



الله أكبر

# IRAQ OVERVIEW

This overview of Iraq is designed to give you, the student, the necessary foundation in basic understanding of the environment you will be assigned. The skills obtained here will be used by you at your new duty station and will be used as groundwork on which other new skills will be added.



# Objective



- Action: Identify the Iraqi environment, including the government, economy, geography, and military.
- Conditions: Given student handouts
- Standards: Identified the Iraqi environment, including the government, economy, geography, and military.



# Administrative



- There are no safety requirements.
- The risk assessment level is low.
- There are no environmental considerations
- Evaluations Student Checks



# Background/History



Portrait of Saddam Hussein

- Formerly part of the Ottoman Empire
- Gains independence as a Kingdom in 1932 (King Faysal)
- Proclaimed a Republic in 1958 ('Abd al-Karim Qasim)
- Saddam Hussein took power after Ba'ath Party coup in 1979

Formerly part of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq was occupied by Britain during the course of World War I; in 1920, it was declared a League of Nations mandate under UK administration. In stages over the next dozen years, Iraq attained its independence as a kingdom in 1932. A "republic" was proclaimed in 1958, but in actuality a series of military strongmen have ruled the country since then, the latest being SADDAM Hussein.



# Background/History (cont.)



- Fought an inconclusive and costly eight-year war (1980-88) with Iran
- Invaded Kuwait in 1990
- Invaded by US led Coalition in March 2003
- Baghdad fell April 2003

Territorial disputes with Iran led to an inconclusive and costly eight-year war (1980-88). In August 1990, Iraq seized Kuwait, but was expelled by US-led, UN coalition forces during the Gulf War of January-February 1991. Following Kuwait's liberation, the UN Security Council (UNSC) required Iraq to scrap all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles and to allow UN verification inspections. Continued Iraqi noncompliance with UNSC resolutions over a period of 12 years resulted in the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and the ouster of the SADDAM Hussein regime. Coalition forces remain in Iraq, helping to restore degraded infrastructure and facilitating the establishment of a freely elected government



# Geography



- Area: 437,072 sq km (270,985 sq mi), slightly larger than Texas
- 3,650 km (2263 mi) in land boundaries
- 58 km (36 mi) in coastline

Large parts of Iraq consist of desert, but the area between the two major rivers Tigris and Euphrates very is fertile, with the rivers carrying about 60 million cubic meters of silt annually to the Gulf. It's border countries are Iran 1,458 km, Jordan 181 km, Kuwait 240 km, Saudi Arabia 814 km, Syria 605 km, Turkey 352 km.



# Geography (cont.)



- Lowest point: Persian Gulf 0 m (0 ft) in the south
- Highest point: Haji Ibrahim 3,611 m (11,555 ft) in the north
- Only three ports: Umm Qasr, Khawr az Zubayr, and Al Basrah (all w/ limited functionality)

The north of the country is largely mountainous, with the highest point being Haji Ibrahim at 3,611 m. Iraq has a small coastline with the Persian Gulf. Close to the coast there used to be marshlands, but many of these were drained in the by Saddam Hussein in the 1990's.



# Climate



Sandstorm in Southern Iraq, Apr03

- Dry, hot, cloudless summers
- Mild to cool winters in most of Country
- Cold winters with occasionally heavy snow in the North
- Sand storms are VERY frequent

Mostly desert; mild to cool winters with dry, hot, cloudless summers; northern mountainous regions along Iranian and Turkish borders experience cold winters with occasionally heavy snows that melt in early spring, sometimes causing extensive flooding in central and southern Iraq



# Terrain



Sunset over the Tigris river, Apr03

- “Birthplace of Civilization”
- Tigris & Euphrates River valleys
- Mostly broad desert plains
- Reedy marshes along Iranian border
- Mountainous along Iran & Turkey borders

The so-called “Fertile Crescent”, which lies between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers running through Iraq, is supposedly the Biblical location of “The Garden of Eden” (The Book of Genesis). Most of Iraq’s population lives in this area.



# Population



4ID soldier with residents of Tikrit, Iz

- Pop. 24,683,313 (July 2003 est.)
- Median age: 19
- Life expectancy at birth: 68 years
- Only 3% of Iraqis are over the age of 65 (US is 12.4%)

## Age Structure:

0-14 years: 40.7% (male 5,103,669; female 4,946,443)  
 15-64 years: 56.3% (male 7,033,268; female 6,855,644)  
 65 years and over: 3% (male 348,790; female 395,499) (2003 est.)

Life expectancy at birth: total population: 67.81 years      male: 66.7 years      female: 68.99 years (2003 est.)

Literacy: definition: age 15+ and can read and write      total population: 40.4%      male: 55.9%      female: 24.4% (2003 est.)



# Population (cont.)



- Ethnic groups: Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%, Turkoman, Assyrian or other 5%
- Religions: Muslim 97% (Shi'a 60%-65%, Sunni 32%-37%), Christian\* or other 3%
- Languages spoken: Arabic, Kurdish (official in Kurdish regions), Assyrian, Armenian

*\* Note, Tariq Aziz is a Christian*



# Government (Pre-war)



Presidential Palace, Tikrit Iz

- Monarchy from 1932 until 1958
- First Revolution in 1958 declared Iraq a Republic
- Ba'ath Party goes underground after '63 Coup
- Ba'ath Party takes power after '68 Coup

The Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) was the top decision-making body of the state. The RCC was first formed in July 1968, and it exercised both executive and legislative powers. Saddam Hussein was the chairman of the RCC as the president of the republic. His Vice Chairman (Vice President) was Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri, currently the most wanted former Regime member still at large in Iraq. At the beginning of the war, he was #6. The number of RCC members has varied over time; in 1988 there were ten members.



# Government (cont.)



- A series of military strongmen & dictators have ruled Iraq since 1958, the latest being Saddam Hussein

41% of Iraq's population is under the age of 14 and approximately another 30-35% is under the age of 45. It is safe to say that the average Iraqi does not remember living in a free country without a harsh dictatorship.



# Government (Post-war)



Ayad Allawi



Ghazi al-Yawir

- Interim President: Ghazi al-Yawir
- Interim Prime Minister: Ayad Allawi
- Assumed power on 28 June 04, 2 days sooner than expected
- Retains power until Iraq elections (Jan05)

The Iraq Interim Government of 2004 was created by the US led coalition as a caretaker government to govern Iraq until elections can be conducted, presumably in or around January, 2005. It took the place of the Coalition Provisional Authority on June 28, 2004. It is recognized by the U.S. and several other countries as being the sovereign government of Iraq. The new government's political leader is Prime Minister Ayad Allawi and his deputy is Baram Salih. The head of state is President Ghazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer. They were all sworn in at a second and more public ceremony on June 28, 2004, shortly after the small private one at which Paul Bremer, the Coalition Provisional Authority's administrator, formally gave chief justice Midhat Mahmoud the legal documents instituting the hand-over. Until a permanent constitution is written, the new government will operate under the Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period, their transitional constitution.



# Economy



4ID soldier with residents of Tikrit, Iz

- Dominated by the oil sector
- War with Iran cost Iraq \$100 billion
- Economic sanctions drastically reduced economic activity

Iraq's economy is dominated by the oil sector, which has traditionally provided about 95% of foreign exchange earnings. In the 1980s, financial problems caused by massive expenditures in the eight-year war with Iran and damage to oil export facilities by Iran led the government to implement harsh measures, borrow heavily, and later reschedule foreign debt payments; Iraq suffered economic losses of at least \$100 billion from the war. After the end of hostilities in 1988, oil exports gradually increased with the construction of new pipelines and restoration of damaged facilities. Iraq's seizure of Kuwait in August 1990, subsequent international economic sanctions, and damage from military action by an international coalition beginning in January 1991 drastically reduced economic activity.



# Transportation



Road sign in Baghdad

- 150 Airports\*
  - Paved: 77
  - Unpaved: 73
- Highways: 45,550 km (28,117 mi)
  - Paved: 38,399 km (23,807 mi)
  - Unpaved: 7,151 km (4,434 mi)
- Railways: 2,032 km (1,254 mi)

**\*Note, unknown number damaged during the 2003 war**

For more than two decades there have been plans for building a metro system in Baghdad. Part of the tunnels have been built, but that they are now used for sheltering, hiding and escaping purposes. U.N. inspectors have heard of the tunnels for years, but have not found their entrances.



# Transportation (cont.)



- Air travel for civilians to Iraq is severely restricted
- Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) is currently under Coalition control

Transportation was one of the Iraqi economy's most active sectors in the late 1980s; it was allocated a large share of the domestic development budget because it was important to the government for several reasons. Logistics became a crucial factor in Iraq's conduct of the Iran-Iraq War. The government also recognized that transportation bottlenecks limited industrial development more than any other factor. Finally, the government believed that an expanded transportation system played an important political role by promoting regional integration and by heightening the central government's presence in the more remote provinces. For these reasons, the government embarked on an ambitious plan to upgrade and to extend road, rail, air, and river transport simultaneously. Iraq's main transportation axis ran roughly northwest to southeast from Mosul via Kirkuk to Baghdad, and then south to Basra and the Gulf (Highway 1, MSR Tampa).



# Military (Pre-war)



Saddam's Fedayeen

- World's fifth largest military in 1991 with 950,000 troops
- One year after Gulf War, estimated at 382,500
- FY 2000 Military expenditures: \$1.3B (US was \$276.7B in '99)

The Iran-Iraq War ended with Iraq supporting the largest military of the Middle East, with more than 70 army division and over 700 aircraft within its air force. Losses during the invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent ejection of Iraqi forces from Kuwait by the UN coalition resulted in the reduction of Iraq's ground forces to 23 divisions and the air force to less than 300 aircraft. Military and economic sanctions have prevented Iraq in the from rebuilding its military power.



# Military (cont.)



- Iraq's Army comprised 23 divisions
  - 17 Regular Army Divisions
    - 3 armored, 2 mechanized, and 11 infantry
  - 6 Republican Guard Divisions
    - 3 armored, 1 mechanized and 2 infantry
- Fedayeen Saddam (Saddam's Men of Sacrifice)
  - At one point reportedly between 18,000-40,000 strong

The Iraqi Army fielded at least 11 infantry, 3 mechanized, and 3 armored divisions prior to the invasion. In addition, the Iraqi Republican Guard fielded 3 armored divisions, 2 mech divisions, and 1 motorized infantry division, while the Special Republican Guard fielded 6 brigades, including two tank brigades and an anti-aircraft brigade. The Fedayeen Saddam was not part of Iraq's regular armed forces but rather operated as a paramilitary unit. They reported directly to the Presidential Palace, rather than through the army chain of command. They were not an elite military force, often having been poorly trained and without heavy weapons. However, they were among the most loyal organizations to the government of Saddam Hussein and were a politically reliable force against domestic opponents.



# Military (Post-war)



Special Security Organization HQ (Former)  
Tikrit, Iz

- Currently rebuilding after fall of Regime
- US Troops recruiting and training Iraqi Defense Forces
- IDF is assisting U.S. troops in SOSO\*

\*Stability Operations and Support Operations



# Conclusion



Soldier in Presidential Compound  
Tikrit, Iz May03

- Violent past & history of tyranny
- Unforgiving climate & geography pushes extremes
- Rebuilding it's sovereignty, economy is key if Iraq is to move into it's future.



# QUESTIONS???

Please present your questions to the instructors at the CRC.

# Training and Doctrine Command

Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, and Training



*Certificate of Completion*

*This will certify that*

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PRINT NAME

*has completed all elements of the Iraq Overview basic module as  
a component of the Theater-Specific Individual  
Requirement Training Course*

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Date