.<sup>183</sup>

USCENTCOM added that the IqAAC requires a more robust air advisor program to assist with dynamic targeting, intelligence fusion, and long-term requirements development. To continue the counter-ISIS fight and keep aircraft operational, the IqAAC and Iraqi government requested continued contractor support for their light attack and medium lift platforms, with future requests aimed at additional platforms.<sup>184</sup> While there was no change in CJTF-OIR activities to address the shortcomings compared to last quarter, CJTF-OIR continued to work with OSC-I to address logistics, maintenance, and capability gaps within the Iraqi Air Force and IqAAC.<sup>185</sup>

**The conflict in Ukraine has negatively impacted support for the Mi-17 medium lift helicopter, which serves as the ISF's primary platform to support ground forces with air assault and medevac capabilities and the most abundant airframe within the IqAAC fleet.**

**CJTF-OIR reported that the KSF and ISF conducted two joint operations during the reporting period.**

## **ISF Helicopters Utilized For Air Assaults During Counter-ISIS Operation, Demonstrating Room for Improvement**

Despite maintenance and logistics concerns, CJTF-OIR said the ISF demonstrated initiative in attempting to utilize IqAAC helicopters for air assaults with the CTS during the second phase of Operation Willing Resolve this quarter. However, CJTF-OIR said that the end results of the air assaults were “likened to shows of force” because the air insertions were on target areas abandoned by ISIS. CJTF-OIR attributed the results to intelligence failures, with poor pattern of life confirmation and outdated information.<sup>186</sup>

CJTF-OIR stated that improvements to the ISF’s air assault capability start with training the IqAAC and CTS in loading, movement during night operations, insertions, and extractions, to raise their level of confidence. Next, collaborative mission planning is needed between the JOC-I, IqAAC, CTS, and a designated quick response force to solidify target areas, insertion points, ground movement plans, additional air and ground support to the CTS element, contingency planning for medevac, actions when on the objective, and lastly a departure plan for friendly forces. Additionally, CJTF-OIR recommended that the ISF dedicate specific IqAAC aircraft and crews to co-locate with the CTS, to allow for a ready rapid response force when ISIS targets of opportunity emerge. This co-location would establish a unique ISF capability that can deploy across Iraq in response to various contingencies or targeting opportunities.<sup>187</sup>

## **KURDISH SECURITY FORCES**

### **KSF and ISF Conducted Joint Operations against ISIS**

CJTF-OIR reported that the KSF and ISF conducted two joint operations during the reporting period. The first one was a clearance operation that occurred along the Kurdish Coordination Line (KCL), which CJTF-OIR said disrupted and deterred ISIS activity in that area.<sup>188</sup>

The second was a joint strike and clearance operation in the Makhmur Mountains conducted by the Iraqi CTS and Iraqi Air Force, with KSF units conducting a subsequent ground clearance operation. CJTF-OIR said that the operation destroyed most of an ISIS cell that had been active in the mountains.<sup>189</sup> A third operation conducted by the CTS did not involve the KSF, but the two sides coordinated to ensure the safety of KSF forces.<sup>190</sup>

In addition to these ISF-KSF operations, CJTF-OIR reported that the KSF’s 1st Special Forces Gulan Division and ISF’s Border Police conducted joint patrols to secure the Iraqi Kurdistan Region’s border with Syria.<sup>191</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that while the KSF are capable of planning and executing joint operations with the ISF, the operations are limited to basic battlespace deconfliction and coordination maneuvers.<sup>192</sup> The MAG continued to support KSF efforts to develop an intelligence-driven operational planning process.<sup>193</sup>

In addition to the joint operations, CJTF-OIR reported that KSF units conducted at least 6 unilateral clearance operations against ISIS in areas along the KCL.<sup>194</sup> CJTF-OIR said that

the operations disrupted potential ISIS activities and acted as a deterrent.<sup>195</sup> However, the operations tended to be “simple in scope,” typically lasting no more than few hours, and with the exception of some counter terrorism forces, usually occurred during daylight hours.<sup>196</sup>

CJTF-OIR also reported that most of the KSF’s artillery systems are old and in poor condition.<sup>197</sup> Additionally, most of its artillery capability is confined to two support commands that were recently realigned under the command of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK); once the transition is complete, some artillery systems will become obsolete.<sup>198</sup>

## **Stalled Iraqi Government Formation Continued to Impact Efforts to Stand Up a Joint ISF-KSF Brigade**

CJTF-OIR reported that the inability of Iraqi politicians to form a government has delayed the formation of an ISF-KSF Joint Brigade due to the lack of an MoD budget under the caretaker government.<sup>199</sup>

Despite the delay, on June 23, the MoD and the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs (MoPA) reached an agreement to provide training to KSF forces and allow residents of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region to enroll in the MoD’s military academy and staff college, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).<sup>200</sup>

## **The MoPA Continued to Form Nonpartisan Regional Guard Brigades**

CJTF-OIR reported that the MoPA continued to incorporate units from Peshmerga forces aligned with the region’s two biggest political parties into the MoPA’s nonpartisan Regional Guard Brigades as part of reforms designed to create one unified Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) security force.<sup>201</sup>

During the quarter, two additional Peshmerga units prepared to transfer to MoPA control.<sup>202</sup> Additionally, the MoPA oversees two Support Force Commands that were also previously under the command of the two main political parties.<sup>203</sup>

USCENTCOM said that “ideally” the units moving to the MoPA should be apolitical, non-partisan forces “loyal to the KRG and subordinate to the MoPA.” However, “like the partisan Peshmerga, the Regional Guard Brigades likely will remain somewhat influenced by partisan loyalties and political ties,” USCENTCOM said.<sup>204</sup>

USCENTCOM said that KRG leaders expressed support for efforts to unify forces under the MoPA and reduce partisan alignment, but added that it was likely that the KSF will continue to answer to political parties “for the foreseeable future” and “unlikely the KSF will completely unify as a nonpartisan force due to long-term distrust and unwillingness to relinquish control of party affiliated security forces.”<sup>205</sup>

## Role of Third Parties

### **IRAN-ALIGNED MILITIAS CONTINUED ATTACKS, DEMONSTRATING PERSISTENT OPPOSITION TO COALITION FORCE PRESENCE**

Last quarter, Iraqi militias aligned with Iran briefly paused attacks following a series of strikes in early January that the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) assessed was probably to focus on government formation, manage escalation, and improve their operational capabilities.<sup>206</sup> The DIA and USCENTCOM reported that Iran-aligned militias conducted sporadic attacks during the quarter.<sup>207</sup> According to CJTF-OIR, Iran-backed militias' attacks on Coalition forces likely complicated some aspects of the Coalition's efforts to counter ISIS. Militias continued to issue public threats against U.S. forces within the Coalition to pressure the United States to withdraw all military forces from Iraq.<sup>208</sup>

Attacks conducted by Iran-aligned militias during the quarter included three indirect fire attacks against al-Asad Air Base (April 30 and May 30) and the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad (May 4), a decrease from the four rocket attacks that occurred last quarter.<sup>209</sup> The militias also conducted UAV strikes against al-Asad on April 8 and the Baghdad International Airport, which hosts the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center, on May 24.<sup>210</sup> USCENTCOM said the militias employed Iranian-made UAVs.<sup>211</sup> The Iraqi government publicly condemned the attack.<sup>212</sup>

According to USCENTCOM, Iran-aligned militias conducted approximately 37 IED attacks against Coalition-associated logistical convoys during the quarter, primarily in southern Iraq. There were 49 such IED attacks in the previous quarter.<sup>213</sup> CJTF-OIR said the IED attacks continue to disrupt logistics and damage materiel en route to support the counter-ISIS mission.<sup>214</sup> A militia front group that emerged in early 2021 called the International Resistance Faction claimed both rocket attacks on al-Asad Air Base and has claimed several IED attacks on Coalition-contracted convoys.<sup>215</sup>

### **CONCERNS ABOUT IRAN-ALIGNED MILITIAS' ABILITY TO ESCALATE ATTACKS ON U.S. AND COALITION INTERESTS REMAIN**

The DIA reported that leading militia groups have access to anti-aircraft weaponry, including man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS), 23mm anti-aircraft artillery, and other surface-to-air missile systems. Iran-aligned militias have messaged an intent to engage U.S. military aircraft, including by downing an Iraqi military helicopter in June 2021 using a MANPADS which the DIA assessed the militia probably misidentified as a U.S. aircraft.<sup>216</sup> In addition to anti-air threats, the DIA said that the militias maintain the capability to escalate their attacks using more sophisticated weaponry such as ballistic and cruise missiles, presenting an enduring threat to U.S. interests.<sup>217</sup>

The militias have also continued to attack non-U.S. and Coalition targets in the region. During the quarter, Iran-aligned militia groups attacked Turkish forces in northern Iraq with at least one UAV and multiple indirect fire attacks targeting the Zilkan base near Bashiqa, Ninewa province. The DIA said these attacks included salvos of 107mm and 122mm rockets fired from multiple rocket launchers in Mosul and the Ninewa Plains. One militia front group, Ahrar Sinjar, emerged on April 3 and has since claimed at least four attacks on Turkish forces, including the one UAV strike in May.<sup>218</sup>

Additionally, Iran-aligned militias attacked Kurdish targets and alleged Israeli targets in northern Iraq. The DIA said that on April 6 and May 1, militias fired rockets at the Kurdish KAR Group's Kawergosk oil refinery in Erbil, reflecting a rise in militia attacks against Kurdish infrastructure.

*(continued from next page)*



## Role of Third Parties *(continued from previous page)*

According to Iranian press, a UAV that impacted in Erbil on June 8 was intended to strike an Israeli agent. The DIA reported that Iran continues to rely on Iraqi militias to conduct attacks that advance its goals, including potential retaliatory operations against Israel.<sup>219</sup>

The DIA noted no remarkable change in the relationship between the Iraqi government and the PMF, which is dominated by Iran-aligned militias. The DIA assessed Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi almost certainly is refraining from targeting the militias to avoid risking an outbreak of violence during the government formation process, despite suspicions that militants continued to attack political rivals and the Coalition during the quarter.<sup>220</sup>

### **IRAQI GOVERNMENT HAS LIMITED ABILITY TO CONTROL IRANIAN INFLUENCE**

The DIA said that the Iraqi government remains largely unwilling to assert control over the PMF and its official governing body, the Popular Mobilization Committee or to hold its members accountable. As of June, ISF units remain committed to the Iraqi government and follow its orders, including conducting joint operations with the PMF units. The DIA said it was unable to assess changes in the ISF's willingness to confront Iran-aligned militias because the Iraqi government did not issue orders against the militias during the quarter.<sup>221</sup>

Through their affiliation with the Shia Coordination Framework political bloc, the Iran-aligned militias and Popular Mobilization Committee maintained influence within Iraq's parliament and government ministries, which they leverage to safeguard their interests. The DIA, citing press reporting, stated that the militia groups are also able to exert influence in Iraq's judiciary through intimidation tactics and leveraging sympathetic judges to delay government formation.<sup>222</sup>

## POLITICS AND ECONOMICS

The U.S. Government, through the DoS, coordinates diplomacy and public diplomacy programs to support Iraq's stability and enable reconstruction. The DoS said that this engagement is necessary to combat malign foreign influence, particularly from Iran. The U.S. Government also supports Iraqi efforts to ensure a more responsive government and reduce corruption; foster private sector-led economic growth and job creation; and strengthen civil society groups so that they can operate freely.<sup>223</sup>

## GOVERNANCE

### **Iraqi Government Formation Remains Stalled**

More than 8 months after Iraq's parliamentary elections in October 2021, Iraqi political leaders have been unable to form a new government. Following the elections, two major coalitions formed. The Tripartite Alliance, led by Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, included the Sunni Sovereignty Alliance Democratic Party led by Parliamentary Speaker Mohammed al-Halbousi, and the KDP. The rival coalition was the Coordination Framework, comprised predominantly of Iran-aligned Shia political parties that lost seats in the elections.<sup>224</sup>

The new parliament was sworn in soon after the election results were ratified by Iraq's Federal Supreme Court. The Speaker was quickly re-elected to a second 4-year term. Then the Federal Supreme Court ruled that Iraq's 2005 Constitution requires a two-thirds majority (220 of 329 members) of the parliament to elect the new president, which is the next step in

the government formation process. Subsequently, Iraq's parliament met three times to vote on a president and was unable to achieve the necessary quorum.<sup>225</sup>

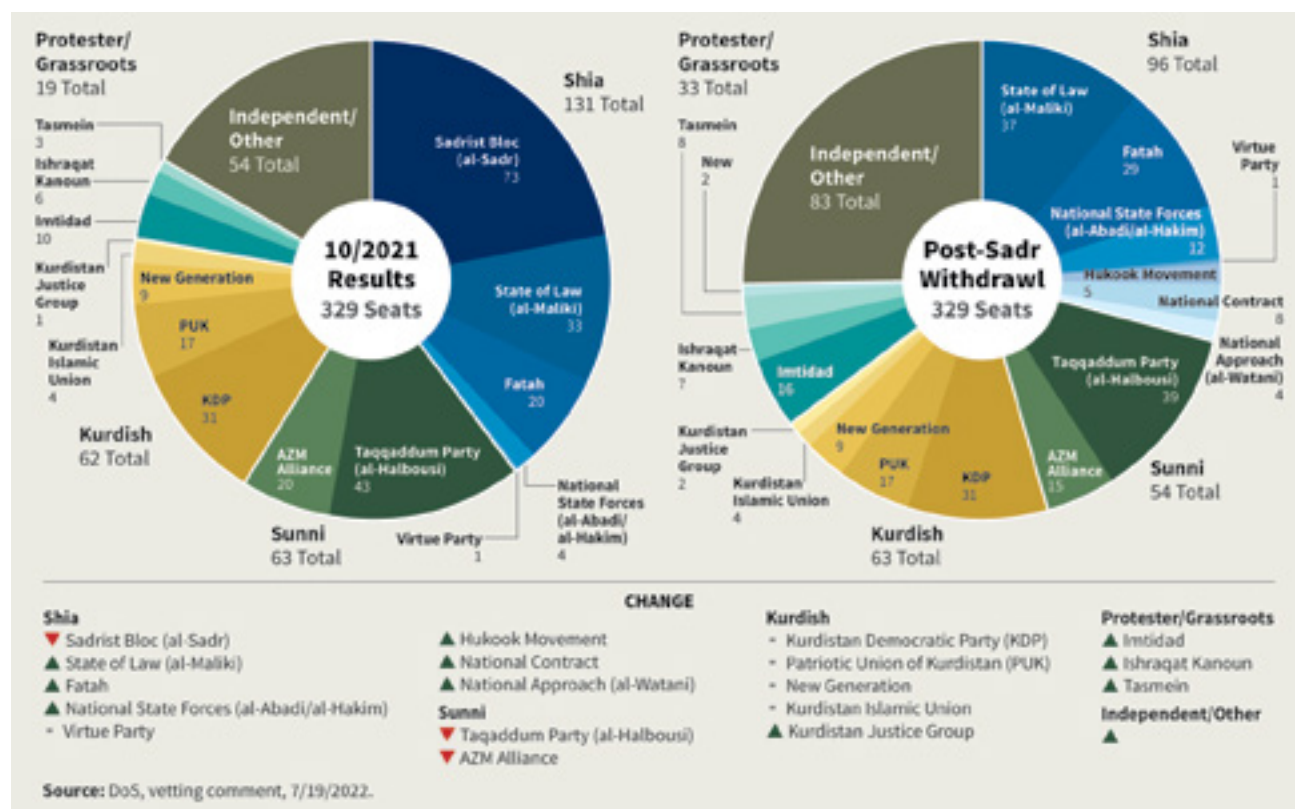
Al-Sadr, whose party won the most seats, was unable to assemble the two-thirds majority he needed for the parliament to elect the KDP's pick for president. On June 14, he directed the 73 parliament members from his party to resign, ending his effort to form a government.<sup>226</sup>

### Parliament Swears in Replacement Members

Under Iraqi law, when a parliamentary seat becomes vacant, the second-place candidate takes the seat.<sup>227</sup> On June 23, Speaker al-Halbousi swore in most of the 73 replacement candidates. According to the DoS, the Iran-aligned Framework gained at least 36 seats, while independents filled many of the remaining seats.<sup>228</sup> Three of the second-place candidates were Sadrists who refused to be sworn in.<sup>229</sup> The DoS said that the Kata'ib Hezbollah's Haqooq Movement, which gained five replacement seats, decide to resign from the parliament for unknown reasons.<sup>230</sup> The DoS also reported that 31 of the 73 Sadr party members who resigned were women, and they were replaced by women.<sup>231</sup> The Framework gained the most seats as a result of the reshuffle and took the lead in negotiations with the KDP and the Sunni Sovereignty Alliance to form the government.<sup>232</sup> (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4.

#### Iraqi Parliamentary Election Results by Party



## Diplomatic Personnel and Facilities

### DIPLOMATIC STAFFING LIMITS UNDERMINED EMBASSY OPERATIONS

On July 1, the DoS ended the ordered departure status for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center (BDSC).<sup>233</sup> The two locations had been operating under ordered departure status since March 2020 in response to health and security concerns.<sup>234</sup> Although the ordered departure has been terminated, the embassy, BDSC, and the U.S. Consulate General in Erbil continued to operate under a separate in-country ceiling for certain U.S. direct-hire and third-country personnel. The DoS said that the in-country staffing cap limits diplomatic engagement and the ability to provide management controls, such as contract oversight.<sup>235</sup>

Around the world, diplomatic missions rely on a stable workforce to carry out their diplomatic work, often in challenging conditions. As a result of the in-country staffing cap and the ordered departure, the DoS said embassy staff spent more time and energy on solving problems that could be managed more efficiently and effectively with a full staff. They also paid less attention to facilities and infrastructure, which will have an adverse impact in coming months. In addition, the DoS said time spent working on ordered departure-related matters during the quarter was time removed from diplomatic engagements, program oversight and review, and general management. The impact of a reduced staff on the ability of the United States to reach its Integrated Country Strategy goals may not be identifiable for years to come, the DoS said.<sup>236</sup>

Although lifting the ordered departure will allow for the shift to normal operations, the in-country staffing cap prevents an immediate influx of personnel and contractors or temporary duty personnel to post, which hampers program oversight and increases operational risk.<sup>237</sup>

The embassy's human resources section works closely with the embassy front office to manage the cap across Mission Iraq and coordinates closely with the DoS Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to ensure the cap is maintained at all times. Staff are only permitted to travel to post after human resources and the front office ensure the mission will not go over the in-country staffing cap.<sup>238</sup>

As part of the Integrated Country Strategy, Mission Iraq conducted a comprehensive staffing review that examined every job category in the mission. The comprehensive staffing review concluded that Mission Iraq staffing needs to be increased.<sup>239</sup>

### ERBIL NEW CONSULATE COMPOUND FACING RISKS AND DELAYS

The DoS approved \$32.5 million in contract modifications for the New Consulate Compound in Erbil, increasing the contract amount to \$454 million; however, the DoS reported "significant yet unresolved" adjustments to the contract submitted by the contractor that could add to the cost of the project. Additionally, the DoS reported numerous pending scope-of-work requests that may add "extreme costs, delays, and security risks" to the project.<sup>240</sup>

The DoS project director's estimated "substantial completion" date is March 1, 2024, nearly two years behind schedule. Occupancy is set to begin on April 30, 2024. According to the latest DoS report, the project's general contractor has not been able to make up the 189 days lost to the coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.<sup>241</sup>

Additional information about construction at the embassy compound can be found in the classified appendix to this report.

**In mid-May, the Iraqi government agreed to pay back \$1.6 billion in debt to Iran in order to secure a steady supply of gas from Iran to produce electricity during the summer months, according to a media report.**

The KDP and its rival, the PUK, must agree on who should be the next president. Under the ethnosectarian power sharing agreement among the Sunnis, Shia, and Kurds, the Kurdish political parties nominate a Kurdish candidate for Iraq's president. Once approved by the parliament, the president designates the largest parliamentary bloc to select a prime minister and cabinet ministers.<sup>242</sup> Past presidents have been chosen by the PUK, but this year the KDP put forth its own candidate, which led to a stalemate.<sup>243</sup>

Additional information about government formation during the quarter can be found in the classified appendix to this report.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **Summer Heat Comes Early, Straining Electricity Grid**

The summer heat arrived early in Iraq, with high humidity and triple-digit temperatures across the country in June. The heat exacerbated Iraq's chronic electricity outages. Only Iraqis who could afford private generators could keep air conditioners operational.<sup>244</sup>

In mid-May, the Iraqi government agreed to pay \$1.6 billion in debt owed to Iran in order to secure a steady supply of gas from Iran to produce electricity during the summer months, according to a media report.<sup>245</sup> The report said U.S. sanctions on importation of Iranian oil and gas have complicated Iraq's payment for the imports; however, the DoS said U.S. sanctions do not prohibit Iraqi imports of Iranian gas and electricity. While U.S. sanctions do not target gas and electricity imports, Iraq must receive a waiver from the United States if it pays designated entities for its electricity debt. The United States has repeatedly granted this waiver.<sup>246</sup> The DoS said that purchasing gas and electricity from Iran is not a new arrangement and will help Iraq meet demand during the summer months.<sup>247</sup>

### **Energy Solutions to Meet Demand Years Off**

The DoS reported that energy demand in Iraq will likely exceed supply by as much as 50 percent over the summer months. USAID has been working with the Iraqi government and private industry to integrate renewable energy sources to offset the lack of electricity supply. In addition, USAID has worked with the Iraqi government and KRG Ministry of Electricity to manage electricity production and distribution more effectively. Iraq reached a financial settlement during the quarter on a regional interconnection electricity transmission line to Jordan. USAID provided funding for construction of the line on the Jordanian side, while the U.S. Government strongly supported General Electric's bid on construction in Iraq. The line will add 200 megawatts to the Iraqi grid in the first phase and 800 megawatts after the second phase is completed in approximately 24 months.<sup>248</sup>

The DoS reported that the Iraqi Kurdistan Region has enough installed electricity capacity to meet its demand but lacks the necessary gas supplies to run all of its generation facilities. The expansion of the Khor Mor gas field will help provide natural gas to increase electricity generation.<sup>249</sup> However, work on the expansion was suspended following three rocket attacks on the gas field.<sup>250</sup> Before the attacks, the expansion of the gas field was not expected to produce additional electricity until the spring of 2023. To address the interim shortfall, the KRG connected to the Turkish grid, which enabled the importation of 500 megawatts



of electricity. The connection is undergoing an upgrade, which should enable up to 1,000 megawatts of imports within 1 year.<sup>251</sup>

## ECONOMIC GROWTH

### Iraqi Parliament Acts to Address Rising Food Prices

In May, the International Monetary Fund issued a report stating that Iraq's most urgent priority is "cushioning the impact of rising food prices on the most vulnerable Iraqis."<sup>252</sup>

On June 9, the Iraqi parliament approved the "Emergency Law for Food Security and Development." According to a media report, the new law allows the Iraqi government to use current revenues to offset rising food prices. Specifically, the law permits spending \$17 billion to expand food subsidies for Iraqis facing rising prices exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the impact of the severe drought, and rising electricity consumption during the summer months.<sup>253</sup>

**In May, the International Monetary Fund issued a report stating that Iraq's most urgent priority is "cushioning the impact of rising food prices on the most vulnerable Iraqis."**

### Oil Export Revenues Top \$33 Billion for the Quarter

The price per barrel and average daily revenues from Iraq's oil exports rose during the quarter.<sup>254</sup> (See Figure 5.) The difference between the projected and actual average daily revenues has created a significant surplus. However, because a new government has not been formed and therefore a new budget has not been submitted, the Iraqi government is unable to spend the surplus. Until a prime minister forms a new government and the parliament approves a new budget, the government is being funded with a month-to-month allocation at the level approved in the 2021 budget.<sup>255</sup>

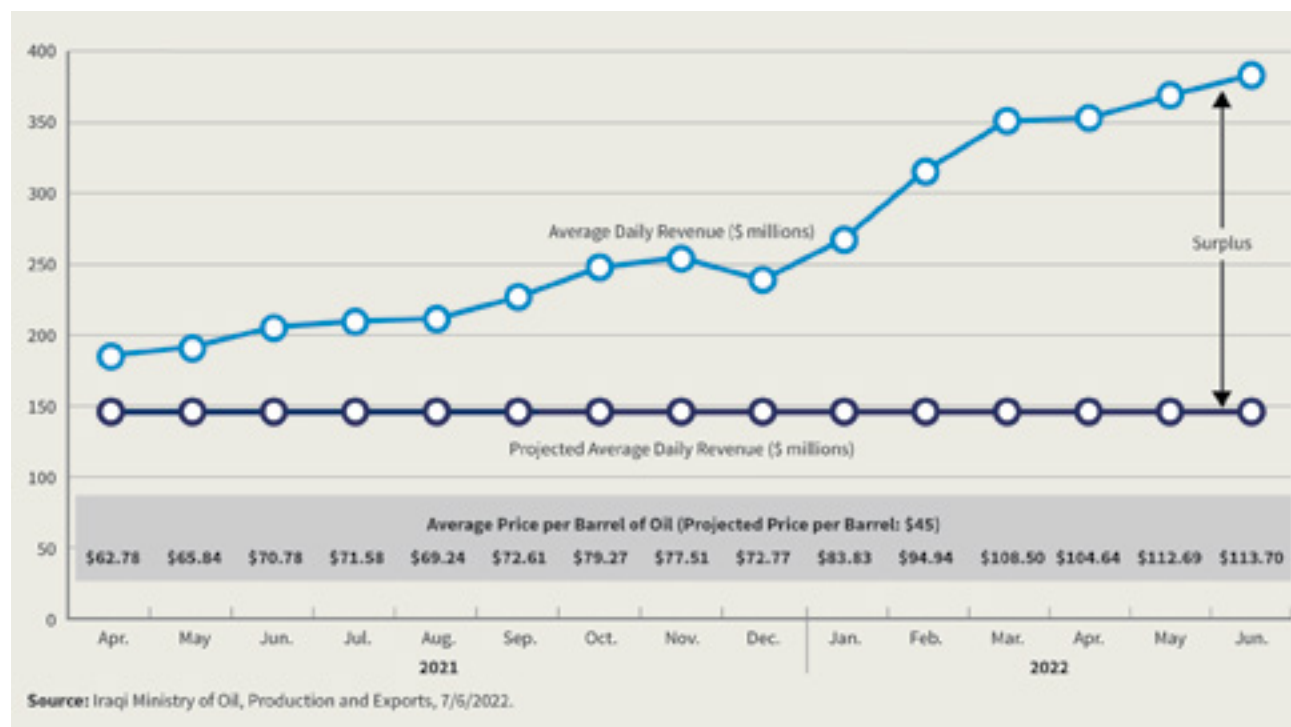
### Baghdad-Erbil Tensions Rise Over Oil Sales

In 2007, the Iraqi Kurdistan Region's parliament passed a law enabling Kurdish authorities to independently develop new oil and natural gas fields, leading to a dispute with federal Iraq over the revenues generated from those fields.<sup>256</sup> In February 2022, Iraq's Federal Supreme Court declared the 2007 law unconstitutional, ruling that oil contracts signed by the Kurdistan Regional Government and foreign oil companies were invalid.<sup>257</sup>

The KRG rejected the ruling and has continued to produce and sell oil in the same quantity as before the decision.<sup>258</sup> The Chief Justice of the Kurdistan Judicial Council argued that because the Iraqi Constitution on which the Federal Court's decision was based was ratified in 2005, it governs only oil and gas that was being extracted at that time. Oil and gas fields developed later are exempt from the shared management arrangements that govern the earlier fields, the chief justice said.<sup>259</sup>

The Iraqi government has initiated several efforts to take control of the oil and gas revenues from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. The DoS reported that Iraq's Ministry of Oil sent letters to selected international oil companies seeking copies of their contracts with the KRG's Ministry of Natural Resources and threatening litigation. The Ministry of Oil also sent a request to the U.S. Development Finance Corporation for a copy of an agreement DFC entered into with an energy company working in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.<sup>260</sup>

Figure 5.

**Actual vs. Projected Daily Oil Revenue, Monthly Average, in \$ Millions, April 2021–June 2022**

In May, the Iraqi government retained an international law firm to approach oil and gas firms operating in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region to sign new contracts with Iraq's State Organization for Marketing of Oil.<sup>261</sup> In early June, the Ministry of Oil sent legal summons to appear before Iraq's Commercial Court to at least seven of the international oil companies to which it had sent letters.<sup>262</sup> Only HKN, a U.S. oil and gas company, showed up for the court date on June 5, which resulted in a postponement of the first hearing in the Oil Ministry's lawsuit.<sup>263</sup> On July 4, the same commercial court invalidated the contracts of four international oil companies, including U.S., Canadian, Norwegian, and British firms. The DoS said the Ministry of Oil's application of the law has been uneven, as it has not yet pursued litigation against all firms operating in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. Notably, litigation has not been commenced against international oil companies from Russia and the UAE, while a judgment against the only Chinese company operating in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region was postponed.<sup>264</sup>

The DoS reported that the international oil companies have expressed concern about the legal limbo created by the Federal Supreme Court decision and its potential effects on their investment decisions.<sup>265</sup> In mid-June, the Ministry of Oil, through the state-run Basrah Oil Company, threatened to blacklist services companies that conduct business in the Kurdish oil sector, according to the DoS. On June 12, the ministry sent letters to the companies demanding that they pledge to stop working in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region and to terminate all contracts with the KRG in 3 months.<sup>266</sup>

On June 20, a KRG official told the U.S. Consulate General in Erbil that one oil and gas fields service company had informed the KRG that it would forego bidding on projects managed by the KRG.<sup>267</sup> This decision was followed by media reports that U.S. oil services companies Halliburton and Schlumberger would refrain from entering into new contracts with the KRG.<sup>268</sup>

## REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

### Iraqi Prime Minister Reviews Diplomatic Achievements

At a press conference on June 8, Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi reviewed his 2 years in office, stating that Iraq was isolated when he came into office.<sup>269</sup> Now, Iraq is the center of the region and has hosted dialogues with regional neighbors, the prime minister noted. Iraq hosted five dialogue sessions between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the most recent taking place in April.<sup>270</sup>

As part of the prime minister's initiative, he traveled to Saudi Arabia on June 25 to meet with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to discuss reviving the talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran that had been hosted by Iraq, according to media reports. The next day the prime minister traveled to Iran to meet with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi. They discussed the need for stability in the Middle East, including helping Iran and Saudi Arabia improve their relations.<sup>271</sup>

### Iraqi Parliament Criminalizes Relations with Israel

On May 26, the Iraqi parliament overwhelmingly approved a bill criminalizing normalization of relations with Israel, including establishing diplomatic, political, military, economic, cultural, or any other ties. The prohibition includes attending conferences or other organized events that support normalization of relations with Israel. Violation of the law is punishable by death or life imprisonment, according to media reports, building on preexisting anti-normalization language in Iraq's penal code.<sup>272</sup> On June 23, the Iraqi government officially published the law in Iraq's federal register, putting the law into effect.<sup>273</sup>

Following passage of the law, Shia leader Muqtada al-Sadr, whose party recently withdrew from parliament, told his supporters to celebrate in the streets chanting anti-Israel slogans in support of the new law.<sup>274</sup> The DoS issued a statement that the United States was "deeply disturbed" by the law, saying that it jeopardizes freedom of expression and promotes an environment of antisemitism.<sup>275</sup>

### Kurdish Leader Looks to the United Nations to Mediate Discussions Between the KRG and Federal Iraq

According to media reports, in May, Iraqi Kurdistan President Nechirvan Barzani submitted several political requests to the UN Security Council regarding developments in Iraq. Specifically, President Barzani asked the UN to appoint an official to mediate a dialogue between the KRG and the Iraqi government over longstanding, unresolved issues, such as the KRG's share of the annual federal budget. According to the report, all 15 members of Security Council supported the request so that the Iraqi government and the KRG can reach lasting, constitutionally-based agreements, including an agreement to address sharing of hydrocarbon resources.<sup>276</sup>

**Iraq hosted five dialogue sessions between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the most recent taking place in April.**

## Turkey Launches Military Operation in Northern Iraq

A key objective for the U.S. Government is to increase Iraq's capacity to protect its sovereignty.<sup>277</sup> Turkey's ongoing military campaigns against the Kurdish separatist terrorist organization—the PKK, which maintains bases in northern Iraq—has led to Turkey to conduct a series of operations in the IKR and elsewhere in Iraq. During the quarter, Iraqi leaders said Turkey's presence in Iraq is a threat to Iraqi sovereignty.<sup>278</sup>

### OPERATION AIMED AT PKK STRONGHOLDS IN NINEWA, DUHOK, AND SULAYMANIYAH

In April, Turkey launched a new military operation in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, the latest in a series of cross-border operations against PKK elements based in mountainous areas of northern Iraq; the operation was foreshadowed by a series of airstrikes on Iraq and Syria in February.<sup>279</sup> Turkish drones struck PKK targets, killing several senior PKK leaders, while PKK militants attacked Turkish bases and killed Turkish soldiers.<sup>280</sup>

The Turkish operation, dubbed “Claw Lock,” is the third annual spring offensive to attack PKK targets outside of Turkey and occurred as tensions rose in the Sinjar region between the ISF and a PKK-affiliated militia over an agreement signed in 2020 that seeks to create a new administration and security structure in Sinjar.<sup>281</sup> The agreement, backed by the United States and the United Nations, calls for the removal of the PKK and affiliated armed groups to improve security and set conditions for the return of Sinjar's internally displaced Yazidi population.<sup>282</sup>

Implementation of the 2020 agreement has stalled for numerous reasons, including the continued presence of the PKK and Iran-aligned militia groups, lack of political agreement on a new mayor of Sinjar, lack of funding for the local security force, the Sinjar Resistance Unit (YBS) refusal to relinquish security control to the ISF and the Iraqi government's failure to provide former YBS members alternative livelihoods. In early May, the Iraqi Army clashed with the YBS, with the Army capturing at least 20 checkpoints formerly held by the Yazidi militia.<sup>283</sup>

Iran-aligned militias operating in Sinjar also reject the agreement because it supplants their authority in favor of the ISF, according to Iraq analysts.<sup>284</sup> Iran-aligned militias have been operating in the Sinjar region since they helped expel ISIS from Sinjar in 2015.<sup>285</sup>

The PKK has operated in Sinjar since 2015, taking advantage of a security vacuum created when ISIS captured Sinjar and Kurdish forces aligned with the Kurdistan Democratic Party—Turkey's main political ally in Iraq—withdraw.<sup>286</sup> At about the same time, a 2-year ceasefire between Turkey and the PKK collapsed, leading to an uptick in PKK violence in Turkey, and a renewed effort by Turkey to remove PKK bases from Iraq, including in Sinjar.<sup>287</sup>

According to the DIA, the YBS has some connections to and receives some support from the PMF and Iran-aligned militias, including Kata'ib Hezbollah.<sup>288</sup>

The DIA also reported that the presence of the PMF in Sinjar is a “divisive factor” that has helped to turn Sinjar into a center of competition between Iran and Turkey, while the stalled process of forming the Iraqi government has delayed implementation of the 2020 Sinjar agreement.<sup>289</sup>

*(continued from next page)*



## Turkey Launches Military Operation in Northern Iraq

*(continued from previous page)*

Turkey responded by establishing military bases across northern Iraq, including the Iraqi Kurdistan Region—there were 40 bases there as of the end of the quarter—and by conducting cross-border operations against the PKK and YBS beginning in 2019.<sup>290</sup> During the quarter, Turkey targeted PKK militants in Duhok province and struck PKK targets in relatively distant province of Sulaymaniyah. On June 17, a Turkish drone strike killed a high-ranking official in the Self-Administration of North and East Syria, who Turkey claims was a member of the PKK.<sup>291</sup> On June 24, Turkey claimed the death of another PKK commander in Sulaymaniyah.<sup>292</sup>

The DIA reported that the ISF is willing to confront the PKK, however, the KRG will not allow federal Iraqi armed forces to deploy into the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.<sup>293</sup> The KSF routinely conducts localized security operations against the PKK, though the MoPA denies that it cooperates with Turkish forces against the PKK.<sup>294</sup> While the PMF does not conduct significant operations in Iraq's northernmost areas, PMF militias have attacked Turkish forces in Iraq, including in Ninewa province.<sup>295</sup> The DIA reported that during the quarter there were no notable PMF operations in the Sinjar region, but Iran-aligned militias conducted attacks on Turkish forces. On February 3, a new militia-affiliated group calling itself the Ahrar Sinjar (Free People of Sinjar) claimed its first attack against Turkish forces and since then has claimed multiple strikes on Turkish bases in Iraq. The militias frame their attacks as retaliation for Turkish strikes against the YBS, the DIA said.<sup>296</sup>

### **TURKISH MILITARY ACTIVITY HAS LITTLE IMPACT ON OPERATIONS AGAINST ISIS, BUT IRAQ VIEWS ACTIONS AS A THREAT TO ITS SOVEREIGNTY**

CJTF-OIR reported that it is unlikely that Turkey's military activity in Iraq affected the KSF's counter-ISIS mission.<sup>297</sup> Publicly, the KSF has not taken steps to counter or even discourage the Turkish activity, nor has the ISF countered Turkish operations in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.<sup>298</sup>

However, the Iraqi government and the KRG have made official complaints about Turkish actions. On May 17, for example, the Iraqi permanent representative to the United Nations told the UN Security Council that the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs had protested and condemned Turkey's actions in a note delivered to the Turkish Ambassador to Iraq.<sup>299</sup> In June, former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said that Iraq must take measures to stop Turkish violations of its sovereignty, according to local media reports.<sup>300</sup>

## STABILIZATION

The U.S. Government seeks a stable Iraq capable of suppressing insurgencies and violent extremist organizations at the local government and law enforcement levels. The U.S. Government funds programs that seek to accelerate the restoration of essential services in conflict-affected areas of Iraq. In addition, the U.S. Government assists ethnic and religious minority communities and supports programs that help displaced persons return with dignity, safely, and voluntarily to their places of origin or settle in other destinations of their choosing.<sup>301</sup>

USAID reported that it supported stabilization activities through 11 programs funded by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) and Middle East Bureau. (See Table 3.) For example, USAID's Middle East Bureau supported the rehabilitation of the Sinjar Courthouse by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The facility, which was severely

damaged during ISIS's occupation of the Sinjar region, reopened in June and will provide legal services for more than 25,000 people across Sinjar district in Ninewa province.<sup>302</sup> USAID OTI reported it began implementing 30 activities totaling more than \$2.4 million dollars.<sup>303</sup>

## USAID Receives Limited Support for Localization Programming

In March, the USAID Mission in Iraq updated its Mission Strategic Framework for 2022-2025. The update incorporated new partnerships and local capacity building as cross-cutting themes. Since 2018, USAID has partnered directly with local Iraqi organizations and made

Table 3.

### USAID-funded Stabilization Programs in Iraq

Program	Activities
<b>Funding Facility for Stabilization</b> Aims to stabilize areas recently liberated from ISIS by restoring damaged or destroyed essential services and providing the conditions for a dignified, safe, and voluntary return of IDPs to their home.	USAID is the largest contributor to this 29-donor, multilateral program. Implementer: UNDP
<b>Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities</b> Aims to build resilient, adaptive communities and advance economic well-being in target communities in Iraq by addressing underlying drivers of conflict and increasing community leadership of inclusive local development.	Engages selected communities impacted by conflict and their leadership to identify and resolve conflict sustainably and peacefully through inclusive dialogue and practical solutions. Provides training and networking services to Iraqi victims of war to help them gain high-quality and sustainable sources of livelihood. Implementer: Chemonics
<b>Shared Future</b> Supports the durable return for IDPs from the Ninewa Plain, focusing on the historically religious and ethnic minority communities.	Works with youth, and community and religious leaders to increase mutual understanding, tolerance, and trust both within their communities and with other communities. Improves vocational and leadership skills and youth livelihood opportunities through targeted vocational training. Implementer: Catholic Relief Services
<b>Iraq Response and Resilience Program</b>	Rehabilitating nine water treatment units in Basrah that will provide over 640,000 beneficiaries with potable water. Implementer: UNDP
<b>Safe Return</b>	Assists IDPs from minority communities in the Ninewa Plain who are survivors of severe human rights abuses to return and reintegrate into their communities of origin. Implementer: Heartland Alliance
<b>Supporting the Return of the Displaced Population in the Ninewa Plains and West Ninewa</b>	Supports the return of displaced populations from ethnic and religious minorities in Ninewa Plains and western Ninewa through activities to build livelihoods, community peacebuilding, education, and psychosocial services. Rehabilitated destroyed or damaged homes and delivers competitive grants to small and medium enterprises through the Enterprise Development Fund to boost business recovery and create jobs. Implementer: IOM

Program	Activities
<b>Transitional Assistance to IDPs in Erbil, Iraq</b>	Provides cash assistance to support the IDPs from Ninewa province in protracted displacement in Erbil and assisted beneficiaries to prepare for durable solutions for their families through targeted information and planning sessions. Implementer: Catholic Relief Services
<b>Strengthening the Ankawa Humanitarian Committee to Response to Communities in Crisis</b>	Strengths the capacity of the Ankawa Humanitarian Committee and prepared them to fully engage with USAID on future development initiatives through strengthened capacity and commitment. Implementer: Ankawa Humanitarian Committee
<b>Building Resilience in Children</b> Leverages Ahlan Simsim's unique approach that combines locally driven, crisis-sensitive and age-appropriate interventions to increase resilience capacities among children, families and communities impacted by conflict and violence.	Engages families and communities impacted by conflict and violence using a combination of original multimedia, direct services, and youth engagement programming to increase resilience capacities that help to counter malign influences and prevent radicalization and violent extremism. Implementer: Sesame Workshop
<b>Preserving the Cultural Heritage of Minority Communities in Iraq</b> Aims to contribute to communal healing, intercommunal understanding, and appreciation of the diversity of Iraq, a fundamental step toward the promotion and actualization of democracy.	Partners with local Iraqi organizations to describe and document the tangible and intangible heritage of religious and ethnic minority communities in Iraq. Created digitally documented collections as databases, built for portability, interoperability, and accessibility. Implementer: Antiquities Coalition
<b>Iraq Community Resilience Initiative</b> Aims to increase stability in Iraq by increasing perceptions of equity and inclusion, and reducing polarization and sectarianism through highly visible, quick impact service delivery projects that engage local communities.	Supports small-scale, symbolic livelihood initiatives that focus on addressing perceptions of economic exclusion, especially among youth and marginalized farming communities. Supports dialogue between citizens and elected officials, as well as cultural and social spaces that foster engagement and interaction among diverse community members. Highlights commonalities that foster unity and a shared identity across Iraq, including in new geographic spaces south of Baghdad. Aims to mitigate discrete challenges that threaten overall stability. Implementer: USAID OTI

**Sources:** USAID Middle East Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 6/23/2022; USAID OTI, vetting comment, 7/18/2022.

more than 400 grants or sub-grants to better meet the unique recovery needs of religious and ethnic minority and other communities who suffered genocide and atrocities at the hands of ISIS.<sup>304</sup>

USAID said that to support localization efforts, the Mission will need adequate staffing and robust assistance from USAID Washington headquarters.<sup>305</sup> According to USAID, the Mission manages programming through a mix of in-country staffing and remote support from the Middle East Regional Platform in Frankfurt and USAID Washington headquarters. However, the Mission is not currently receiving assistance from USAID Washington to support the management of its localization programming.<sup>306</sup>

## USAID Expands Stabilization Assistance in Baghdad and Southern Iraq

During the quarter, USAID piloted several programs to test opportunities to expand ongoing stabilization assistance to the Baghdad region and southern Iraq.<sup>307</sup> USAID said that the October 2019 Tishreen movement, a series of antigovernment protests across Baghdad and the Iraq's southern provinces, revealed opportunities to increase USAID stabilization programming in the South.<sup>308</sup> The pilot efforts have included expanding USAID activities to Basrah under the Durable Communities and Economic Opportunities program, providing support to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) work with the Iraqi government to prevent violent extremism, and funding support for city-level interventions in southern Iraq.<sup>309</sup> USAID OTI also expanded programming in Nasiriyah and al-Islah districts in Dhi Qar province to increase perceptions of equality and inclusion and reduce polarization and sectarianism.<sup>310</sup>

For example, USAID reported that three schools in a neglected Nasiriyah neighborhood were furnished during the quarter and that future activities will focus on education, water, health, and electricity priorities. Other programs will expand livelihood opportunities through small-scale, symbolic initiatives that focus on addressing perceptions of economic exclusion, especially among youth and marginalized farming communities.<sup>311</sup> In Dhi Qar province, where spaces for youth and civic activists are often either controlled or neglected and in disrepair, USAID supported a youth-led cleanup campaign activity in Nasiriyah district and helped equip the office of the Provincial Women's Empowerment Division.<sup>312</sup>

According to USAID, OTI will highlight commonalities that foster unity and a shared identity across Iraq, including in Dhi Qar province.<sup>313</sup> Future activities will focus on countering disinformation and divisive rhetoric by highlighting commonalities that foster unity and a shared identity across Iraq. USAID-supported activities will include the restoration of symbolic sites, community improvement, and rehabilitation projects that highlight moderate political actors, communities and civil society working together; and creation of opportunities for these entities to counter disinformation and divisive rhetoric with more positive, truthful, and less contentious messaging.<sup>314</sup>

## REPATRIATION AND REINTEGRATION

### Repatriations from al-Hol Camp Continue

On June 1, the Iraqi government repatriated 151 households (683 individuals) from al-Hol camp, the first repatriation since January. Nearly 2,500 Iraqis have been repatriated since May 2021.<sup>315</sup> The repatriated families are being housed in the Jeddah 1 camp in Ninewa province as a midway point before they are cleared to return to their communities of origin or other communities in Iraq.<sup>316</sup> UN implementing partners informed USAID BHA that other platforms have been considered as either a supplement or substitute for Jeddah 1, but that these options have not yet been accepted or implemented.<sup>317</sup> In June, DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) funded IOM to expand Jeddah 1 to accommodate up to 1,500 families.<sup>318</sup>

According to the DoS, the Iraqi government seeks to complete clearance procedures for Iraqis at the Jeddah 1 camp within 90 days so they can integrate into the community of their choice.<sup>319</sup> However, individuals can remain in Jeddah 1 for as long as 6 to 9 months, according



to estimates from UN implementing partners.<sup>320</sup> Humanitarian actors and the U.S. Government work to ensure that the residents in Jeddah 1 are provided with international standards-based humanitarian assistance because the camp is not set up as a permanent settlement.<sup>321</sup> The Iraqi government, with assistance from DoS PRM, USAID/BHA, and the international community, is providing educational, social, and medical services to residents at Jeddah 1. Children at the camp receive mental health and psychosocial services, including formal and informal education. Once families are able to return to their area of origin, humanitarian organizations provide reintegration and social cohesion programming and as protection monitoring.<sup>322</sup>

The DoS PRM-supported IOM Community Revitalization Program assists returnees with legal assistance and civil documentation support, social cohesion programming and tribal engagement activities, protection monitoring, cash-for-work programs and livelihoods assistance, shelter support, and access to basic services like water and electricity.<sup>323</sup> IOM and UNDP receive USAID funding to provide reintegration services once families are released from Jeddah 1.<sup>324</sup>

The majority of Iraqis reintegrated from Jeddah 1 have remained in their communities of origin. As of early June, of the nearly 450 families repatriated from al-Hol to Jeddah 1 between May 2021 and January 2022, nearly 280 families have left the camp for their area of origin or to resettle in another location in Iraq.<sup>325</sup>

Additional information about repatriations during the quarter can be found in the classified appendix to this report.

## HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The UN Humanitarian Needs Overview for Iraq, released in March, reported that 2.5 million Iraqis are in need of humanitarian assistance, a 39 percent decrease from the 4.1 million people in need identified in the 2021 overview. (See page 47.) Those in need of assistance include returnees and internally displaced persons (IDP) who are sheltering in camps and informal settlements near the camps.<sup>326</sup>

USAID BHA provides humanitarian assistance to vulnerable Iraqis affected by conflict, including but not limited to those displaced by violence. USAID BHA provides life-saving aid, including food assistance, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, protection, and emergency healthcare services.<sup>327</sup> The DoS PRM provides assistance to vulnerable refugees and displaced persons. (See Tables 4 and 5.)

Table 4.

### U.S. Government Funding Available for the Iraq Humanitarian Response FY 2022

IRAQ HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE FY 2021–22			
	USAID BHA	DoS PRM	TOTAL
<b>Humanitarian Funding for Complex Emergency*</b>	\$34,046,729	\$23,500,000	<b>\$57,546,729</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$34,046,729**</b>	<b>\$23,500,000</b>	<b>\$57,546,729</b>

**Notes:** \*Inclusive of COVID-19 activities and COVID-19 supplemental funding. \*\*USAID funding is current as of 5/24/2022.

**Source:** DoS and USAID, "Iraq-Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #2," 5/24/2022.

Table 5.

**USAID-funded Humanitarian Assistance Activities During the Quarter**

Implementer	Activity Highlights
<b>BHA-funded Implementing Partner</b>	An implementer distributed non-food item kits to 77 IDP households in Balad district in Salah ad Din province. The kits contained items including air coolers, kitchen sets, bed sheets, a rechargeable desk fan, a gas cooker, a cool box, a ground mat, and one mattress.
<b>BHA-funded Implementing Partner</b>	An implementer conducted legal information dissemination and awareness raising on civil documentation and housing, land, and property rights to 440 individuals in Anbar, Diyala, and Salah ad Din provinces.
<b>UN World Food Programme</b>	<p>Supply chain disruptions resulting from Russia's invasion of Ukraine exacerbated food insecurity in Iraq during the quarter. In response, World Food Programme continued providing cash and food assistance to vulnerable populations.</p> <p>In April, World Food Programme provided cash and food assistance to approximately 267,000 people, including approximately 184,000 IDPs, 69,000 refugees, and 14,000 people from vulnerable communities.</p>
<b>International Organization for Migration</b>	Provided camp management services, including provision of tents, camp care and maintenance, specialized mental health and psychosocial support service provision, protection monitoring, and various community support, mobilization, and engagement activities in Jeddah 1.

**Note:** Activity highlights are illustrative examples and do not represent the full spectrum of USAID BHA activities conducted during the quarter. As a part of the U.S. Government response, USAID BHA funding also supports health, protection, and shelter and settlements programs for vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas of Iraq.

**Sources:** USAID BHA, response to USAID OIG request for information, 6/17/2022.

Table 6.

**DoS-funded Humanitarian Assistance Activities During the Quarter**

Implementer	Activity Highlights
<b>UNHCR</b> Promotes and protects the rights of refugees and other displaced persons, provides assistance, and seeks durable solutions for refugees.	<p>Led the humanitarian response for Syrian refugees in Iraq, in close coordination with humanitarian organizations and government authorities, to protect and assist refugees and asylum-seekers.</p> <p>Supported activities for refugees, IDPs, and persons at risk of statelessness related to registration and civil documentation; protection monitoring and advocacy; legal aid; health; shelter and camp management; psychosocial support; child protection; prevention, risk mitigation, and response to gender-based violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse; and more.</p>
<b>IOM</b> Provides a comprehensive response to the humanitarian needs of migrants, IDPs, returnees, and host communities.	<p>Worked to improve the conditions for dignified and voluntary returns to areas of origin, local integration, and settlement in new locations, with assistance like civil documentation and legal assistance, social cohesion support, financial assistance, health consultations, and protection monitoring and advocacy.</p> <p>Through the Displacement Tracking Matrix, collected data on displacement, conditions in areas of return, and main barriers to return for IDPs and returnees.</p>

Implementer	Activity Highlights
<b>Other International Organizations</b> Supports refugees, IDPs, returnees, and other vulnerable communities in Iraq with a range of humanitarian assistance and services	Supported activities for refugees, IDPs, returnees, and other vulnerable communities with support for health, mental health and psychosocial support, legal assistance, shelter, prevention and response to gender-based violence and child protection issues, and more.
<b>UNICEF and NGOs–Education</b> Supports an NGO-led consortium that seeks to increase access to education for displaced children.	Supported education services for displaced school-aged children, which is a key need for refugee, IDP, and returnee families. The consortium worked to provide educational kits and materials, incentivize volunteer teachers, conduct service referrals, implement trainings for teachers, and leads targeted, evidence-based advocacy around inclusive education.
<b>NGOs–Livelihoods and Economic Empowerment</b> Supports NGO projects focusing on the restoration of income-generating and livelihoods opportunities.	Supported the restoration of income-generating and livelihoods opportunities, including building the capacity of the local government and institutions to provide services in the agricultural sector, trainings to develop key business knowledge and skills, cash grants for enterprise start-ups, and legal assistance services with livelihoods interventions to support beneficiaries' access to income.
<b>NGOs–Protection</b> Supports NGO projects focusing on protection activities to reduce risk for refugees and IDPs.	Supported protection activities to reduce risk for refugees and IDPs, including gender-based violence prevention and response activities, legal assistance and awareness-raising to remove legal barriers to durable solutions for displacement-affected individuals, case management, mental health and psychosocial support services, child protection and child safeguarding training, and support for community centers and Women & Girls Safe Spaces.

**Source:** DoS, response to DoS OIG request for information, 6/17/2022.

During the quarter, USAID reported two BHA-funded programs were initiated and one program providing multipurpose cash assistance to vulnerable households concluded. According to USAID, the new programs will support humanitarian information management and provide protection services, including gender-based violence prevention and response for IDPs and host communities affected by conflict in Iraq.<sup>328</sup>

## United Nations to Conclude or Transition Humanitarian Programs by December 2022

In February, the United Nations announced plans to scale down humanitarian assistance programs and transition to an Iraqi government-led response focused on durable solutions. According to USAID, the United Nations determined that the primary drivers of the displacement crisis that spanned from 2014-2017 have ended and host government capacities have recovered to a level that will allow the Iraqi government to meet humanitarian needs. USAID said, to date, the Iraqi government has been hesitant to assume additional responsibility for managing and funding existing humanitarian needs in Iraq.<sup>329</sup> USAID, DoS PRM, and other humanitarian actors continued to advocate through various engagements for increased Iraqi governmental financial and programmatic responsibility to address the needs of displaced people.<sup>330</sup> However, USAID BHA noted that the care and protection of vulnerable IDPs and returnees in and out of camps will remain a gap for the Iraqi government to fill.<sup>331</sup>

Under the transition plan, UN-led clusters plan to transfer ongoing activities to Iraqi government and KRG ministerial or governorate-level authorities by December 31, 2022, with some

# IRAQ: RECENT COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

April 1, 2022–June 30, 2022

## NINEWA PROVINCE

In May, escalated insecurity in Sinjar district displaced approximately 10,200 individuals, primarily to Dahuk province. In coordination with U.S. Government partners, the Iraqi government and the KRG led an effort to provide humanitarian assistance to the displaced households. Relief actors reported that as of May 10, approximately 300 households had returned to Sinjar after the implementation of a temporary ceasefire.

## ERBIL

In late June, UNDP and IOM said they hosted a workshop with Iraqi government agencies that engaged more than 45 community and tribal leaders and local authorities from Ninewa province to foster community readiness among local leaders and facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqis. Participants discussed details of the return process, challenges facing families, the role of community leaders and local government in facilitating the reintegration of families, and built unanimous consensus to enhance community acceptance of returning families.



## BAGHDAD

On June 8, the Iraqi Parliament passed a \$17.1 million emergency food bill. Among its top priorities is the issuance of a wheat tender following a disappointing domestic harvest. USAID reported that the passage of the bill should help to head off potential social unrest that would have likely followed in the event the Iraqi government was unable to provide flour to cover the food ration system under Iraq's Public Distribution System.

## DHI QAR PROVINCE

An official in al-Shatra district in Dhi Qar province warned that water flow in the Gharraf river had been reduced to levels that could soon prevent water treatment plants from being able to provide drinking water to district residents. The official said that the district is receiving 25 percent less water than in previous years. According to an NGO report, the mayor of al-Shatra district attributed the reduced water levels in the river to limited releases from an upstream dam.

**2.5 million**

People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance

UN OCHA–March 2022

**961,000**

People in Acute Need

UN OCHA–March 2022

**1.2 million**

IDPs

IOM–March 2022

**260,686**

Syrian Refugees Sheltering in Iraq

UNHCR–May 2022

**180,375**

IDPs in Camps

CCCM–April 2022

## COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

As of June 27, 2022, more than **18.6 million** vaccine doses were administered in Iraq, with approximately **7.6 million** fully vaccinated.

## Allocated (COVAX)

**10,230,900**

## Doses Delivered

- COVAX/Global–AstraZeneca: **835,200**
- COVAX/Italy–AstraZeneca: **201,600**
- COVAX/USA–Pfizer/BioNTech: **503,100**
- COVAX/Global–Pfizer/BioNTech: **1,660,230**
- COVAX/Global–Other: **5,349,620**
- China–Sinopharm: **799,000**
- Pfizer/BioNTech (Procured): **100,000**
- Sinopharm (Procured): **1,000,000**
- Other (Procured): **3,030,950**
- Sinopharm (Unknown): **6,901,927**

**Sources:** USAID and DoS, "Iraq–Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #2 FY2022," 5/24/2022; USAID Middle East Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 6/23/2022; Aysar Jabber, "Iraq Grapples with Rising Food Costs as a Result of Ukraine War," Al-Monitor, 4/27/2022; UNDP and IOM, press release, "UNDP, IOM, and Iraqi Government Agencies Encourage Returns and Reintegration in Ninewa," 6/27/2022; EPIC, "Iraq Security and Humanitarian Monitor: June 9–June 16, 2022," 6/16/2022; WHO, "WHO COVID-19 Dashboard: Iraq," 6/30/2022; UNICEF, "COVID-19 Vaccine Market Dashboard," 6/30/2022; UN OCHA, "COVID-19 Vaccine Doses in HRP Countries," 6/30/2022.



elements of current humanitarian coordination transitioning to development and stabilization actors. Within the scope of its programming, USAID BHA reported encouraging its implementing partners to coordinate with governmental authorities on planning during the transitional period, specifically in protection and water, sanitation, and hygiene sectors. USAID BHA also said it had participated in informational sessions with operations-level Iraqi governmental authorities to ensure that they are informed about the specifics of the transition plan. In addition, U.S. Government-led advocacy on the reduction in international humanitarian assistance continued at all levels of the Iraqi government to adequately prepare it for the draw-down of the humanitarian system.<sup>332</sup>

USAID BHA and DoS PRM reported that they are playing a supporting role in the practical planning for the hand-over, which will continue to be built out and detailed over the next 6 months. Ongoing USAID humanitarian assistance programs will continue based on assessed need; however, funding will continue to be reduced commensurate with decreasing humanitarian need and the transition to durable solutions.<sup>333</sup> USAID BHA said that it coordinated closely with USAID Mission in Iraq and the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad to develop approaches to help with the transition from humanitarian assistance to stabilization and development programming which were included in the updated Integrated Country Strategy and USAID Mission Strategic Framework for Iraq.<sup>334</sup>

**At the end of June, positivity rates exceeded 12.5 percent, compared to less than three percent in late May.**

## **COVID-19 Surges, Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever, and Cholera Cases Increase**

According to an update from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, data released by Iraq's Ministry of Health during the quarter reflected increases in coronavirus-2019 (COVID-19) infections. At the end of June, positivity rates exceeded 12.5 percent, compared to less than 3 percent in late May.<sup>335</sup> The update noted that approximately 75 percent of Iraqi citizens are unvaccinated, and the public willingness to receive vaccines was declining.<sup>336</sup> According to WHO data, as of June 27, more than 10.8 million Iraqis have received at least one dose of the vaccine and the number of reported daily mortalities has remained low.<sup>337</sup>

Amid new cases of COVID-19, the WHO reported Iraqi health authorities had reported increased cases of Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever, a viral tick-borne disease with a high case fatality ratio between 10 and 40 percent.<sup>338</sup> At the end of May, media reported that the Iraqi government had allocated 1 billion dinars to veterinary departments to purchase pesticides and support efforts to address and mitigate the effects of the disease.<sup>339</sup>

On June 19, Iraq's health authorities announced a cholera outbreak after the WHO reported 13 confirmed cases, 10 of which were in Sulaymaniyah province.<sup>340</sup> According to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, approximately 4,000 cases of diarrhea and vomiting were recorded in Sulaymaniyah hospitals in the six days leading up to the announcement.<sup>341</sup> On June 20, the WHO dispatched an urgent consignment of medical supplies including infusion sets, antibiotics, and intravenous fluid to Sulaymaniyah province. According to the WHO press release, the supplies were to cover the needs of a population of approximately 5,000 people for a duration of 3 months.<sup>342</sup>









A Dayr az Zawr farmer and beneficiary of a USAID stabilization project grows wheat. (USAID photo)

## SYRIA

52 Security

64 Stabilization

72 Humanitarian Assistance



## SYRIA

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD(P)) said that the U.S. Government is focused on “practical and achievable goals” in Syria.<sup>343</sup> The DoS added that these goals include defeating ISIS and al-Qaeda, increasing access to humanitarian assistance, controlling violence by maintaining ceasefires in the region, and “promoting accountability for the Assad regime’s atrocities.”<sup>344</sup>

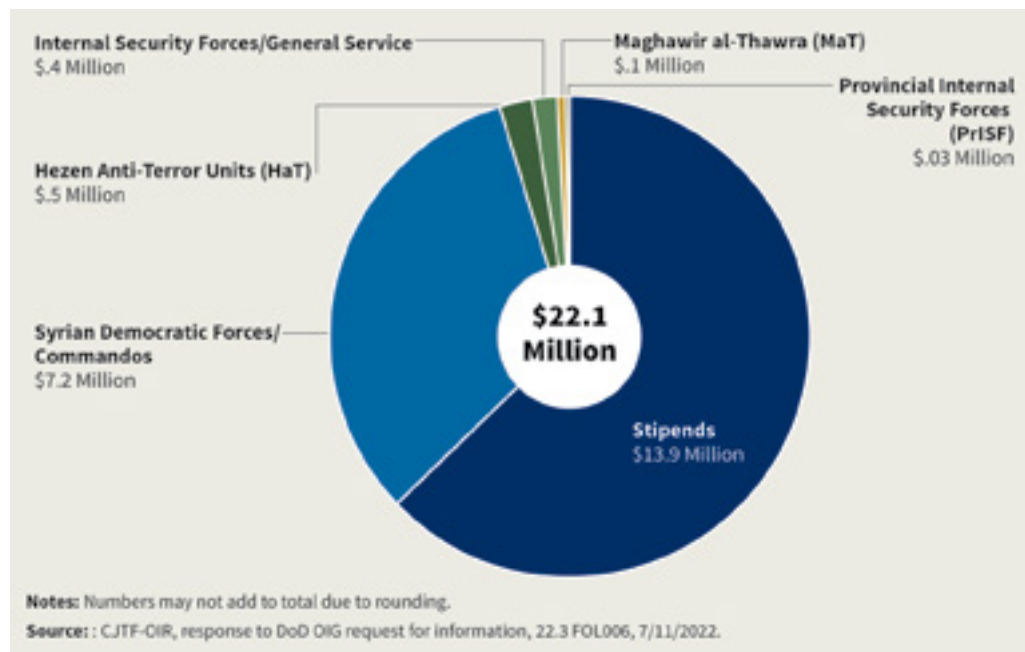
## SECURITY

Coalition forces continued to advise, assist, and enable partner forces in Syria: the SDF in northeastern Syria and the Mughawir al-Thawra (MaT) further south near the confluence of the Iraq and Jordan borders. The SDF remained the Coalition’s key partner against ISIS, operating in the Eastern Syria Security Area (ESSA), which includes parts of Hasakah and Dayra az Zawr governorates east of the Euphrates River, as well as portions of Raqqah and Aleppo governorates.<sup>345</sup> The MaT is a small force that occupies 12 outposts across the 55 kilometer deconfliction zone around the At Tanf Garrison where U.S. forces are based.<sup>346</sup>

**U.S. Army Soldiers engage with locals in Syria. (U.S. Army photo)**



Figure 6.

**CTEF-funding for Syrian Partner Forces, April–June 2022**

The MaT is the primary security and stability force and serves to deter ISIS activity within the deconfliction zone, while seeking to prevent other malign actors, including pro-regime or Iran-aligned militia located on the outskirts from operating inside zone.<sup>347</sup> (See map on page 55.)

As in Iraq, the DoD Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) is the primary fiscal authority for providing material and other Defeat-ISIS support to vetted Syrian partner forces.<sup>348</sup> Of the \$500 million CTEF appropriation for FY 2022, \$155 million is designated to support partner forces. Special Operations Task Force–Levant (SOJTF-L) provided \$22.1 million of material and support to Syrian partner forces during the quarter. This brings the total value of FY 2022 CTEF support delivered to Syrian partner forces to \$61.3 million as of the end of the quarter.<sup>349</sup> (See Figure 6.)

**Coalition forces captured a top ISIS leader in Syria on June 16 in a mission in the Aleppo governorate.**

## COALITION OPERATIONS

### Coalition Captures, Kills Terrorist Leaders

Coalition forces captured a top ISIS leader in Syria on June 16 in a mission in the Aleppo governorate.<sup>350</sup> Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) said that Hani Ahmed al-Kurdi, was “an experienced bomb maker and operational facilitator who became one of the top leaders in the Syrian branch of ISIS,” and was the ISIS leader of the Raqqah governorate.<sup>351</sup> He was responsible for coordinating terrorist activities in the region, instructed others in making explosive devices, supported the construction of IED production facilities, and facilitated attacks on U.S. and partner forces.<sup>352</sup>

CJTF-OIR said Hani Ahmed al-Kurdi's removal disrupted ISIS leadership and operations in Syria, removed a threat to U.S. and Coalition forces in Syria, and prevented the spread of "significant bomb construction and bomb emplacement knowledge" throughout the ISIS enterprise.<sup>353</sup> CJTF-OIR said that the "meticulously planned" mission avoided harm to any civilians or civilian infrastructure and resulted in no damage to Coalition assets or aircraft.<sup>354</sup>

The U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) announced on June 27 that its forces conducted a strike targeting a senior leader of the al-Qaeda-aligned Hurras al-Din group in Syria's western Idlib governorate. Abu Hamzah al Yemeni was traveling alone on a motorcycle at the time of the strike. USCENTCOM said in a press release that there were no indications of other casualties.<sup>355</sup>

USCENTCOM said that violent extremist organizations such as Hurras al-Din use Syria as a safe haven to coordinate with affiliates and plan attacks outside of Syria, and present a threat to the United States and its allies. Abu Hamzah's removal will disrupt al-Qaeda's ability to carry out attacks against U.S. citizens, U.S. partners, and innocent civilians around the world, USCENTCOM said.<sup>356</sup>

**The SDF carried out multiple operations against ISIS targets in areas of Dayr az Zawr, Hasakah and Raqqah governorates during the quarter, according to CJTF-OIR and the SDF.**

## Bradley Fighting Vehicles Continue Patrols

Coalition forces continued to operate Bradley Fighting Vehicles in the ESSA during the quarter.<sup>357</sup> CJTF-OIR said that the Bradleys averaged two to three patrols per week, mostly for area and route reconnaissance and civilian engagements.<sup>358</sup> CJTF-OIR said the vehicles add combat power to patrols or to help lower operational risk while MRAP vehicles undergo maintenance.<sup>359</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that since the battle that followed the ISIS attack on the Ghwayran Detention Facility in January, the Bradleys have not been involved in enemy engagements, but conducted three training engagements with the SDF. During those engagements, the Bradleys fired multiple missiles and Coalition force dismounts fired with small arms as "a show of force to deter malign actors."<sup>360</sup>

## SDF OPERATIONS

### SDF Conducts Coalition-Enabled and Joint Operations Against ISIS

The SDF carried out multiple operations against ISIS targets in areas of Dayr az Zawr, Hasakah and Raqqah governorates during the quarter, according to CJTF-OIR and the SDF.<sup>361</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that the SDF and its commando or special operations units, the Hezen Anti-Terror and Yekineyen Anti-Terror units, conducted 22 partnered counter-ISIS operations in April and May.<sup>362</sup> (See Figure 7.) The SDF reported that it conducted 11 targeted raids in June.<sup>363</sup>

According to the SDF-associated Rojava Information Center, the SDF greatly increased the frequency of its counter-ISIS raids in May as part of a large scale security campaign,<sup>364</sup> In one operation reported in the media, the SDF foiled an attack on a Coalition base at the



# THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT IN SYRIA

Coalition forces in Syria operate in a complex political and military environment. Violence associated with the Syrian civil war, begun in 2011, has destabilized the country and has led to the deaths of more than half a million people. Today, the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, with military support from Russia and Iran, controls most of the country.

The Coalition supports partner forces in areas not under regime control, including the SDF in the northeast and the MaT near the At Tanf Garrison. Russian and pro-regime forces also operate in these areas. Turkey controls territory along the northern border and conducts cross-border operations that often target SDF forces. All of these rival forces operate in close proximity, often restricting Coalition and partner force movement, distracting partner forces, limiting humanitarian access, and putting civilians at risk.

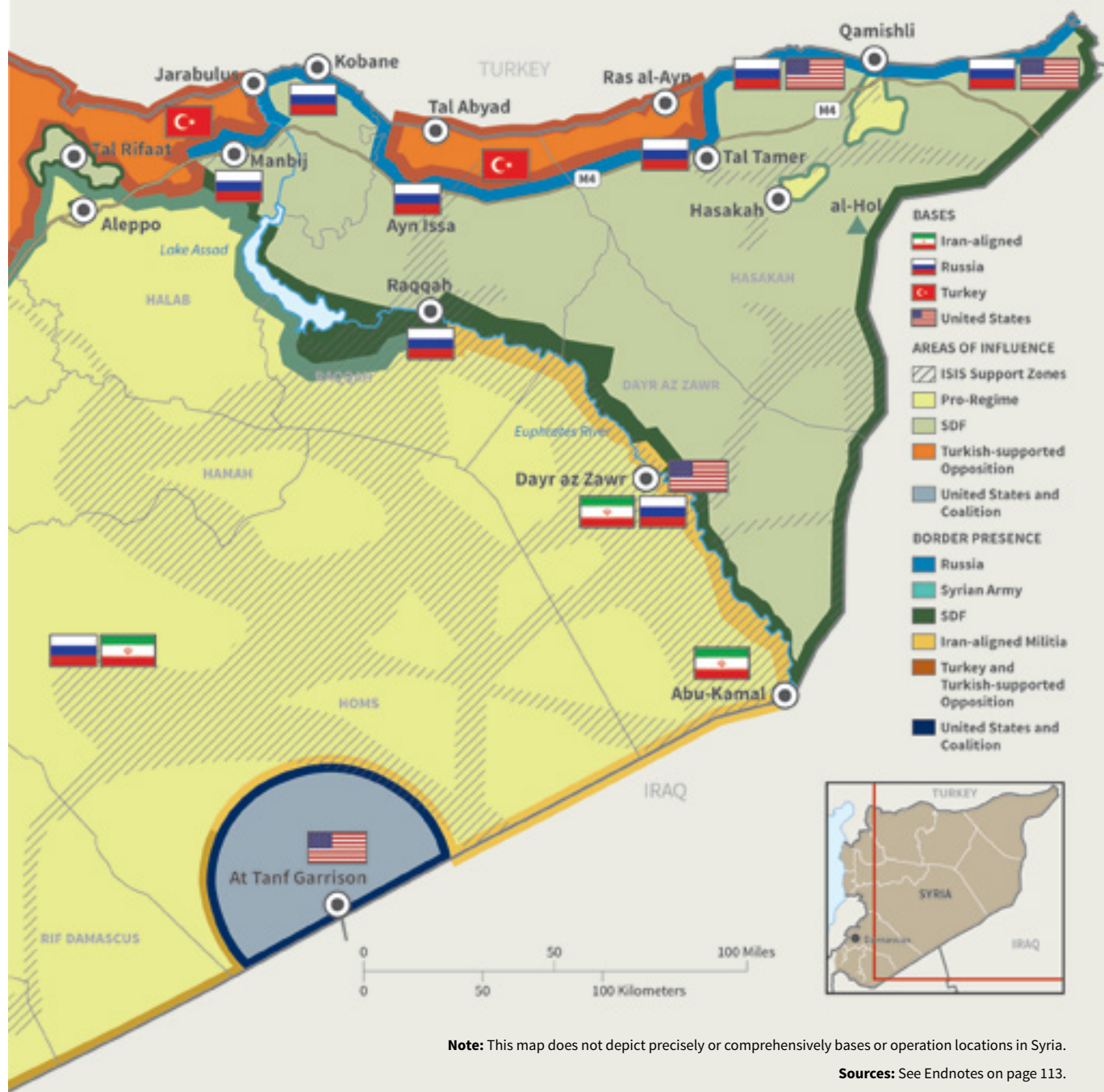
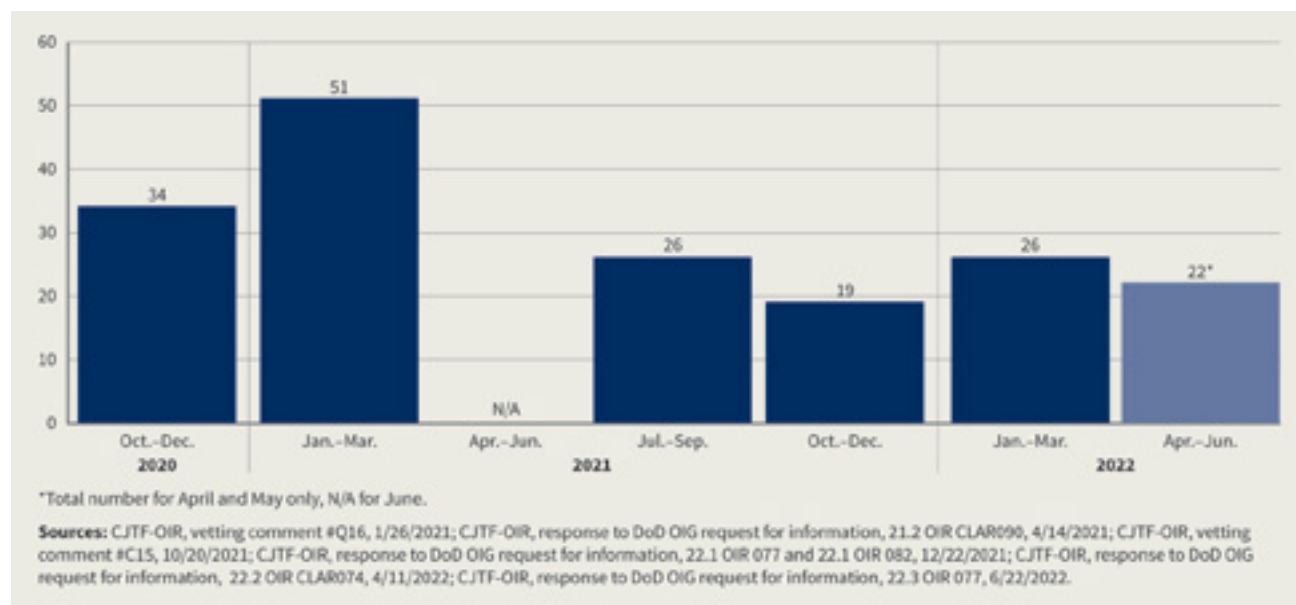




Figure 7.

**SDF Operations by Quarter, October 2020–June 2022**

al-Omar Oil Field, arresting ISIS suspects with rockets and improvised explosive device (IED) materials.<sup>365</sup> On May 11, the SDF conducted a joint operation with Coalition forces in Dayr az Zawr that led to the capture of a “dangerous” ISIS leader, according to the SDF.<sup>366</sup>

The SDF said that in June, it captured 17 ISIS leaders and operatives, and killed 2 ISIS leaders.<sup>367</sup> The SDF further said that its counterterrorism units were “enabled” by Coalition forces, including a June 26 raid that targeted a former ISIS leader. A statement said the ISIS leader was involved in civilian murders, and more recently was responsible for transporting ISIS cell members, IEDs and motorcycle bombs as well as smuggling families of some ISIS leaders from the al-Hol displaced persons camp.<sup>368</sup>

### **SDF Capable of Conventional Operations, but Becomes “Rapidly Overstretched”**

CJTF-OIR reported that while the SDF is capable of conducting conventional-type and counterterrorism operations at a sustainable unilateral level, the SDF’s reliance on Coalition forces for ISR persisted during the quarter.<sup>369</sup> CJTF-OIR has experienced logistical issues when providing military equipment to the SDF, but managed to resolve the obstacles and said the SDF continues to build its logistics capabilities.<sup>370</sup> SDF media cells are “very effective and able to disseminate information quickly,” CJTF-OIR said.<sup>371</sup>

CJTF-OIR described the SDF intelligence collection platform as “robust,” particularly its ability to collect, process, and utilize human intelligence effectively.<sup>372</sup> The SDF also remains able to collect and target ISIS-affiliated targets.<sup>373</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that regular

**The DoS reported that this quarter the SDF seldom enforced its mandatory military service and explained that the SDF “attracts sufficient voluntary adult conscripts to maintain its forces” and conduct counter-ISIS operations.**

SDF action with the Coalition “will allow SDF to improve” its ability to effectively complete the find and fix intelligence cycle.<sup>374</sup>

The SDF is also improving its long term force generation ability, CJTF-OIR said. Currently, the SDF rapidly becomes overstretched during periods of heightened Turkish cross-border military activity.<sup>375</sup> The SDF warned during the quarter that Turkey’s threats of a new military offensive across its border with Syria jeopardized SDF counter-ISIS operations.<sup>376</sup> (See page 62.)

### **SDF Military Service for Men Mandated, but Rarely Enforced**

The DoS reported that this quarter the SDF seldom enforced its mandatory military service and explained that the SDF “attracts sufficient voluntary adult conscripts to maintain its forces” and conduct counter-ISIS operations.<sup>377</sup> According to the DoS, the SDF provides recruits with salaries, access to improved medical services, and career advancement opportunities. However, some Arab civilian populations “resist SDF’s calls for mandatory conscription” because they do not wish to be deployed outside of their home region or to serve under non-Arab commanders.<sup>378</sup> The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) said that protests against SDF conscription appeared to continue during the quarter suggesting that some compelled conscription continued.<sup>379</sup>

## **PARTNER FORCE TRAINING**

### **CJTF-OIR Trains SDF and Asayish on Range of Skills**

Coalition forces continued to provide training to the SDF during the quarter on weapons systems, vehicle maintenance, and intelligence collection and analysis, among other topics. Training of the SDF’s Asayish forces also continued, with 62 trainees graduating in late May and 150 beginning a new class in early June.<sup>380</sup>

### **CJTF-OIR to Increase Resources for MaT**

CJTF-OIR reported that during the quarter, a task force conducted an assessment of the MaT’s capabilities and training and equipping needs.<sup>381</sup> CJTF-OIR said it plans to increase stipends for new MaT recruits and has procured additional arms, munitions, and equipment for divestment to the MaT.<sup>382</sup> CJTF-OIR continued to provide training on small arms, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, and communications equipment.<sup>383</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that Coalition forces have also begun conducting more partnered reconnaissance and security patrols with the MaT and increasing overall Coalition presence throughout the deconfliction zone to increase interoperability.<sup>384</sup> U.S. forces conducted 69 partnered patrols to the 12 MaT outposts, where they advised, assisted and enabled the MaT in areas of reconnaissance, surveillance, outpost defense, marksmanship exercises, medical rehearsals, and team live fire training.<sup>385</sup>

## SDF DETENTION FACILITIES

### SDF, With Coalition Support, Improves Security, Conditions at Detention Facilities Holding ISIS

CJTF-OIR continued to work with the SDF during the quarter to improve security at detention facilities, using CTEF funds and other methods and resources.<sup>386</sup> The SDF continues to hold more than 10,000 ISIS detainees, including 2,000 from outside Iraq or Syria.<sup>387</sup>

The SDF operates 28 detention facilities across northeastern Syria. Conditions inside the facilities, as well as size, vary dramatically.<sup>388</sup> The detainees have been mostly held in overcrowded, ad-hoc structures that were not built to hold detainees and were set up following the territorial defeat of ISIS in 2019.<sup>389</sup> Most of the buildings are converted schools, hospitals, and warehouses.<sup>390</sup>

The SDF has consolidated approximately half of ISIS detainees into more secure facilities—including some that are purpose-built, according to OUSD(P) and the DoS.<sup>391</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that consolidations were done with support from SOJTF-L, and conditions in these more secure facilities are adequate and meet international standards. The facilities also have much greater long-term viability.<sup>392</sup> CJTF-OIR said that future CTEF-funded construction projects, particularly a proposed \$27 million Rumaylan Detention Facility that will ultimately provide capacity for all detainees to be housed in purpose-built facilities that meet international standards.<sup>393</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that assessments of SDF detention facilities were conducted and are now concluded. The assessments included sewage, water, electricity, academics, and trash (known as a SWEAT assessment), force protection, detainee conditions, local civil considerations, and needs-based assessments.<sup>394</sup>

During the quarter, SOJTF-L provided CTEF-funded material and equipment to the SDF for existing detention facilities, including HESCO barriers (wire-enclosed heavy-duty bags filled with sand); concrete T-Walls and concertina wire; riot control gear; restraints; and general furnishings such as pillows, mattresses, detainee uniforms and generators.<sup>395</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that security is gradually improving at SDF detention facilities and any gaps in defensive security at each site are being or have been addressed.<sup>396</sup> During the quarter, there were no reports of illicit activities, including coercion or smuggling activities, at the detention facilities, nor were any riots, uprisings or escape attempts reported.<sup>397</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that detainees currently can only communicate externally via the Red Cross. The SDF indefinitely suspended all external communication, including visitation, after the January 20 ISIS attack at the Ghwayran Detention Facility.<sup>398</sup>

The DIA reported that although the SDF has increased security at its detention facilities since the Ghwayran facility attack, many of the fundamental security vulnerabilities that were in place prior to the attack remain.<sup>399</sup> These vulnerabilities include the physical conditions in some of the facilities and limitations of the SDF guard force. The DIA reported that the SDF

The SDF operates 28 detention facilities across northeastern Syria.

**According to CJTF-OIR, the guard force at the Ghuwayran facility was “undermanned, underequipped, and undertrained” to manage the number of high threat detainees housed in the facility at the time of the attack, especially considering the lack of separation and control inside the facility.**

relies on poorly trained conscripts for most of its guard force, and the guards are susceptible to bribes in part because of the poor state of northeastern Syria’s economy.<sup>400</sup>

During the quarter, 255 individuals from SDF detention facilities (52 adults and 203 youths) were repatriated.<sup>401</sup>

## Conditions Improve at Ghuwayran Facility

The attack at the Ghuwayran Detention Facility underscored concerns about ISIS’s ability to plan a complex attack and infiltrate the detention facility. The DIA said that ISIS detainees at the Ghuwayran facility were able to obtain phones to communicate with members outside the detention facility.<sup>402</sup> Prisoners were prepared to riot when the attack occurred.<sup>403</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that the SDF leadership at various SDF facilities across the operating area have expressed a heightened level of concern related to threat vulnerability in the aftermath of the attack.<sup>404</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that efforts to improve the Ghuwayran facility were completed in March and conditions are now “good.”<sup>405</sup> The population at the facility is below maximum capacity with each room holding no more than 26 inmates, providing at least 2.5 meters (8.2 feet) square of floor space each.<sup>406</sup>

All mattresses, blankets, and uniforms that were burned during the January attack were replaced and each detainee has their own mattress. All detainees have access to washing stations, daylight, fresh water and air, and are fed from the operational kitchen facility. The laundry facility construction work and repairs are finished, so clothing and bedding can be washed.<sup>407</sup> In addition, all but one air conditioning unit has been installed and all repairs following the attack have been completed, improving conditions inside the facility.<sup>408</sup>

According to CJTF-OIR, the guard force at the Ghuwayran facility was “undermanned, underequipped, and undertrained” to manage the number of high threat detainees housed in the facility at the time of the attack, especially considering the lack of separation and control inside the facility.<sup>409</sup> The detainees had considerable freedom of movement within the old buildings and cell blocks, in part due to the limitations of the facility itself, and also due to the lack of control the guard force imposed on the detainee population.<sup>410</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that the new, more secure buildings and cell blocks in which the detainees now reside were near completion at the time of the attack. Had they already been in use, they would have enabled greater control of the detainee population.<sup>411</sup>

To rebuild and improve the SDF guard force, CJTF-OIR developed a 15-day training program to identify and train trainees with the aptitude to become primary instructors. The plan is to put a train-the-trainer model in place to ultimately develop a better operating SDF guard force.<sup>412</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that while formal guard force training has not significantly changed, the lessons learned from the Ghuwayran attack remain a “staple of conversation” when interacting with the SDF, and have been applied to a marginal extent at Ghuwayran and other detention facilities in northeastern Syria.<sup>413</sup>

## SDF Continues to Hold Juvenile Detainees

The DoS reported that 539 of the detainees at the Ghuwayran Detention Facility were under age 18 when they were detained following their capture in the 2019 battle of Baghuz, of which 348 are still minors.<sup>414</sup>

The juveniles are housed in a single block, separated from the adult population.<sup>415</sup> The DoS said that international and humanitarian organizations have limited access to them.<sup>416</sup> CJTF-OIR said conditions for the juveniles are mostly the same as other detainees, although juveniles are allowed additional clothing and blankets.<sup>417</sup>

The DoS reported that the SDF does not have the capacity to house more than approximately 100 juveniles in “civilian-managed, age-appropriate centers,” rather than detention facilities, where they can be set on the path towards reintegration.<sup>418</sup> To help ease the overcrowding, the SDF requested support from the international community. In response, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and ISIS’s 2022 pledge drive includes an appeal for funds for youth rehabilitation programming.<sup>419</sup> The DoS said that many of these youth are non-Syrians awaiting repatriation. The United States encourages countries to repatriate their nationals from northeastern Syria.<sup>420</sup>

Additional information about SDF detention centers is available in the classified appendix to this report.

**CJTF-OIR reported that during two clearance operations, partner forces detained more than 130 ISIS suspects in the camp and seized numerous weapons.**

## DISPLACED PERSONS CAMPS

### Security Operations, Training Seek to Improve Security at al-Hol

During the quarter, the SDF and their internal Asayish security forces continued operations to clear the al-Hol displaced persons camp of ISIS operatives and address ongoing insecurity and violence.<sup>421</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that during two clearance operations, partner forces detained more than 130 ISIS suspects in the camp and seized numerous weapons.<sup>422</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that while there were no significant changes in security activity or practices at the camp, partner forces have improved the camp’s internal and external security mechanisms and infrastructure.<sup>423</sup> U.S. military training teams have trained a total of 109 guards for al-Hol; a further 150 security forces were in training during the quarter.<sup>424</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that U.S. Army Civil Affairs teams continued to work with partner forces and international partners to identify areas where camp security can be improved through Overseas Humanitarian Disaster Assistance Civil Aid and CTEF funding streams.<sup>425</sup> The objectives are to improve security and living conditions, and reduce ISIS and other malign actor influence inside the camp.<sup>426</sup> During the quarter, the Civil Affairs teams supported internal and external camp security improvements and repatriation efforts.<sup>427</sup>

The United States continued to call on countries to repatriate their nationals from the camp as well as from SDF detention facilities holding foreign ISIS fighters.<sup>428</sup> The U.S. Government position is that the most durable solution is for countries to repatriate, rehabilitate, reintegrate, and where appropriate, prosecute their nationals residing in northeastern Syria.<sup>429</sup>



**CJTF-OIR said that the continued presence of ISIS ideology in al-Hol “fuels the continued violence,” which in turn exacerbates the humanitarian suffering by driving away aid.**

## ISIS Activities in al-Hol Pose Long-term Threat

Al-Hol is the largest displacement camp in northeastern Syria, with an estimated 70 percent of its population of approximately 56,000 under the age of 18 and living in dire conditions.<sup>430</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that 11 years of conflict, a failing economy and rising food and fuel prices exacerbated by the Ukraine conflict and other factors, have created humanitarian suffering throughout the region and disproportionately in displaced persons camps, particularly al-Hol.<sup>431</sup>

Analysts and government, military and humanitarian leaders continued to observe that ISIS could rebuild its influence and reach if the group’s activity in al-Hol is not adequately suppressed.<sup>432</sup> Ian Moss, a top DoS Bureau of Counterterrorism official, stated in remarks during the quarter that failure to address the situation in al-Hol will further destabilize Syria and the region, threaten the West, and “all but guarantee that we will again face a more capable and resurgent ISIS.”<sup>433</sup> The new USCENTCOM Commander, General Erik Kurilla, visited al-Hol as part of his first visit to the region in April.<sup>434</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that the continued presence of ISIS ideology in al-Hol “fuels the continued violence,” which in turn exacerbates the humanitarian suffering by driving away aid.<sup>435</sup> For example the Norwegian Refugee Council temporarily suspended most of its humanitarian work in al-Hol during the quarter and left its offices within the camp following an armed raid and beatings of its staff.<sup>436</sup>

## ISIS Violence at al-Hol Continues

ISIS continued its streak of killings and attacks on civilians and SDF security forces in al-Hol during the quarter.<sup>437</sup> The DIA reported that ISIS targeted “perceived defectors” for assassination; the group also continued to use al-Hol as “a safe haven,” and “a population center for recruitment of children”<sup>438</sup>

The DoS reported that 17 camp residents were killed in al-Hol during the quarter, an increase of 9 from the previous quarter. The DoS said it was unable to determine which killings are associated with ISIS.<sup>439</sup> The level of violence at al-Hol camp was “significant, threatening both the civilian population and the humanitarian workers risking their lives to provide vital assistance,” the DoS reported.<sup>440</sup>

In one example on May 30, suspected ISIS supporters killed an Iraqi woman in the camp, and internal security forces reportedly found her beheaded body in shackles with signs of extensive torture.<sup>441</sup> A Syrian war monitor reported that security forces found the body of a decapitated woman in the camp on June 28, the same day a man was shot and killed.<sup>442</sup>

The DIA said that while poor conditions and scarce resources drive criminality in the camp, ISIS is responsible for most violent crime in al-Hol. ISIS members in the camp are able to move freely in all areas except the foreigners annex which has more restricted access.<sup>443</sup> CJTF-OIR noted that the Self-Administration of North and East Syria (SANES) assessed that ISIS cells in the camp coordinated with the ISIS fighters who attacked the SDF-run Ghuwayran Detention Facility in January.<sup>444</sup>

More information about repatriation efforts from al-Hol can be found on page 70.

## Role of Third Parties

Forces associated with the Syrian regime, Iran, Russia, and Turkey continued to operate in Syria during the quarter.<sup>445</sup> While many of these forces also conducted limited operations against ISIS, OUSD(P) noted that many of these actors seek to erode the SDF's base of support by attacking SDF forces and sowing discontent in local communities in northeastern Syria.<sup>446</sup> At the same time, the SDF selectively cooperates with some third party actors, particularly the Syrian regime and Russian forces, out of necessity to defend shared interests.<sup>447</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that third parties, particularly Iran-aligned militias, continued to pose a threat to U.S. and Coalition personnel in Syria.<sup>448</sup>

### **TURKEY, REGIME AND RUSSIAN FORCES CONTINUE COUNTER-ISIS OPERATIONS**

The U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) reported that Turkey's counter-ISIS activities inside Turkey and its sustained presence along its border with Iraq and Syria have reduced ISIS's ability to conduct and support attacks within and from Turkey.<sup>449</sup> During the quarter, Turkish security forces routinely conducted raids and detained ISIS members to deter cross-border facilitation, constrain financial and logistic support, and disrupt potential threats.<sup>450</sup> According to a press report, Turkish authorities claimed to have detained senior ISIS leader, Abu al-Hassan al-Qurayshi, in Turkey in late May.<sup>451</sup>

The DIA reported that the Syrian regime continued to rely on its allies to conduct joint operations against ISIS and Russia continued to conduct airstrikes against ISIS targets in support of Syrian regime-aligned forces' counterterrorism operations.<sup>452</sup>

A war monitor tallied that Russian jets conducted close to 1,300 airstrikes against ISIS during the quarter.<sup>453</sup> According to a news report, regime forces and Russian warplanes increased their counter-ISIS operations in a large swathe of the desert in June following a spate of ISIS attacks on regime forces during the quarter.<sup>454</sup>

### **TURKEY ANNOUNCES PLANS TO LAUNCH FRESH MILITARY OFFENSIVE IN SYRIA**

In May, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's announced that Turkey would initiate a new ground offensive into northern Syria, heightening tensions with the SDF.<sup>455</sup> President Erdogan stated that Turkey planned to continue its implementation of its 30km (19 mile)-deep "safe zone" in northern Syria between Manbij and Tal Rifaat.<sup>456</sup>

Turkey views the SDF as a terrorist group, and sees its main Kurdish force, the People's Protection Units (YPG), as an extension of the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), which has been waging a decades-long insurgency against Turkey.<sup>457</sup> Since 2016, Turkey has launched three incursions deep across the Syria border, mostly targeting the SDF. The most recent incursion occurred in 2019, and prompted U.S. and SDF forces to withdraw from a stretch of the northeastern Syria border between Tal Abyad and Ras al Ayn.<sup>458</sup>

Tensions along the border region have remained high between the SDF and Turkish and Turkish-aligned Syrian opposition forces.<sup>459</sup> The SDF and the local Manbij Military Council reported that Turkish artillery and missile bombardments along the border and particularly in the areas singled out by Turkey for attack worsened in June.<sup>460</sup>

The SDF warned that a fresh incursion would shift its fight away from ISIS.<sup>461</sup> The DIA said that the SDF prioritizes defending its territory from Turkish attack over fighting ISIS and a new Turkish incursion would turn the SDF focus away from counterterrorism and jeopardize security at detention facilities and camps for internally displaced persons (IDP).<sup>462</sup> After the 2019 incursion, the SDF paused its operations against ISIS for weeks.<sup>463</sup>

The SDF Commander, General Mazloum Abdi, stated that a Turkish offensive would "divide Syrians, create a new humanitarian crisis and displace original inhabitants (local residents) and IDPs," as well as "negatively affect our

campaign against ISIS.”<sup>464</sup> The management of the al-Hol camp issued a statement warning that an attack by Turkey would “pave the way” for ISIS to reorganize itself in Syria, particularly in al-Hol.<sup>465</sup>

The DoS stated there is “credible reporting” that Turkish-supported opposition groups committed human rights abuses in northeastern Syria during the quarter, including abuses relating to detention, torture, rape, and deprivation of property.<sup>466</sup> The DoS said that ISIS is “better positioned to retain and recruit members” when the SDF is focused on protecting Kurdish populations.<sup>467</sup> U.S. Government sanctions imposed on the Turkish-supported group Ahrar al-Sharqiya last July has had “little real impact on” the behavior of Turkish-supported opposition groups, the DoS said.<sup>468</sup>

### **ACTORS IN SYRIA REACT TO TURKEY THREATS**

The United States, Russia, the Syrian regime, and Iran urged President Erdogan not to carry out the plan for a new offensive.<sup>469</sup> Speaking to Congress in June, DoS Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara Leaf warned that the U.S. Government is “deeply concerned by recent increased rhetoric” from Turkey about its possible escalation of military activities in northern Syria. She stated that U.S. diplomatic efforts had been increased to attempt de-escalation of tensions.<sup>470</sup>

In the same briefing to Congress, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Dana Stroul stated that any new Turkish offensive in Syria could “further undermine regional stability and put at risk U.S. forces and the Coalition’s campaign against ISIS.”<sup>471</sup> The SDF said that it would be ready to coordinate with Syrian regime forces to “thwart any potential Turkish attack.”<sup>472</sup>

Following the Turkish threats, Syrian regime forces expanded their positions in northern Syria, according to media reports.<sup>473</sup> The DIA said that Russia also reinforced its ground positions in northeastern Syria—particularly around Tal Rifaat, Manbij, the southern outskirts of Kobani, and Ain Issa—but had not significantly altered its overall force posture in Syria during the quarter.<sup>474</sup> In June, Russian forces conducted reconnaissance flights over Tal Rifaat, set up Pantsir-S1 air defense systems in Qamishli, and conducted additional military patrols in northern Syria, likely in anticipation of a potential Turkish offensive.<sup>475</sup>

The DIA reported that despite Russia’s differences with Turkey, as of April, Russia and Turkey continued to conduct joint patrols in northern Syria.<sup>476</sup>

### **RUSSIAN FORCES BEHAVIOR “PROVOCATIVE AND ESCALATORY”**

CJTF-OIR reported that during the quarter a “threat actor” aircraft struck an outpost of the MaT forces, which are positioned in the deconfliction zone around the At Tanf Garrison.<sup>477</sup> Media reports said that Russian forces carried out an airstrike in the area on June 15. The strike escalated an already tense relationship between U.S. and Russian forces operating in Syria.<sup>478</sup> U.S. defense officials cited in media reports said Russian military officials notified American forces in advance of their intent to strike in the vicinity of the garrison, giving the U.S. Special Forces team time to warn the partner forces to take shelter.<sup>479</sup> The reports said no Americans were hurt.<sup>480</sup>

According to media reports, the notification came through the de-confliction channel between U.S. and Russian forces in Syria, which allows Russian and U.S. forces to communicate on upcoming operations in proximity of one another and avoid the risk of inadvertent contact or escalation.<sup>481</sup> According to one press report, the warning came 35 minutes prior to the attack on an outpost at the garrison.<sup>482</sup>

*(continued from next page)*

## Role of Third Parties *(continued from previous page)*

In the same week, Russian jets reportedly deployed to a site in northeastern Syria where U.S. forces were conducting a raid to apprehend an ISIS bomb maker.<sup>483</sup> According to U.S. military officials cited in media reporting, the Russian jets withdrew when the U.S. scrambled its own F-16 fighters.<sup>484</sup> Russian jets also executed menacing maneuvers around U.S. military planes over Syria that failed to adhere to standards of professionalism and safe operating protocols.<sup>485</sup>

USCENTCOM Commander Erik Kurilla visited At Tanf just days after the attack, where he was cited as telling U.S. Soldiers and their partner forces that Russia is testing U.S. limits and will push as hard as it thinks it can. He said that the last thing the U.S. wants is conflict with Russia, but it would defend itself and “won’t hesitate to respond.”<sup>486</sup> General Kurilla called Russia’s recent behavior “provocative and escalatory,” but said the United States continues to seek to “avoid miscalculation.”<sup>487</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that the majority of Russian deconfliction violations in Syria during the quarter were air violations, while ground violations dropped considerably below last year’s totals for that period.<sup>488</sup> CJTF-OIR said it maintains daily contact with Russian counterparts to de-conflict air and ground operations as required.<sup>489</sup>

CJTF-OIR said that Coalition forces continue to demonstrate willingness and ability to project force by conducting mounted presence patrols within the ESSA and around Qamishli and live fire exercises with artillery and close air support assets in the ESSA and around At Tanf. The Coalition also engage daily with the Russian military to protest Russian violations against Coalition forces.<sup>490</sup>

### IRAN-ALIGNED FORCES CONTINUE TO POSE THREAT, THOUGH ATTACKS DECREASE

CJTF-OIR reported that Iran-aligned militias continued to conduct attacks against U.S. and Coalition personnel and other disruptive activities targeting U.S. military facilities in Syria.<sup>491</sup> CJTF-OIR said attacks decreased compared to the previous quarter, continuing a downward trend since a spike in January that coincided with the anniversary of the death of Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps -Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani.<sup>492</sup>

The latest attack against co-located U.S. military personnel and U.S.-backed forces occurred on May 17, 2022, at Patrol Base Shaddadi in Hasakah province, resulting in no U.S. casualties.<sup>493</sup>

## STABILIZATION

The DoS said that stabilization assistance plays a “critical role in this stage of the OIR mission” by addressing the economic and social cleavages that ISIS seeks to exploit, closing gaps in local service provider capacity, and supporting civil society to advocate for citizen needs.<sup>494</sup>

The DoS funds programs that support education, community security, independent media, civil society, social cohesion, transitional justice, accountability, restoration of essential services, and a political resolution to the Syrian conflict in line with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2254.<sup>495</sup> USAID’s Middle East Bureau funds programs that support livelihoods, economic governance, women’s empowerment, political participation, essential service restoration, access to water and irrigation, and agriculture.<sup>496</sup> (See Tables 7 and 8.)

Table 7.

**DoS-funded Stabilization Programs in Syria During the Quarter**

Program Goals	Activities During the Quarter
<b>Essential Services and Local Governance</b> Seeks to build local councils' ability to provide essential services to their communities	Partnered with local governance entities in Raqqah, Tabqah, Dayr az Zawr, and Hasakah to restore essential services in liberated areas east of the Euphrates River, including rehabilitating infrastructure and building the response capacity of its partners by providing operational and infrastructure assistance to emergency medical teams, municipal vehicle mechanics, trash collection workers, firefighters, emergency response drivers, body exhumation teams, documentation/forensics specialists and rubble removal teams.  Built capacity of project partners through training sessions, on-the-job mentorship, and assessment support, critical to a sustainable approach.
<b>Civil Society</b> Seeks to help civil society organizations restore essential services and livelihoods in areas liberated from ISIS	Supported Syrian civil society organizations as they restored essential services and livelihoods in areas liberated from ISIS.  Supported work by civil society organizations to enhance social cohesion in communities liberated from ISIS and communities with members of religious minority groups.  Strengthened the capacity of all civil society partners to serve and represent Syrians.
<b>Education</b> Seeks to build the capacity of local councils, their education committees, and community based organizations to provide remedial numeracy, primary education, psychosocial support for children, vocational training, and school	Provided capacity building for local councils, education committees, and community-based organizations to provide educational services, including remedial literacy and numeracy, technical and vocational training, psychosocial support, teacher training, and rehabilitation/winterization of schools.  Worked with families who have recently returned from displaced persons camps (especially al-Hol camp) through a social reintegration program that focuses on building cohesion in the communities of return.
<b>Independent Media</b> Seeks to promote unbiased, professional, relevant reporting	Provided capacity building and operational support to 10 independent Syrian media outlets to improve access to accurate, unbiased information and counter disinformation and violent extremist narratives.  Provided operational and production support to 10 independent media partners producing content across online, television, and radio platforms; trainings and mentoring sessions for partner journalists and producers; and satellite subscriptions and mobile journalism kits to partners.  Provided ongoing support of a media consumption survey for all media partner partners to monitor and evaluate media partner trends, audience reach and impact among various demographics.
<b>Community Security</b> Seeks to build the capacity of internal security forces to provide security in a way that supports, and is supported by, the communities they serve	Built the capacity of internal security forces and the governance bodies to deliver community policing services that serves, and is supported by, the population.  The project takes a holistic approach to community security, supporting officer trainings, building the capacity of civilian authorities, promoting community engagement, and supporting public safety initiatives.



Program Goals	Activities During the Quarter
<b>Syrian Political Process</b> Seeks to strengthen the capabilities of stakeholders to participate in the Constitutional Committee and work with other UN-convened negotiations in support of UNSCR 2254	Supported progress towards a political solution in Syria by building the capacity of stakeholders to engage in UN-convened processes and fostering their engagement with Syrian civil society and marginalized populations.
<b>Democracy, Human Rights and Labor</b> Seeks to build Syrian-led, holistic, and victim-centered approach to justice and accountability for mass atrocities, gross human rights violations, and other violations in Syria	<p>Supported Syrian civil society organizations to collect, preserve, and analyze evidence of human rights violations and atrocities from all sides of the conflict and supported survivors of torture and sexual and gender-based violence.</p> <p>Built the capacity of Syrian civil society and advocacy organizations and other individuals to counter extremism and help stabilize their communities through trainings and advocacy activities (specifically targeting marginalized groups to foster social cohesion and rebuild communities).</p> <p>Continued to increase civic participation in the political process, strengthen nonsectarian voices, provide enhanced accountability for local governance, and support Syrian civil society organizations to implement local reconciliation initiatives to prevent intercommunal conflict and violence.</p>

**Source:** DoS, response to DoS OIG request for information, 6/22/2022; DoS, vetting comment, 7/19/2022.

Table 8.

### USAID-funded Stabilization Activities During the Quarter

Program Goals	Activities During the Quarter
<b>Elections and Political Processes</b>	<p>Completed assessments on the SANES internal organizational structure and disinformation efforts in northeast Syria.</p> <p>Provided assistance to civil society organizations through training sessions and workshops on citizen priorities such as women's rights, gender-based violence, local governance and accountability.</p>
<b>Wheat and Livestock Project</b>	<p>Procured seed sorting machines which are planned to be distributed to benefit 13 farmer cooperatives in 6 villages in Dayr az Zawr benefiting an estimated 3000 members of the cooperatives.</p> <p>Tractors will be distributed to benefit 25 farmer cooperatives in 6 villages in Dayr az Zawr which will improve crop management practices on at least 500ha of wheat production lands.</p> <p>Prepared and sourced for inputs for the fall 2022 wheat planting season.</p>
<b>Syria Livelihoods Project</b>	<p><b>Block Press Operators Started Training:</b> The program distributed block presses to 30 workshops and 59 block press operators started on-the-job training at workshops across Raqqah. The program will provide one month's paid on-the-job training for the block press operators who will be employed at the workshops to operate the additional presses.</p> <p><b>Public-Private Dialogue to Discuss Construction Sector Challenges:</b> Twenty-five contractors from Raqqah and Tabqa attended a roundtable discussion, and representatives of the Contractors Union was part of a Community of Practice, which aims to create stronger partnerships between the public and private entities in the construction sector.</p>

Program Goals	Activities During the Quarter
<b>Economic Management for Stability in Northeast Syria</b>	<p><b>Private Sector Engagement:</b> The program identified and provided tailored advice to 40 companies in sub-sectors such as agro-processing, farming, and garment manufacturing to expand local production of critical goods and reduce reliance on imports. The program has created 435 sustainable job opportunities and by the end of 2022, aims to reach 80 firms and create over 1000 sustainable job opportunities.</p> <p><b>Agriculture and Economic Advisors' Visit:</b> Completed an assessment of the potential risks and opportunities to food security in the region, including wheat availability, which has been impacted by the conflict in Ukraine. Advisors visited agricultural producers, processors, packers, traders, and input suppliers across northeast Syria to assess how short to medium term interventions focused on the private sector could rapidly help to improve the food security situation there.</p>
<b>Essential Services, Good Governance, and Economic Recovery</b>	<p><b>IDP Needs Assessment:</b> The Social Affairs and Labor committee created data collection tools, including a needs assessment manual and surveys, to better understand the needs and priorities of internally displaced persons in the region. Using these tools, the committee drafted a needs assessment report that is now guiding efforts to support IDPs in the area.</p> <p><b>Enhancing and Supporting Employment and Decent Work for Women and Youth:</b> A local organization completed an agricultural extension awareness campaign in Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr. In Raqqah, the organization held two agricultural extension training sessions, completing a total of 52 sessions, reaching their target of 1,260 farmers. In Dayr az Zawr, a total of 50 training sessions were completed, reaching a total of 1,269 farmers. These sessions, which targeted IDP, returnee, and host community farmers, covered crop diseases and pests and methods to mitigate their effects.</p> <p><b>Raise Awareness of Labor Rights Issues:</b> The Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr Labor and Farmers Unions continued their awareness campaign on labor rights. In Raqqah, the activity installed billboards, posters in local authority establishments and markets, and painted street art. In Dayr az Zawr, the activity continued painting street art, installed billboards, and hung posters in markets and local authority establishments. This campaign aims to enhance knowledge about labor rights and the obligation of employers to ensure a decent working environment.</p> <p><b>Labor and Farmer Unions Complete Capacity Building Training:</b> A local organization completed its training for the management of the Labor and Farmers Unions. In Raqqah, five sessions were held for the Labor and Farmers Union's administrative employees in Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr. The purpose of the training was to aid the unions in developing an organizational chart and enhance the unions' staff awareness of their roles and responsibilities, particularly in regard to supporting youth and women.</p> <p><b>Work on Oxygen Bottling Plant:</b> The Jazeera Health Commission completed work on the oxygen bottling facility. This plant is now capable of producing 200 oxygen cylinders a day to help meet the medical-grade oxygen demand across Hasakah governorate, a need that has grown more acute due to COVID-19.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Continued on next page)</i></p>

Program Goals	Activities During the Quarter
<b>Essential Services, Good Governance, and Economic Recovery</b> <i>(continued)</i>	<p><b>Chick Hatchery and Fertilized Eggs Production Farms:</b> This activity was completed by the Veterinary Union of Dayr az Zawr, which expects to receive eggs for the chick hatchery this quarter. This hatchery will revive the local poultry economy by enabling the production of locally hatched and raised chicks that will be sold to poultry farmers in Dayr az Zawr. This will lower the input cost for poultry farmers because they will no longer have to purchase expensive imported chicks.</p> <p><b>Solar-Powered Vaccine Cold Storage Rooms:</b> Began physical work on a site in Dayr az Zawr where new solar-powered cold storage rooms for vaccines will be established. Once this activity is completed, the Dayr az Zawr Health Committee will be able to store COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines for longer periods, adding a much-needed piece to the region's health infrastructure and enabling more flexible vaccine distribution while simultaneously reducing waste.</p> <p><b>Employment and Decent Work for Women and Youth:</b> The Labor and Farmers Unions in Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr completed various activities in support of the expansion of decent employment for women and youth. Agricultural extension workshops reached 2,530 farmers and distributed agricultural extension guidance booklets reached another 7,000, including 3,000 women. The campaign included hosting 53 awareness sessions targeting 800 participants from the private sector and local authorities, as well as various advertisements to ensure women, youth, IDPs, and returnees are empowered to advocate for fair work environments.</p>

**Source:** USAID ME Bureau, response to USAID OIG request for information, 6/17/2022

On May 11, the United States and Morocco co-chaired the Ministerial Meeting of the 85-member Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in Marrakesh, Morocco. At the meeting, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland, emphasized the U.S. commitment to the Defeat-ISIS fight and launched the 2022 Coalition Pledge Drive for Stabilization. She called for “urgent contributions” to the goal of \$700 million in stabilization assistance for Iraq and Syria and pressed for the immediate repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters and associated family members from northeast Syria.<sup>497</sup>

U.S. Government stabilization programs are managed through the Syria Regional Platform.<sup>498</sup> Though the DoS and USAID stabilization programs are funded and managed separately, personnel from both agencies work together to share information daily and de-conflict any overlaps in programming.<sup>499</sup>

## Wheat Output Improved Despite Restricted Access to Irrigation

With the wheat harvest underway, a USAID implementing partner conducted a survey of farms that received U.S.-provided wheat seeds during the fall 2021 planting season.<sup>500</sup> The farms are expected to produce over 35,000 tons of wheat, with significant yield improvements over last year.<sup>501</sup> USAID reported that farms receiving support in Hasakah governorate improved yields between 14 and 58 percent from the previous year. Farmers in Dayr az Zawr governorate improved yields between 46 and 157 percent compared to the previous year.<sup>502</sup> Wheat output improved amid uneven and poorly timed delivery of diesel subsidies from SANES impacting access to irrigation.<sup>503</sup>

USAID reported that to maximize the impact of the seed distribution and ensure the highest yields, the program developed eligibility criteria to choose farmers with access to irrigation and proper land area and conducted field visits to verify that selected beneficiaries match the criteria.<sup>504</sup> In addition, USAID worked closely with U.S. Government, local, and regional stakeholders to ensure logistics ran smoothly and to facilitate work by coordinating with local authorities.<sup>505</sup>

Food security efforts are critically important given that warmer temperatures, historic drought, and the combined impacts of eleven years of conflict have diminished wheat production in northeast Syria.<sup>506</sup> An April assessment conducted by a nongovernmental organization (NGO) found that dryer and warmer weather patterns resulted in reduced water levels and contributed to increased crop diseases and pest infestations.<sup>507</sup> These factors combined with decaying public irrigation infrastructure and poor soil quality have presented challenges for wheat farmers in northeast Syria.<sup>508</sup>

## **No Progress Made in Eighth Round of Constitutional Committee Talks**

UN Special Envoy for Syria Geir Pedersen held the eighth rounds of talks of the Syrian Constitutional Committee from May 30 through June 3.<sup>509</sup> The DoS cited the Syrian regime's continued "stalling tactics" as the main reason for the lack of progress during the talks and said that the "Assad regime continues to be the biggest obstacle" toward a political resolution to the conflict.<sup>510</sup>

Among the topics discussed during the meetings were transitional justice, preserving and strengthening state institutions, the importance of the constitution, and the hierarchy of international agreements.<sup>511</sup>

Special Envoy Pedersen said the "slow pace of work and the continuing inability to identify" and resolve agreements were areas that required much improvement.<sup>512</sup> He urged committee members to work "with a sense of compromise" towards a constitution that would attract broad support among Syrians.<sup>513</sup>

The ninth session of the Constitutional Committee, scheduled for late July, was postponed.<sup>514</sup> The United States and most of the international community continue to support UNSCR 2254 as the "best roadmap for reaching a political solution" in Syria, the DoS said.<sup>515</sup>

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Syria General License Aims to Improve Economy, Stability in Northern Syria**

The DoS supports civil society assist emerging small businesses and entrepreneurs, while its education projects support technical and vocational trainings. USAID, through multiple projects, supports agriculture production, access to irrigation, livelihoods, economic growth, and private sector led development. In tandem, the Syria Recovery Trust Fund, of which the United States is an original permanent donor, has established a Revolving Credit Fund



to provide small-scale loans in parts of northeast and northwest Syria.<sup>516</sup> This stabilization assistance, as well as the DoS and USAID’s broader stabilization efforts, is vital to helping to accelerate inclusive economic recovery in areas liberated from ISIS.<sup>517</sup>

On May 12, the U.S. Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control issued Syria General License 22, which is designed to improve economic conditions in certain non-regime-held areas of northeastern and northwestern Syria to support ongoing U.S. Government-led Defeat-ISIS stabilization efforts, the DoS reported.<sup>518</sup> This authorization “builds on the Administration’s strategy to defeat ISIS and aims to increase stability” in areas liberated from ISIS by encouraging private sector engagement in non-regime-held areas to complement Defeat-ISIS stabilization goals, the DoS said.<sup>519</sup> General License 22 is intended to encourage economic growth in northern Syria in the following sectors: agriculture, information and telecommunication, power grid infrastructure, construction, health services, trade, manufacturing, education, clean energy, transportation and warehousing, water and waste management, and finance.<sup>520</sup>

**The DoS reported that on June 1, 151 Iraqi families were repatriated from al-Hol camp to their countries of origin.**

## REINTEGRATION AND REPATRIATION

### Iraqi Families, Syrians, and Other Nationals Depart al-Hol

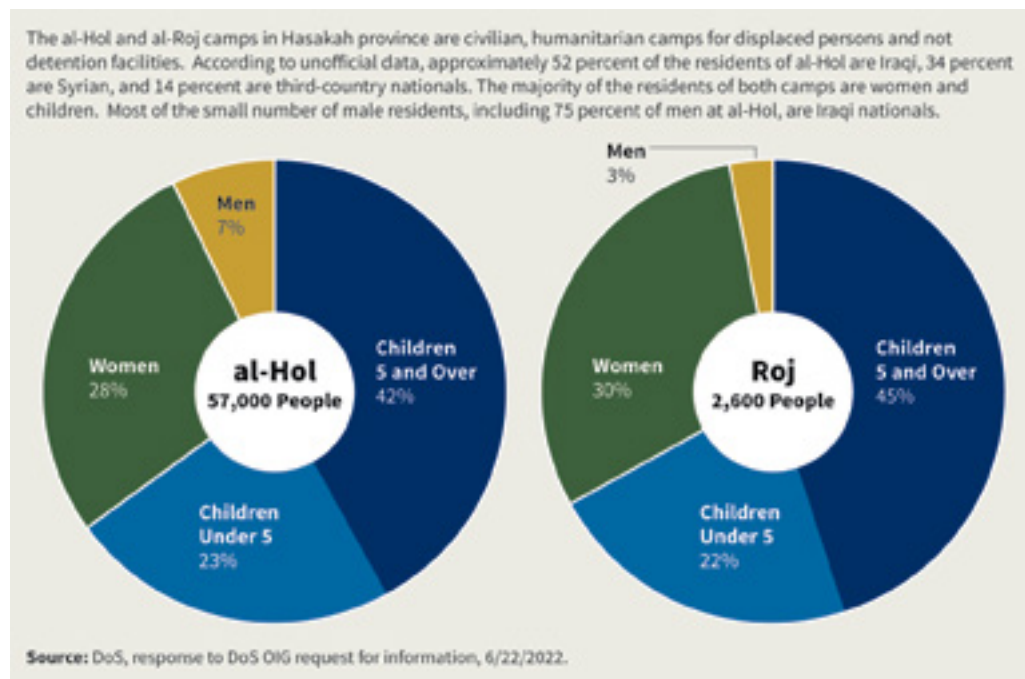
The DoS reported that on June 1, 151 Iraqi families were repatriated from al-Hol camp to their countries of origin. Most of these families resided at al-Hol prior to the March 2019 fall of Baghuz, ISIS’s last territorial holding in Syria.<sup>521</sup> Meanwhile, departures of Syrian nationals from al-Hol camp have slowed since the January attack on the detention center in Hasakah governorate. Since April 1, 9 Syrians departed al-Hol for their areas of origin in northern Syria.<sup>522</sup>

During the quarter, several countries, “gradually and in specific cases,” showed willingness to or repatriated their nationals from northeastern Syria.<sup>523</sup> The DoS reported that in late March, the U.S. Government facilitated the repatriation of 37 German foreign terrorist fighter-associated family members.<sup>524</sup> In April, 2 British children and 10 Russian children were repatriated to those countries; in May, 5 Swedish women and children, 13 Albanian women, and 2 Kosovar ISIS fighters were repatriated; in June, 2 Austrian children, and 22 Belgian women and children were repatriated. Also in June, in addition to the 151 Iraqi families who were repatriated, 50 adult Iraqi detainees and 203 Iraqi juvenile detainees were repatriated to Iraq.<sup>525</sup>

### DoS Funds Essential Services at al-Hol and Roj Camps

During the quarter, the DoS funded essential services at al-Hol and Roj displaced persons camps, including maintenance of physical infrastructure, the distribution of food, water, and other assistance, and the overall coordination of humanitarian assistance with the camp administration, which is run by SANES.<sup>526</sup> Through partnerships with UN humanitarian organizations and NGOs, the U.S. Government also provided additional, significant life-saving assistance for the camp, including shelter, protection, winterization supplies, health, education, and sanitation.<sup>527</sup>

Figure 8.

**Demographics of Residents of al-Hol and Roj Displaced Persons Camps**

The DoS reported that short-term security improvements are “urgently needed to minimize threats to camp residents and aid workers,” and longer-term solutions are necessary to properly train and equip external and internal security partners.<sup>528</sup>

The DoS reported that it provided psychosocial support, remedial literacy and numeracy courses, and self-learning classes to children in both formal and informal schools in internally displaced persons camps, including al-Hol and Roj camps. The DoS said that education and psychosocial assistance at displaced persons camps are the most pressing needs for children residing there.<sup>529</sup> During a visit to al-Hol in June, the UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria stressed that “al-Hol is no place for children.”<sup>530</sup>

### **Al-Hol Camp Stakeholders Discuss Insecurity, Civil-Military Coordination**

Humanitarian, diplomatic, and military stakeholders met during the quarter to discuss security and humanitarian improvements at al-Hol camp. These discussions included CJTF-OIR and SOJTF-L “initiatives to address insecurity [and] related civil-military coordination challenges” and UN and NGO plans to improve services at al-Hol camp.<sup>531</sup>

The meeting participants acknowledged that the new security initiatives they are proposing will not control all types of violence, but are necessary to help SDF forces improve security at the camp. In addition, humanitarian organizations outlined plans and funding appeals for service provision at the camp.<sup>532</sup>

A convoy of trucks filled with wheat seeds crosses into northeast Syria to deliver seeds. (USAID photo)



## HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The DoS reported that while levels of violence in Syria were at their lowest point in the 11-year conflict during the quarter, the economic and humanitarian situation was at its worst.<sup>533</sup> (See page 73.) On May 10, the United States announced nearly \$808 million in new funds to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Syria. The funds are intended to help many of the 14.6 million Syrians in Syria and the more than 5.6 million Syrian refugees and host communities in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt.<sup>534</sup>

USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) fund organizations that provide emergency food assistance; health services; and water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance; and shelter in Syria and to Syrian refugees living in neighboring countries. USAID BHA and the DoS PRM also support psychosocial programs; case management and referral services; and other programs to children and vulnerable individuals.<sup>535</sup>

In addition, USAID and the DoS fund early recovery programs: activities that aim to reduce immediate and protracted humanitarian needs by strengthening the self-reliance of affected populations, and improving individual, household, and community resilience, and therefore reducing dependence on external assistance.<sup>536</sup> The programs are based on assessed humanitarian needs among vulnerable populations and implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner by independent and impartial humanitarian agencies across Syria.<sup>537</sup>

In Syria, USAID BHA early recovery programs include rehabilitation of health facilities damaged by conflict; debris and waste removal; and income-generating activities such as small livelihoods grants, vocational training, and savings and loan groups.<sup>538</sup> Humanitarian early recovery is not provided at the expense of emergency humanitarian assistance but is often provided in tandem.<sup>539</sup> USAID BHA said that it applies an “early recovery lens across all programs in Syria” to improve the sustainability of its humanitarian response, and that early recovery programming supplements immediate, life-saving assistance with activities that support the longer-term needs and self-reliance of Syrians.<sup>540</sup>

During the quarter, the U.S. Government remained heavily involved in efforts to ensure that UN cross-border access—currently via the Bab al-Hawa crossing in northwestern Syria—continued. On July 12, the UN Security Council reauthorized the resolution for another 6 months to allow cross-border humanitarian aid deliveries through the Syrian-Turkish border until January 10, 2023.<sup>541</sup>

# SYRIA: RECENT COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS

April 1, 2022–June 30, 2022

## BAB AL-HAWA

In early June, Ambassador Linda Thomas Greenfield, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, visited the Bab al-Hawa border crossing to discuss U.S. Government support for continued UN cross-border assistance to northwest Syria through the crossing. She also discussed the U.S. Government's May commitment of nearly \$808 million in additional humanitarian assistance funding for Syria.

## IDLIB

On May 16, the United Nations dispatched its fourth crossline humanitarian convoy to Idlib governorate, carrying food commodities sufficient to support approximately 40,000 people in northwest Syria. Ongoing conflict, including airstrikes, improvised explosive devices, and landmines, continued to hinder the UN's ability to conduct regular humanitarian assistance deliveries into northwest Syria.

## HASAKAH, RAQQAH, AND DAYR AZ ZAWR

An NGO published an assessment in April that described how the climate in Syria has become increasingly warm and arid. The average temperature in northeast Syria is approximately 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than 100 years ago and average rainfall during each month has decreased by approximately 0.7 inches per century. These changes have significantly impacted wheat farmers in the region.



**14.6  
million**

Population in Need  
of Humanitarian  
Assistance

**12  
million**

Food Insecure  
People

**6.7  
million**

IDPs

**5.5  
million**

People Reached  
by USAID BHA  
per Month

**2.1  
million**

People Reached  
by DoS PRM  
per Month

## COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

More than **14.1 million** COVID-19 vaccine doses had been delivered in Syria, which covers **45.4 percent** of the population

## Allocated (COVAX)

**14,101,280**

## Doses Delivered

- Government of Syria–COVAX: **9,287,440**
- Government of Syria–Bilateral: **2,753,640**
- NW Syria–COVAX: **2,060,200**

Source: USAID, "Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #7 FY22," 6/10/2022.

Table 9.

**U.S. Government Funding Available for the Syria Humanitarian Response FY2021–22**

SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE FY 2021–22			
	USAID BHA	DoS PRM	TOTAL
<b>Crisis Response</b>	\$356,831,306	\$96,700,000	<b>\$453,531,306</b>
<b>Humanitarian Funding for Countries that Host Syria Refugees</b>			
<b>Egypt</b>	\$15,000,000	\$7,500,000	<b>\$22,500,000</b>
<b>Iraq</b>	N/A*	\$16,400,000	<b>\$16,400,000</b>
<b>Jordan</b>	\$66,552,591	\$68,200,000	<b>\$134,752,591</b>
<b>Lebanon</b>	\$73,035,000	\$111,100,000	<b>\$184,135,000</b>
<b>Turkey</b>	\$7,600,000	\$64,548,214	<b>\$82,148,214</b>
<b>Regional</b>	N/A	\$1,200,000	<b>\$1,200,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$519,018,897</b>	<b>\$375,648,214</b>	<b>\$894,667,111</b>

**Note:** \*USAID BHA funding for Syrian refugees in Iraq is included in the Iraq Humanitarian Response funding total.

**Source:** USAID, “Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #7 FY22,” 6/10/2022.

## Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine Increases Costs to Provide Humanitarian Assistance

USAID BHA reported that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine continued to have major implications for food security in Syria due to both Russia and Ukraine’s major roles in global food markets.<sup>542</sup> USAID said that the World Food Programme and other implementing partners reported a continued surge in energy prices.<sup>543</sup> Increased energy costs resulted in the escalation of the cost of humanitarian operations throughout Syria—due to rising food prices and supply chain-related fuel costs for ocean freight, land transportation, aviation, and facilities.<sup>544</sup> USAID said that in-country dispatches of food assistance were delayed as transportation companies face “severe difficulties” in securing fuel.<sup>545</sup>

Prices for critical commodities including wheat, flour, oil, and fuel have also continued to rise significantly. USAID reported that during the quarter, implementing partners had to diversify source countries for food commodities due to high prices, unavailability, and shortages.<sup>546</sup> The cost of electricity also increased, impacting program activities including agriculture and water, sanitation, and hygiene. Supply chain concerns have led to hyperinflation, supply shortages, unavailability of items, and loss of employment for Syrians.<sup>547</sup>

## USAID Supports COVID-19 Response Efforts

To combat the spread of COVID-19 in Syria, USAID BHA funds the WHO and five NGOs to support the capacity building and operations of both healthcare workers and health facilities.<sup>548</sup> Recipients of USAID BHA COVID-19 assistance include hospitals, primary health care facilities, mobile medical units, and community health workers, and services



provided include COVID-19 screening and surveillance, direct treatment of patients, and referrals of severe cases to specialized treatment centers.<sup>549</sup>

USAID BHA said that it encourages and enables implementing partners to adapt program activities across sectors to protect partner staff and beneficiaries, including through the provision of personal protective equipment, social distancing, and offering remote services.<sup>550</sup> Implementing partners promote community awareness and prevention of COVID-19 through improved water, sanitation, and hygiene practices, including targeted water, sanitation, and health improvements at health facilities.<sup>551</sup>

## **USAID Navigates the Assad Regime's Currency Manipulation**

According to a think tank analysis, the Assad regime often requires that international aid agencies use a distorted exchange rate. In 2020, according to this analysis, this allowed the regime to divert nearly 51 cents of every international aid dollar spent in the country.<sup>552</sup>

USAID and its partners take all possible steps to ensure that U.S.-funded assistance reaches those for whom it is intended and that it carefully monitors the fiduciary risks associated with providing aid in Syria.<sup>553</sup> USAID said currency instability in Syria has created a gap between the black market and the official rate used by the banks through which USAID implementing partners are required to operate, resulting in a loss of value to aid programs.<sup>554</sup> The Central Bank of Syria controls all banking in regime-held areas, where 60 percent of the people in need of humanitarian assistance in Syria reside.<sup>555</sup>

In April 2021, USAID OIG's Office of Investigations issued a fraud alert to USAID that identified vulnerabilities related to unofficial exchange rates and unregulated currency exchange systems. The alert said that implementers' use of unregulated money transfer agents may result in an absence of records needed to determine the actual currency exchange rate. The alert acknowledged that regions such as Syria that are designated as complex emergencies lack formal banking infrastructure, which increases the need for informal exchange systems. The alert also noted that U. S.-based implementers may require additional consultation regarding currency exchange procedures.<sup>556</sup>

USAID acknowledged that the Syrian regime and other actors in Syria have attempted to manipulate assistance for many years, through border closures, reduced access to vulnerable populations, and the closure of alternative methods of banking.<sup>557</sup> USAID said that while the loss of value from the official exchange rate is concerning, the United States has robust controls in place to maximize the amount of humanitarian assistance that reaches vulnerable people and mitigate risk in Syria.<sup>558</sup> Most of the goods provided by the United Nations in Syria are purchased outside of the country and are therefore not impacted by the Syrian pound's exchange rate.<sup>559</sup>

USAID said that it takes all allegations of corruption or mismanagement seriously and that it will continue working with the UN and other humanitarian partners to address the Syrian regime's interference in the provision of humanitarian assistance.<sup>560</sup> USAID reported that it began working with humanitarian partners and other donors to advocate for the resumption of a "moving preferential exchange rate" for humanitarian assistance provided in regime-held areas, and that the UN has agreed to begin negotiations on this matter.<sup>561</sup>







A Syrian WFP beneficiary heads back home after shopping with hybrid assistance that enables families to purchase food items from selected retailers. (WFP photo)

## OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

- 78 Strategic Planning
- 80 Audit, Inspection,  
and Evaluation Activity
- 85 Investigations and Hotline Activity

# OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

This section of the report provides information on Lead IG and partner agencies' strategic planning efforts; completed, ongoing, and planned Lead IG and partner agencies' oversight work related to audits, inspections, and evaluations; Lead IG investigations; and hotline activities from April 1 through June 30, 2022.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Pursuant to Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG develops and implements a joint strategic plan to guide comprehensive oversight of programs and operations for each overseas contingency operation. This effort includes reviewing and analyzing completed oversight, management, and other relevant reports to identify systemic problems, trends, lessons learned, and best practices to inform future oversight projects. The Lead IG agencies issue an annual joint strategic oversight plan for each operation.

### FY 2022 JOINT STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT PLAN ACTIVITIES

In 2014, upon designation of the DoD IG as the Lead IG for Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR), the three Lead IG agencies developed and implemented a joint strategic oversight plan for comprehensive oversight of OIR. The three Lead IG agencies update the oversight plan annually.

The *FY 2022 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for OIR* was published on November 8, 2021, as part of the *FY 2022 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations*. The *FY 2022 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for OIR* is organized by three strategic oversight areas: 1) Military Operations and Security Cooperation; 2) Governance, Humanitarian Assistance, and Development; and 3) Support to Mission.

The Overseas Contingency Operations Joint Planning Group serves as a primary venue to coordinate audits, inspections, and evaluations of U.S. Government-funded activities supporting overseas contingency operations, including those relating to the Middle East. The Joint Planning Group meets quarterly to provide a forum for coordination of the broader Federal oversight community, including the military service IGs and audit agencies, the Government Accountability Office, and the OIGs of the Departments of Justice, the Treasury, Energy, and Homeland Security.

In May 2022, the Joint Planning Group held its 58th meeting, with guest speaker Jeanne Pryor, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for the USAID Middle East Bureau. Ms. Pryor spoke about risks and other challenges in managing development and humanitarian assistance programs in an overseas contingency environment, including fraud prevention, and to ensure assistance is delivered to the intended beneficiaries.



**FY 2022  
Comprehensive  
Oversight Plan  
for Overseas  
Contingency  
Operations**

## Lead IG Strategic Oversight Areas

### MILITARY OPERATIONS AND SECURITY COOPERATION

*Military Operations and Security Cooperation* focuses on determining the degree to which the contingency operation is accomplishing its security mission. Activities that fall under this strategic oversight area include:

- Conducting unilateral and partnered counterterrorism operations
- Providing security assistance
- Training and equipping partner security forces
- Advising, assisting, and enabling partner security forces
- Advising and assisting ministry-level security officials

### GOVERNANCE, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, AND DEVELOPMENT

*Governance, Humanitarian Assistance, and Development* focuses on some of the root causes of violent extremism. Activities that fall under this strategic oversight area include:

- Countering and reducing corruption, social inequality, and extremism
- Promoting inclusive and effective democracy, civil participation, and empowerment of women
- Promoting reconciliation, peaceful conflict resolution, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces, and other rule of law efforts
- Providing food, water, medical care, emergency relief, and shelter to people affected by crisis
- Assisting and protecting internally displaced persons and refugees
- Building or enhancing host-nation governance capacity
- Supporting sustainable and appropriate recovery and reconstruction activities, repairing infrastructure, removing explosive remnants of war, and reestablishing utilities and other public services
- Countering trafficking in persons and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse

### SUPPORT TO MISSION

*Support to Mission* focuses on U.S. administrative, logistical, and management efforts that enable military operations and non-military programs. Activities that fall under this strategic oversight area include:

- Ensuring the security of U.S. Government personnel and property
- Providing for the occupational health and safety of personnel
- Administering U.S. Government programs
- Managing U.S. Government grants and contracts
- Inventorying and accounting for equipment



## AUDIT, INSPECTION, AND EVALUATION ACTIVITY

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees, as well as contractors, to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and provide consolidated planning and reporting on the status of overseas contingency operations.

DoD OIG oversight and investigative staff maintained their presence in Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain during the quarter. DoS OIG staff in Baghdad and Frankfurt conducted oversight work of the DoS's activities in Iraq and Syria. USAID OIG staff provided oversight of USAID activities in Syria and Iraq from their regional office in Frankfurt, supported by additional staff in Washington, D.C.

The Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies completed six reports related to OIR during the quarter. These reports examined various activities that support OIR, including whether the Army effectively accounted for Government-furnished property provided to the base operations and security support services contractor in Kuwait at facilities that support OIR; whether the DoD and DoS effectively monitored contractors' adherence to policies related to preventing trafficking in persons; and financial accountability in humanitarian assistance efforts. Publicly releasable DoD OIG reports are available online at [www.dodig.mil](http://www.dodig.mil). Most partner agency reports are available on their respective websites.

As of June 30, 2022, 13 projects related to OIR were ongoing and 4 projects related to OIR were planned.

## FINAL REPORTS BY LEAD IG AGENCIES

### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

#### ***Audit of Army Accountability of Government-Furnished Property under Base Operations Contracts in Kuwait***

DODIG-2022-106; June 22, 2022

The DoD OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the Army effectively accounted for Government-furnished property provided to the base operations and security support services contractor in Kuwait.

In 2010, Army Contracting Command–Rock Island awarded a \$75 million cost-plus-award-fee contract to provide Kuwait base operations and security support services at locations in Kuwait, including Camp Arifjan, which supports the OIR mission in Iraq and Syria. Base operations support and security services provide the resources to operate bases, including food and housing, payroll support, fire protection, security protection, law enforcement, and transportation. According to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, Government-furnished property is defined as all materials provided by the Government in performance of the contract.

The DoD OIG determined that the Army did not properly account for Government-furnished property provided to the base operations and security support services contractor in Kuwait.

The Kuwait accountable property records were incomplete because Army Support Group–Kuwait did not initially record property transferred to the contractor or establish written procedures for the property book officer to conduct a reconciliation.

The DoD OIG recommended that the Army Support Group–Kuwait property book officer reconcile Kuwait accountable property records with contractor Government-furnished property records and address discrepancies. The DoD OIG also recommended that the Commander of Army Support Group–Kuwait develop written procedures for the property book officer to ensure all Government-furnished property transfers are recorded in the Kuwait accountable property records and to reconcile Kuwait accountable property records with contractor records at least once per year thereafter. Army officials agreed with the findings and initiated corrective actions that either resolved or closed each recommendation.

***Follow-Up Evaluation of Report No. DoDIG-2019-088, “Evaluation of DoD Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Kuwait-June 11, 2019”***

DODIG-2022-082; April 8, 2022

The DoD OIG conducted this evaluation to determine whether the DoD implemented corrective actions for the recommendations in report DODIG-2019-088, “Evaluation of DoD Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Kuwait,” June 11, 2019, which is related to contractors at facilities supporting OIR.

The 2019 report, which included 22 recommendations, focused on the DoD organizations with the largest-value contracts on military installations supporting OIR in Kuwait or those installations that had a previous history of known trafficking in persons problems.

The original evaluation determined that the U.S. Army Contracting Command–Rock Island, U.S. Air Forces Central, and Executive Director of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service implemented actions that met the intent of 14 of the 22 recommendations from Report No. DODIG-2019-088, “Evaluation of DoD Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Kuwait,” June 11, 2019. However, 8 of the 22 recommendations had not been fully implemented. For example, the follow-up evaluation found that the Air Force did not include combating trafficking in persons guidance in policies intended to support implementing and developing targeted human trafficking monitoring, and did not show how its combating trafficking in persons program was tailored to the Kuwait operational environment.

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

***Audit of Department of State Actions to Prevent Unlawful Trafficking in Persons Practices when Executing Security, Construction, and Facility and Household Contracts at Overseas Posts***

AUD-MERO-22-28; May 20, 2022

The DoS OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the DoS has implemented management controls to ensure that contracts for security, construction, and facility and household services performed at overseas posts comply with Federal laws and regulations designed to prevent contractors and subcontractors from engaging in unlawful labor practices.

In 2011 and 2012, the DoS OIG issued reports that identified DoS contractors engaging in coercive labor practices frequently associated with trafficking in persons. Since then, Federal laws and regulations and DoS policies have been updated to prohibit such practices and to implement new requirements for awarding, managing, and monitoring contracts to prevent trafficking in persons. The DoS OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the DoS had implemented management controls to ensure that services contracts performed overseas in three sectors at increased risk for trafficking in persons—security, construction, and facility and household services—comply with Federal laws and regulations designed to prevent contractors and subcontractors from engaging in unlawful labor practices.

The DoS OIG determined that the DoS had implemented management controls to help ensure that security, construction, and facility and household services contractors do not engage in trafficking in persons or unlawful labor practices. For this audit, the DoS OIG found that all 80 contracts reviewed, including some for services related to Afghanistan and Iraq, had incorporated the trafficking in persons-related clauses required by the Federal Acquisition Regulation. In another aspect of the audit, the DoS OIG determined that management controls governing trafficking in persons monitoring by DoS contracting officers and contracting officer's representatives (COR) require attention. Specifically, the DoS OIG found that CORs assigned to 15 of 16 contracts did not develop required trafficking in persons monitoring strategies and CORs assigned to 12 of 16 contracts did not conduct required trafficking in persons monitoring activities. Moreover, contracting officers did not always verify that CORs conducted required trafficking in persons monitoring.

The DoS OIG made seven recommendations to improve the DoS's trafficking in persons-related contract management and monitoring. In response to a draft of this report, the relevant DoS offices concurred with all seven recommendations, and the DoS OIG considered all seven recommendations resolved pending further action at the time the report was issued.

## **U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

### ***Financial Audit of Handicap International Federation under Multiple Awards, for the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2019***

3-000-22-017-R; June 9, 2022

The Handicap International Federation contracted with an accounting firm to express an opinion on whether the organization's fund accountability statement for the year ended December 31, 2019, was presented fairly. Auditors also evaluated the organization's internal controls, whether it complied with award terms, applicable laws, and regulations, and other aspects of fund accountability. The audit covered USAID audited expenditures for \$13,520,970 and included awards in Iraq and Syria. Auditors determined that Handicap International Federation's fund accountability statement was presented fairly except for \$564 total questioned costs composed of direct costs of \$467 and indirect costs of \$97. The questioned costs did not meet the USAID OIG's established threshold of \$25,000 for making a recommendation to recoup funds. However, the USAID OIG recommended that USAID verify that Handicap Federation International corrects the instances of material noncompliance that auditors identified.

***Financial Audit of Danish Refugee Council Under Multiple Awards, for the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2019***

3-000-22-016-R; June 1, 2022

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) contracted with an accounting firm to express an opinion on whether the organization's fund accountability statement for the year ended December 31, 2019 was presented fairly. Auditors also evaluated DRC's internal controls and to determine whether DRC complied with award terms, applicable laws, and regulations, and other aspects of fund accountability. The audit covered USAID audited expenditures for \$49,984,088 and included awards in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Auditors determined that DRC's fund accountability statement and financial statements were presented fairly. The audit firm did not identify any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control and reported no material instances of noncompliance. Furthermore, the audit firm stated that the schedule of computation of indirect cost rate was fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements.

***Strategic Workforce Planning: Challenges Impair USAID's Ability to Establish a Comprehensive Human Capital Approach***

9-000-22-001-P; May 25, 2022

USAID OIG conducted this audit to assess USAID's strategies and plans to meet Congressionally mandated staffing goals including tracking its performance to meet targets and to what extent USAID has identified agency-wide skills gaps.

For nearly 30 years, USAID has worked to improve its strategic planning to maintain a talented, diverse, and adaptable workforce. USAID staff support the USAID Mission in Iraq and regional platforms supporting assistance programs in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. In December 2019, Congress appropriated funding for USAID to increase its civil service and Foreign Service permanent staffing levels. However, USAID has struggled to achieve the congressionally funded levels amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impeded USAID's hiring efforts.

Due to reduced human capital staffing levels, short hiring timelines, and COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, USAID did not reach congressionally funded staffing levels. Despite adjusting its processes to reach hiring targets, USAID faced challenges in disseminating guidance to help staff navigate hiring changes and in addressing the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, USAID did not have a definition of "skill gap" or a centralized tool to track skill gaps. As a result, USAID did not centrally track skill gaps or its progress toward closing skill gaps across all hiring mechanisms.

USAID OIG made five recommendations to improve USAID's staffing, strategic workforce planning guidance, and skill-gap tracking. USAID agreed with all recommendations, which remained resolved, but open pending completion of planned activities.

## ONGOING OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

As of June 30, 2022, the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies had 13 ongoing projects related to OIR. Figure 9 describes the ongoing projects by strategic oversight area.

Tables 10 and 11, contained in Appendix E, lists the title and objective for each of these projects.

The following sections highlight some of these ongoing projects by strategic oversight area.

### Military Operations and Security Cooperation

- The **DoD OIG** is conducting an audit to determine whether the Army effectively managed DoD language interpretation and translation contracts in the OIR area of responsibility.
- The **DoD OIG** is conducting an audit to determine whether vetted Syrian opposition groups met DoD requirements prior to receiving DoD funds.

### Governance, Humanitarian Assistance, and Development

- **USAID OIG** is conducting an evaluation of USAID's policies and procedures related to sanctions in Syria.

### Support to Mission

- The **DoD OIG** is conducting an audit to determine whether the DoD is effectively monitoring sensitive equipment provided to the Iraqi government.
- The **DoS OIG** is conducting an audit to determine whether the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad implemented internal controls to account for and manage personal property in accordance with Federal requirements and DoS regulations.
- The **DoS OIG** is conducting an audit to determine whether cooperative agreements and grants awarded by the DoS to counter Iranian initiatives align with DoS strategic goals and objectives and whether these cooperative agreements and grants are being monitored and administered in accordance with Federal requirements, DoS policies and guidance, and award terms and conditions.

## PLANNED OVERSIGHT PROJECTS

As of June 30, 2022, the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies had four planned projects related to OIR. Figure 10 describes the planned projects by strategic oversight area.

Table 12, contained in Appendix E, list the titles and objectives for each of these projects. The following sections highlight some of these planned projects by strategic oversight area.

Figure 9.

### Ongoing Projects by Strategic Oversight Area

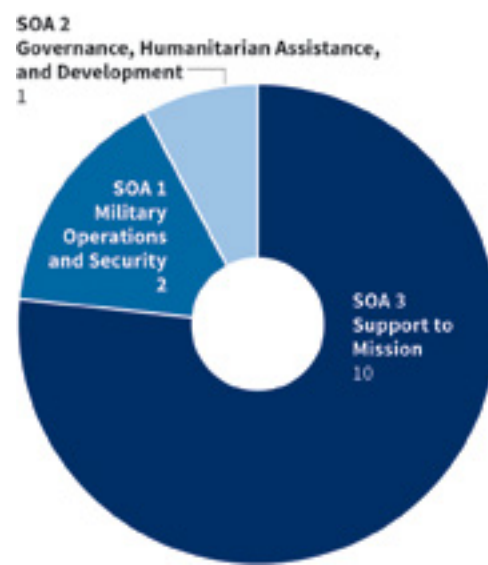
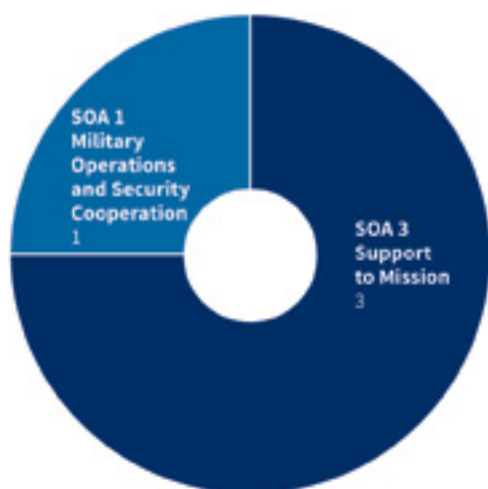




Figure 10.

**Planned Projects by Strategic Oversight Area****Military Operations and Security Cooperation**

- The **DoD OIG** intends to conduct an audit to determine whether the Army adequately maintained and accurately accounted for prepositioned equipment including at facilities that support the OIR mission.

**Support to Mission**

- The **DoD OIG** intends to conduct an audit to determine whether the Army is meeting mission goals associated with implementing a program to modernize equipment sets in the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) area of responsibility, including Kuwait in support of OIR.
- The **DoS OIG** intends to conduct an audit to determine whether the DoS considered existing and future electrical power needs and infrastructure of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad when designing the new power plant, conducted oversight of the construction and commissioning of the new power plant, and took measures to mitigate design or construction deficiencies, if any.

## INVESTIGATIONS AND HOTLINE ACTIVITY

### INVESTIGATIONS

The investigative components of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies continued to conduct investigative activity related to OIR during the quarter. However, COVID-19 limitations led to a decrease in the overall number of open investigations. The DoD OIG's criminal investigative component, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), maintained investigative personnel in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar, where they worked on cases related to OIR. DCIS agents also worked on OIR-related cases from offices in the United States. DoS OIG and USAID OIG investigators worked on cases related to OIR from Washington, D.C.

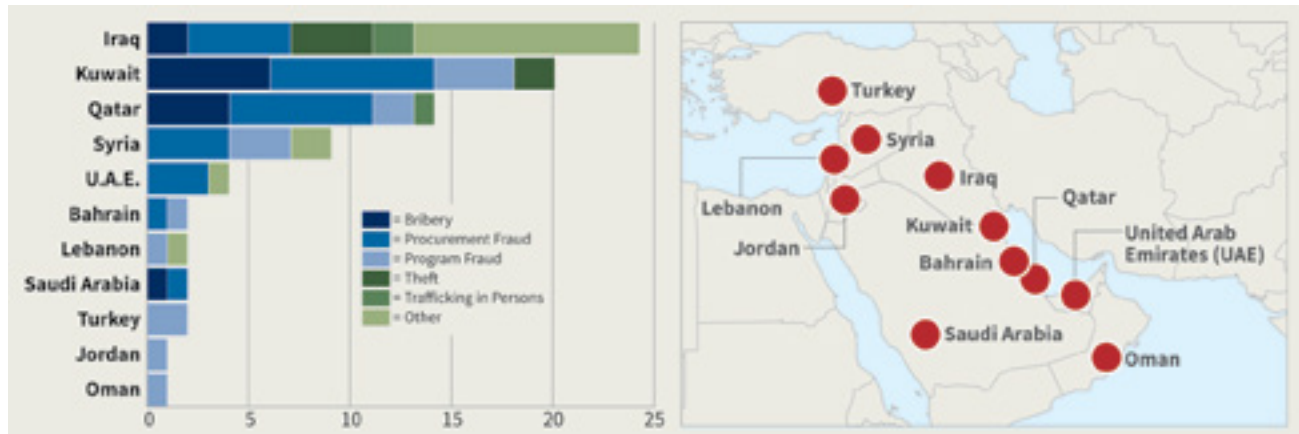
### Investigative Activity Related to OIR

During this quarter, Lead IG investigations resulted in two convictions based on kickbacks and bribery investigations, which are discussed below.

Investigative branches of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies closed 12 investigations, initiated 16 new investigations, and coordinated on 81 open investigations. The open investigations involve grant and procurement fraud, corruption, theft, program irregularities, computer intrusions, and human trafficking allegations. As noted in Figure 11, the majority of primary offense locations and allegations related to OIR originated in Iraq and Kuwait.

Figure 11.

**Types of Allegations and Primary Offense Locations, April 1, 2022–June 30, 2022**

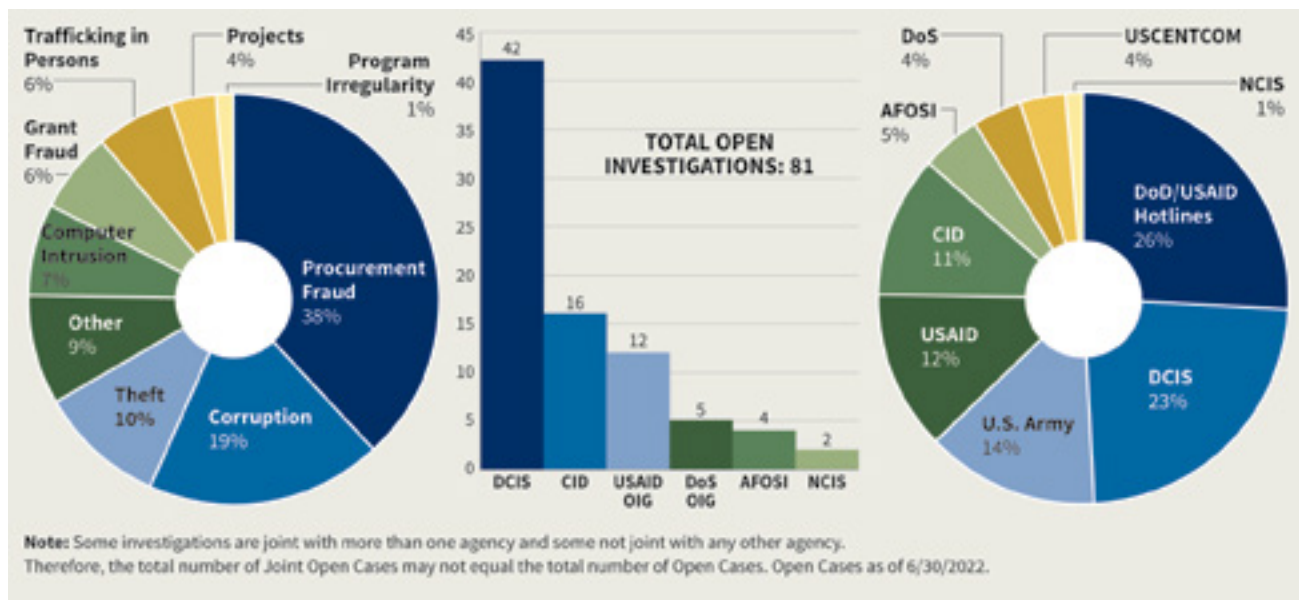


The Lead IG agencies and partners continued to coordinate their investigative efforts through the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group, which consists of representatives from DCIS, the DoS OIG, USAID OIG, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division (CID), the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

Figure 12 describes open investigations related to OIR and sources of allegations. During the quarter, the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group conducted 30 fraud awareness briefings for 701 participants.

Figure 12.

**Open Investigations and Sources of Allegations, April 1, 2022–June 30, 2022**



### Contractor Pleads Guilty in Kickback Scheme

On May 31, the former general manager and co-owner of a Kuwait-based contracting company pleaded guilty to bribery charges based on a joint DCIS and Army CID investigation into a kickbacks scheme to steer government contracts for work in Kuwait.

Gandhiraj Sankaralingam, aka Gandhi Raj, the former general manager and co-owner of Kuwait-based contracting company Gulf Link Venture Co. W.L.L. (Gulf Link), entered a guilty plea via videoconference before a judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The signed plea agreement included a statement of offense and waiver of trial by jury. Sankaralingam, who had been in hiding in Kuwait, agreed to turn himself in to DCIS agents, and to appear in person at the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia at a later date.

According to court documents, Sankaralingam conspired with a former Department of the Army civilian employee at Camp Arifjan, a U.S. Army base in Kuwait that supports the OIR mission. The former employee, Ephraim Garcia, 64, previously pleaded guilty for his role in the scheme with Sankaralingam to steer government contracts to Gulf Link. In his position with the Army's Directorate of Public Works, Garcia was involved in the solicitation, award, and management of certain government contracts related to facilities support at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. In November 2021, Garcia was sentenced to 24 months in jail, and 36 months of supervised probation upon release. Garcia was also debarred from all U.S. Government contracts until August 2028.

### Contractor Sentenced for Trying to Bribe Contracting Officers in Iraq

On April 21, a U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia judge sentenced a contractor to five months of home detention, 36 months of probation, and a \$5,500 fine based on a DCIS, and Army CID investigation of the attempted bribery of a U.S. Army official in Erbil, Iraq.

A joint DCIS and Army CID investigation disclosed that Mark Alan Fryday, CEO of MLM Aviation, gave bribes to a field ordering officer to obtain contracts to provide services to Erbil Air Base. Fryday had previously pleaded guilty to the charges. According to the sentence, Fryday will also pay a special assessment fee of \$100, and he was required to start paying the court \$250 per month toward the fine that will commence 30 days after imposition of the judgement.

### Investigative Activity Related to Legacy Cases

DCIS has four ongoing "legacy" investigations related to crimes involving the OIR area of operations that occurred prior to the formal designation of OIR. During the quarter, one legacy case led to contractors reaching a settlement with the U.S. Government over breach of contract and other allegations, which is discussed below.

### Defendants Agree to Settle Kickback and False Claims Allegations

On June 14, Kellogg Brown & Root Services Inc., and three other defense contractors (collectively referred to as KBR) agreed to a settlement of \$13.7 million to resolve a lawsuit seeking damages and penalties for alleged violations of the False Claims Act and the Anti-Kickback Act, and for breach of contract. The settlement is based on a joint DCIS and Army

CID investigation and includes a payment of \$12 million by KBR, in addition to \$1.7 million KBR previously paid in contract restitution relating to the subcontracts at issue in the lawsuit.

The settlement concerned the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) III contract, under which KBR was required to provide logistics support to U.S. Army forces in Iraq from 2003 to 2005, and subcontracts that KBR awarded to two local companies to perform work on its behalf. As alleged in the lawsuit, certain KBR employees responsible for awarding these subcontracts rigged the bidding process in favor of the two local companies and, to reward this favorable treatment, principal officers from the two local companies paid kickbacks to the responsible KBR employees. The lawsuit also alleged that the subcontract prices were inflated and that, after the award of the subcontracts, KBR employees extended the duration of the subcontracts at the inflated prices. This alleged conduct violated the False Claims Act and the Anti-Kickback Act, and breached the terms and conditions of the LOGCAP III contract.

## HOTLINE

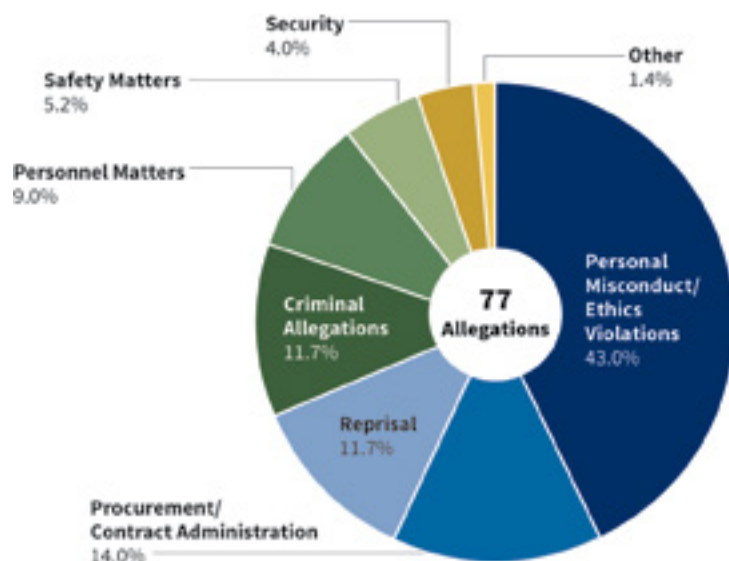
Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints specific to its agency. The hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; or abuse of authority. A DoD OIG Hotline investigator coordinates among the Lead IG agencies and others, as appropriate.

During the quarter, the DoD OIG hotline investigator received 77 allegations and referred 47 cases to Lead IG agencies and other investigative organizations. In some instances, it is possible for a case to contain multiple subjects and allegations.

As noted in Figure 13, the majority of the allegations during the reporting period were related to personal misconduct (ethical violations), procurement and contract administration, criminal allegations, and reprisal.

Figure 13.

### Hotline Activities













Coils of razor wire sitting at Al-Asad Air Base, Iraq for delivery to Iraqi Border Security units. (U.S. Army photo)

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## APPENDIX A

### Classified Appendix to this Report

A classified appendix to this report provides additional information on Operation Inherent Resolve, as noted in several sections of this report. The appendix will be delivered to relevant agencies and congressional committees.

## APPENDIX B

### Methodology for Preparing this Lead IG Quarterly Report

This report complies with section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on each overseas contingency operation, and is consistent with the requirement that a biannual report be published by the Lead IG on the activities of the Inspectors General with respect to that overseas contingency operation. The Chair of the Council of Inspectors General for Integrity and Efficiency designated the DoD IG as the Lead IG for Operation Inherent Resolve. The DoS IG is the Associate IG for the operation.

This report covers the period from April 1 through June 30, 2022. The three Lead IG agencies—DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG—and partner oversight agencies contributed the content of this report.

To fulfill the congressional mandate to report on OIR, the Lead IG agencies gather data and information from Federal agencies and open sources. The sources of information contained in this report are listed in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except in the case of audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations referenced in this report, the Lead IG agencies have not verified or audited the information collected through open-source research or from Federal agencies, and the information provided represents the view of the source cited in each instance.

#### INFORMATION COLLECTION FROM AGENCIES AND OPEN SOURCES

Each quarter, the Lead IG agencies gather information from the DoD, DoS, USAID, and other Federal agencies about their programs and operations related to OIR. The Lead IG agencies use the information provided by their respective agencies for quarterly reporting and oversight planning.

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report may include the following:

- U.S. Government statements, press conferences, and reports
- Reports issued by international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and think tanks
- Media reports

The Lead IG agencies use open-source information to assess information obtained through their agency information collection process and provide additional detail about the operation.

### REPORT PRODUCTION

The DoD IG, as the Lead IG for this operation, is responsible for assembling and producing this report. The DoD OIG, the DoS OIG, and USAID OIG draft the sections of the report related to the activities of their agencies and then participate in editing the entire report. Once the report is assembled, each OIG coordinates a two-phase review process within its own agency. During the first review, the Lead IG agencies ask relevant offices within their agencies to comment, correct inaccuracies, and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG agencies incorporate agency comments, where appropriate, and send the report back to the agencies for a second review prior to publication. The final report reflects the editorial view of the DoD OIG, the DoS OIG, and USAID OIG as independent oversight agencies.

## APPENDIX C

### Department of Justice Prosecutions and Activities against Terrorism

Since 2014, the Department of Justice (DoJ) has charged more than 220 individuals with international terrorism-related conduct relating to ISIS, and obtained more than 170 convictions. The remaining cases are ongoing. A portion of the aforementioned cases involve individuals who could be described as foreign terrorist fighters or homegrown violent extremists linked to ISIS, as well as those who may have assisted their conduct, obstructed investigations, or otherwise involved an identified link to ISIS.

The following examples include details on indictments, convictions, or sentences related to foreign terrorist fighters and homegrown violent extremists related to ISIS activity from April 1 through June 30, 2022:

- **On June 7, 2022, in the Eastern District of Virginia, Allison Fluke-Ekren** aka “Allison Ekren,” aka “Umm Mohammed al-Amriki,” aka “Umm Mohammed,” and aka “Umm Jabril,” (“Fluke-Ekren”) pleaded guilty to conspiring to provide material support to ISIS. According to court documents, Fluke-Ekren, a former resident of Kansas, traveled overseas and from in or about September 2011 through in or about May 2019, engaged in terrorism-related activities in multiple countries, including Syria, Libya, and Iraq. Fluke-Ekren ultimately served as the leader and organizer of an ISIS military battalion, known as the Khatiba Nusaybah, where she trained women on the use of automatic firing AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, and suicide belts. More than 100 women and young girls, including as young as 10 years old, received military training from Fluke-Ekren in Syria on behalf of ISIS.
- **On June 3, 2022, in the Eastern District of New York, Dilkhavot Kasimov** was sentenced to 15 years in prison for conspiring to and attempting to provide material support to ISIS. Kasimov was convicted of both counts following a one-week trial in September 2019. According to court documents, in 2015, Kasimov’s co-conspirators planned to travel to Syria to fight on behalf of ISIS. Kasimov provided money—his own and cash collected by others—to help fund one co-defendant’s travel and expenses. On

the evening of the co-defendant's scheduled departure in February 2015, Kasimov drove to John F. Kennedy International Airport, met the co-defendant at the terminal, and handed him \$1,600 in cash on behalf of himself and other co-conspirators.

- **On May 24, 2022, in the Eastern District of New York, Mirsad Kandic** was convicted, after a three-week jury trial, of one count of conspiring to provide material support and resources to ISIS and five counts of attempting to provide and providing material support and resources to ISIS. According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, Kandic was a high-ranking member in ISIS. He had multiple responsibilities within the global terrorist organization, including recruiting foreign fighters, trafficking foreign fighters from the West through Turkey and into Syria, and obtaining weapons, military equipment, maps, money, and false identifications for ISIS fighters. In carrying out these responsibilities, the defendant worked directly with ISIS emirs and battlefield commanders, including Bajro Ikanovic, who commanded an ISIS training camp in Syria beginning in or around 2014. Ikanovic, in turn, reported to Omar Shishani, then the top military commander for ISIS, and a key advisor to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who was, at the time, the leader of ISIS and the self-declared Caliph of the Islamic State.
- **On April 14, 2022, a federal jury convicted El Shafee Elsheikh**, a militant fighter for ISIS, on all eight charges that were brought against him in the United States. On April 29, 2022, co-defendant Alexandra Amon Kotey was sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty in September 2021 to all charges in the indictment. According to court records, from November 2012 through February 7, 2015, the co-defendants served as ISIS fighters and participated in the captivity of hostages, including American citizens James Wright Foley, Kayla Jean Mueller, Steven Joel Sotloff, and Peter Edward Kassig, each of whom died as a hostage in ISIS custody. The co-defendants and another ISIS member supervised the terrorist organization's jails and detention facilities. The co-conspirators engaged in a prolonged pattern of physical and psychological violence against hostages that was meant to control the hostages. These actions were also intended to compel the victims' family members and the U.S. Government to pay large monetary ransoms for their release, in addition to compelling the U.S. Government to agree to other terms and conditions for the victims' return. In addition to physically and psychologically abusing the hostages, the co-conspirators participated in forcibly exposing the hostages to the murder of other hostages held by ISIS.
- **On April 6, 2022, in the Eastern District of New York, Bernard Raymond Augustine** was sentenced to 20 years in prison for attempting to provide material support to ISIS. Augustine was convicted by a federal jury after a one-week trial in August 2021. According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, in February 2016, Augustine traveled from San Francisco to Northern Africa with the goal of joining ISIS. After arriving in Tunisia, Augustine was detained by local authorities before he could make it to ISIS-controlled territory across the border in Libya. He was returned to the United States in 2018.

In addition, 14 people have been transferred to the United States from Iraq and Syria to face federal criminal charges related to terrorism since 2014. This total includes one person transferred to the United States from Syria during this quarter.



The DoJ's Justice Attaché in Baghdad engaged Iraqi security and legal partners on counterterrorism matters, including the countering of the financing of terrorism. The Justice Attaché will continue to engage on training and capacity building. The Justice Attaché and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are meeting regularly with members of the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIS to foster information sharing, particularly regarding counter-ISIS financing.

The Justice Attaché also provided an hour-long training, along with the U.S. Department of Treasury Financial Attaché, on U.S. investigative assistance available for asset recovery. This training for the Kurdistan Commission of Integrity was provided as part of a two-day course hosted by the World Bank.

The DoJ National Security Division Attaché continued to support civilian prosecutorial dispositions for foreign terrorist fighters and other terrorists, including efforts to counter the financing of terrorism. This includes:

- Reviewing intelligence and available information to determine if criminal prosecutions can be brought against suspected foreign terrorist fighters and other terrorists, including those being detained in Syria by partner forces, in either U.S. or foreign courts;
- Navigating the complexities of foreign legal systems and assisting in assembling available information for use by international partners in foreign investigations and prosecutions; and
- Assisting both interagency and international partners at the platform in navigating complex legal issues associated with the use of intelligence in criminal investigations and court proceedings, and issues related to the admissibility of evidence (converting intelligence into evidence).

Other DoJ programs continued, including through the DoJ's Office of International Affairs, which assists partner nations in developing institutions needed for effective mutual legal assistance and extradition cooperation. In coordination with the DoS, experts from the DoJ Office of International Affairs worked with international counterparts, particularly throughout Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, to help partner countries build effective central authorities. These institutions support effective international cooperation in criminal matters and enable the legal processes necessary to bring terrorists and other criminals to justice under the rule of law.

FBI personnel are not involved in training or capacity-building programs with coalition partners in Iraq, outside of routine interactions with host nation partners on a variety of criminal and national security matters. The FBI does not have a presence in Syria for capacity-building activities. However, the FBI does have personnel providing support to interagency and foreign partners through international intelligence sharing efforts.

The FBI aids in the repatriation process by attempting to obtain biometrics of all individuals prior to them leaving the conflict zone. Although the FBI does not assist in detention operations in Syria, the FBI works with Syrian partners to monitor the movement of prisoners of interest. Information provided by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) may include information on women and children who are located at various IDP camps.

## APPENDIX D

# Department of the Treasury and Department of State Actions Against Terrorist Financing

Executive Order 13224, as amended, provides the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of State global terrorism authorities that authorize both Departments to target activities of extremist groups, including ISIS. The Department of the Treasury's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence and its Office of Foreign Assets Control work to disrupt the ability of terrorist organizations to fund their operations. The DoS's Bureau of Counterterrorism leads DoS activities to counter terrorist finance and to designate Specially Designated Global Terrorists and Foreign Terrorist Organizations.

### DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY DESIGNATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Since 2014, the Secretary of the Treasury has designated 109 individuals and entities providing support to ISIS pursuant to Executive Order 13224. This quarter, the Secretary of the Treasury sanctioned five ISIS financial facilitators operating across Indonesia, Syria, and Turkey. These five individuals played a key role in assisting extremists' travel to Syria and other areas where ISIS operates. The sanctioned entities are as follows:

- **Dwi Dahlia Susanti** was sanctioned for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, ISIS. Susanti has been an ISIS financial facilitator since at least 2017 and has assisted other ISIS members with money transfers involving individuals in Indonesia, Syria, and Turkey. In late 2017, Susanti helped her husband deliver nearly \$4,000 and weapons to an ISIS leader. At that time, Susanti diverted about \$500 of these funds for ISIS supporters in her own network. As of early 2021, Susanti facilitated money transfers from Indonesia to Syria in order to provide funds to individuals in internally displaced persons camps. In some cases, these funds were used to smuggle teenage children out of the camps and into the desert, where they were received by ISIS foreign fighters, likely as child recruits for ISIS.
- **Rudi Heryadi** was sanctioned for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, ISIS. In mid-2019, Heryadi advised an extremist associate about potential travel to ISIS-dominated areas, including Afghanistan, Egypt and other parts of Africa, and Yemen. Heryadi also asked for donations for travelers and their families. On June 24, 2020, Indonesian authorities convicted Heryadi on terrorism charges.
- **Ari Kardian** was sanctioned for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, ISIS. Kardian was previously charged by Indonesian authorities for facilitating the travel of Indonesians to Syria to join ISIS.
- **Muhammad Dandi Adhiguna** was sanctioned for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, ISIS. On numerous occasions, Adhiguna provided assistance to Susanti,

including for financial and operational matters. Adhiguna advised Susanti on the use of her personal bank accounts. In late 2021, Adhiguna completed a registration form to join ISIS and sent it to Susanti.

- **Dini Ramadhani** was sanctioned for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, ISIS. Ramadhani provided financial assistance to Susanti on multiple occasions.

No individuals or organizations sanctioned for providing support to ISIS were removed from the sanctions list during this reporting period.

The Department of the Treasury (Treasury) leverages its participation and influence to develop a shared understanding of the threat posed by ISIS, as well as to encourage countries to take action within their jurisdictions and in coordination with others to disrupt ISIS financing and facilitation.

Treasury continued to work with interagency and Coalition partners, including the Iraqi government, to prioritize identifying ISIS's financial reserves and financial leaders, disrupting its financial facilitation networks in Iraq, and designating ISIS facilitators, front companies, and fundraisers in Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and elsewhere. Treasury also takes a leadership role in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, serving as a co-lead of the Counter ISIS Finance Group along with its counterparts from Italy and Saudi Arabia. On May 9, Treasury co-led a Counter ISIS Finance Group meeting in Morocco with dozens of Coalition members and observers, including Iraqi partners, to exchange information on ISIS financing activities and the efforts to counter these activities across multiple continents.

Treasury reported that ISIS's financial situation remained largely unchanged since last quarter. ISIS continued to raise funds through extortion of oil smuggling networks in eastern Syria, kidnapping for ransom targeting civilian businesses and populations, extortion, looting, and the possible operation of front companies. The group relied on money services businesses, including hawalas (informal money transfer networks), throughout Iraq, Syria, and Turkey to transfer funds internationally. ISIS probably has tens of millions of U.S. dollars available in cash reserves dispersed across the region, but Treasury was not aware of the amount of money ISIS held or distributed during the quarter.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF STATE DESIGNATIONS**

This quarter, the Secretary of State did not make any Specially Designated Global Terrorist designations that were relevant to OIR.

## APPENDIX E

# Ongoing Oversight Projects

Tables 10 and 11 list the titles and objectives for Lead IG and partner agencies' ongoing oversight projects related to OIR.

Table 10.

### Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to OIR by Lead IG Agency, as of June 30, 2022

#### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Audit of Army Oversight of the Department of Defense Language Interpretation and Translation Enterprise II Contract***

To determine whether the Army provided oversight of and appropriately staffed the DoD Language Interpretation and Translation Enterprise II contract in the U.S. Central Command and OIR area of responsibility to ensure the contractors fulfilled requirements.

##### ***Audit of the DoD Counter-Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Train and Equip Fund Stipends to the Vetted Syrian Opposition***

To determine if the DoD assessed whether Vetted Syrian Opposition groups met DoD requirements prior to the DoD providing stipends from the Counter-Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Train and Equip Fund for Syria to the Vetted Syrian Opposition.

##### ***Audit of Tracking, Recovery, and Reuse of Department of Defense-Owned Shipping Containers***

To determine to what extent the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps complied with DoD requirements to track, recover, and reuse shipping containers, including those at facilities that support OIR, and included those containers in an accountable property system of record.

##### ***Evaluation of the DoD's Management of Traumatic Brain Injury***

To determine the extent to which the Defense Health Agency and Military Service medical departments implemented policies and procedures, and provided oversight, to ensure that Service members who sustained traumatic brain injuries—including those who served in Iraq and Syria—were identified and screened to determine their appropriate level of care.

##### ***Audit of Enhanced End-Use Monitoring of Sensitive Equipment Given to the Government of Iraq***

To determine whether the DoD is conducting enhanced end-use monitoring for sensitive equipment provided to the Government of Iraq in accordance with the DoD Security Assistance Management Manual and the transfer agreement terms and conditions.

##### ***Summary Evaluation of Security Cooperation Activities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Africa***

To summarize previous oversight reports related to security cooperation activities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Africa.

#### DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Audit of Nonexpendable Personal Property at U.S. Embassy Baghdad, Iraq***

To determine whether the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad has implemented internal controls to account for and manage the life cycle of nonexpendable personal property in accordance with Federal requirements and DoS regulations.

##### ***Inspection of Embassy Kuwait City, Kuwait***

To evaluate the programs and operations of the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait City, Kuwait. This inspection will also produce a report with classified findings.

##### ***Audit of Cooperative Agreements and Grants Related to Iran***

To determine whether cooperative agreements and grants awarded by the DoS to counter Iranian initiatives align with DoS strategic goals and objectives and whether they are being monitored and administered in accordance with Federal requirements, DoS policies and guidance, and award terms and conditions.



***Management Assistance Report: Support from the Under Secretary for Political Affairs is Needed to Facilitate the Closure of Recommendations Addressed to the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs***

To facilitate the prompt closure of open DOS OIG recommendations by bringing them to the attention of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs.

***Audit of USAID's New Partnerships Initiative***

To determine the extent to which USAID has established a framework for effectively implementing the New Partnerships Initiative as well as processes for measuring the initiative's performance and results, which has included support for religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq that were victimized by ISIS.

***Evaluation of USAID's Sanctions Policies and Procedures***

To assess USAID policies and procedures for obtaining Office of Foreign Assets Control licenses and adhering to U.S. Government sanctions in humanitarian settings and evaluate how USAID identifies, analyzes, and responds to implementer risks and challenges related to sanctions in Syria.

Table 11.

**Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to OIR by Lead IG Partner Agencies, as of June 30, 2022**

**ARMY AUDIT AGENCY**

***Acquisition Cross-Servicing Agreement Accountability***

To determine whether the Army had processes in place to accurately record acquisition and cross-servicing agreement orders in Kuwait, including those that support OIR.



# APPENDIX F

## Planned Oversight Projects

Table 12 lists the titles and objectives for Lead IG and partner agencies’ planned oversight projects.

### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

***Audit of the Army’s Management of Army Prepositioned Stock-5 Equipment***

To determine whether the Army adequately maintained and accurately accounted for Army Prepositioned Stock-5 equipment, to include at facilities that support the OIR mission, in accordance with Federal and DoD policies.

### DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

***Audit of the U.S. Embassy Baghdad, Iraq Power Plant Performance***

To determine whether the DoS assessed the existing and future electrical power needs and infrastructure of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad when designing the new power plant; conducted oversight of the construction and commissioning of the new power plant; and took measures to mitigate design or construction deficiencies, if any.

***Audit of the PAE Operations and Maintenance Contract at Embassy Baghdad, Iraq***

To determine whether the DoS is administering the PAE operations and maintenance contract for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq in accordance with Federal and DoS requirements and whether PAE is operating in accordance with the contract terms and conditions.

***Audit of Physical Security Standards for Temporary Facilities at High Threat Posts***

To determine whether the DoS has instituted internal control procedures and standardized designs to meet applicable physical security standards for temporary structures used at high-threat, high-risk posts, including posts in Iraq.



## ACRONYMS

Acronym	
BDSC	Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center
BHA	USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CJTF-OIR	Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve
CID	U.S. Army Criminal Investigations Division
COR	contracting officer’s representative
COVID-19	coronavirus disease–2019
CTEF	Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund
CTS	Counter Terrorism Service
DCIS	Defense Criminal Investigative Service
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
DoJ	Department of Justice
DoS	Department of State
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
IDP	internally displaced person
IED	improvised explosive device
IG	Inspector General
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IqAAC	Iraqi Army Aviation Command
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
ITAC	Iraqi Terminal Attack Controllers
JOC-I	Joint Operations Command–Iraq
KCL	Kurdistan Coordination Line
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KSF	Kurdish Security Forces
Lead IG Agencies	The DoD, DoS, and USAID OIGs

Acronym	
LOGCAP	Logistics Civil Augmentation Program
MAG	Military Advisory Group
MANPADS	man-portable air defense systems
MaT	Mughawir al-Thawra
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MoPA	Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODASD(ME)	Office of the Deputy Assistance Secretary for the Middle East
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
OSC-I	Office of Security Cooperation–Iraq
PKK	Kurdistan Workers’ Party
PMF	Popular Mobilization Forces
PRM	DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RGB	Regional Guard Brigade
SANES	Self-Administration of Northeastern Syria
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
SOAG	Special Operations Advisory Group
SOTF-L	Special Operations Joint Task Force–Levant
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	UN Security Council Resolution
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USCENTCOM	The U.S. Central Command
USEUCOM	The U.S. European Command
WHO	World Health Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
YPG	People’s Protection Units

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