**NATO and Iraq Context**

Paolo Napolitano, ‘What to expect when you’re expecting NATO in Iraq, *War on the Rocks*, 29 March 2021, last accessed on 1. April 2021 at: <https://warontherocks.com/2021/03/what-to-expect-when-youre-expecting-nato-in-iraq/>

“NATO can provide technical capacity-building to Iraq in the form of training or advisory activities. However, this will be futile if not streamlined in a coherent strategy developed by the Iraqi government and supported by NATO, which is a highly politically sensitive process. NATO therefore should be more politically savvy with regards to what is happening in Iraq and its power relations, rather than just limiting itself to technical capacity-building”.

Michael Knights, Pierre Morcos, Charles Thepaut, NATO in Iraq: Not a Surge’, *Washington Institute for Near East Polic*y, 5. March 2021, last accessed on 1. April 2021 at: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/nato-iraq-not-surge>

“NMI [NATO Mission in Iraq] needs to plant each foot carefully on what will hopefully be a long path of engagement with a key regional power—one whose stability can profoundly affect refugee flows and security issues in Europe. This means that controversial proposals need to be considered very carefully before any steps are publicized or taken by NATO. NMI also presents a modest opportunity for renewed dialogue between Washington and Europe. Now that the United States has reduced its military footprint to 2,500 personnel, Denmark’s decision to assume leadership over the mission and send 285 military personnel shows that European allies are willing to step up their efforts in order to prevent the reemergence of IS.”

Luke Coffey, ‘It is necessary for NATO to play a leading role in Iraq’, *Arab News*, 19. February 2021, last accessed on 3. April 2021, at: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1812241>

“There are many potential benefits arising from NATO having a role in Iraq. Firstly, as noted the organization has been involved in Iraq for a number of years and so it has a stake in ensuring the nation has a stable and secure future. Secondly, the alliance has accumulated a lot of experience in training security forces from its operations in Afghanistan. The lessons it has learned can be applied to Iraq. Thirdly, NATO’s presence in Iraq helps make the rest of the Middle East and Europe safer. While not entirely part of the organization’s area of responsibility, as defined by the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, the alliance cannot afford to ignore the Middle East. History, and recent events, show that what happens in the region can quickly spill over into Europe.”

Brian W. Everstine, ‘NATO to Increase Presence in Iraq, Afghanistan Future Unclear’, *Air Force Magazine*, 18. February 2021, last accessed on 3. April 2021, at: <https://www.airforcemag.com/nato-to-increase-presence-in-iraq-afghanistan-future-unclear/>

“U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III participated in the meetings, and “reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the enduring defeat of ISIS, respecting Iraq’s sovereignty, and ensuring long-term regional stability,” according to a Pentagon readout of the meetings. The U.S. welcomes NATO’s expanded role, and Austin “expressed confidence that all of the work done to date with the Iraqi government and security forces will lead to a self-sustainable mission,” according to the Pentagon.”

Barbara Starr and Oren Liebermann, ‘US signals it is open to sending more troops to support NATO's mission in Iraq’, *CNN Politics*, 18 February 2021, last accessed on 1. April 2021, at: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/18/politics/us-troops-iraq/index.html>

“The Pentagon opened the door to the possibility of sending more American troops to the Middle East as part of a newly expanded NATO training mission to support Iraqi forces and ensure that ISIS does not rise again. "The US is participating in the force generation process for NATO Mission Iraq and will contribute its fair share to this important expanded mission," Pentagon spokesperson Cmdr. Jessica L. McNulty told CNN. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin spoke about the mission with his NATO counterparts during a meeting with defense ministers on Thursday. Late Thursday night, Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby clarified that there are "no plans" to send more US troops into Iraq itself. However, US troops could also support the mission from outside the country, a defense official told CNN.”

Lee Berthiaume, ‘Canada to face pressure bto reverse withdrawal of troops from NATO mission in Iraq’, *The Canadian Press, cp.24.com*, 17. February 2021, last accessed on 1. April 2021 at: <https://www.cp24.com/news/canada-to-face-pressure-to-reverse-withdrawal-of-troops-from-nato-mission-in-iraq-1.5312124>

“The proposed expansion would see a dramatic increase in the number of troops assigned to NATO's current training mission - and likely result in pressure on Canada to start sending troops back into Iraq after having withdrawn nearly 200 over the past year. The current NATO mission was launched in 2018 and involved around 500 troops with the aim of building up Iraq's military so it could better combat extremist groups like ISIL. Canada contributed 200 of those initial troops and the mission was led by a Canadian general.The Department of National Defence says only 17 Canadian troops are now working with the NATO mission, command of which was passed to Denmark in the fall.”

Tim Ball, ‘Thank You for Being a Friend: NATO, Iraq, and the Benefits of the Alliance’, *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 25. February 2021, last accessed on 1. April 2021, at: <https://www.fpri.org/article/2021/02/thank-you-for-being-a-friend-nato-iraq-and-the-benefits-of-the-alliance/>

“As NATO prepares to resume and increase its training mission in Iraq, small pockets of ISIS fighters continue to launch attacks in Iraq itself and claim credit for deadly attacks by its sympathizers in Europe. While it has been several years since an ISIS-inspired attack in the United States, the group remains a shared threat for the U.S. and its NATO partners. By recommitting to the training mission and increasing the number of trainers, non-U.S. NATO members are helping to ensure their own security at home. Meanwhile, the United States receives assistance in meeting its own national security objective of combating violent extremist organizations that pose a threat to its citizens at home and abroad.”

# Khazan Jangiz, ‘ISIS is regrouping, gaining strength in Iraq’s disputed territories: Peshmerga ministry official’, *Rudaw News*, 27. January 2021, last accessed on 3. April 2021, at: <https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/27012021>

“Colonel Wayne Marotto, Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) Spokesman, denies that ISIS is resurging in Iraq. “Daesh (ISIS) is resilient, and remains a serious challenge, but relentless pressure by our partner forces in the ISF (Iraqi Security Forces), in the SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces), in Peshmerga forces will prevent a re-emergence of Daesh,” he told Rudaw's Snur Majid on Tuesday. “I don’t see any kind of resurgence of Daesh” because of the work the coalition is doing in coordination with Kurdish and Iraqi forces, he noted.”

James Goldgeier and Garrett Martin, ‘NATO’s Nevber-Ending Struggle for Relevance’, *War on the Rocks*, 3. September 2020, last accessed on 1. April 2020 at:

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/09/natos-never-ending-struggle-for-relevance/>

“Although deterring and defending against an aggressive Russia will remain high on NATO’s agenda, rethinking the nature of burden-sharing, finding ways to address democratic backsliding, and defining the alliance’s role in dealing with China will be central to navigating a post-COVID-19 world.”

David Petraeus and Vance Serchuk, ‘Big Ideas for NATO’s New Mission in Iraq’, *Foreign Policy*, 6. March 2020, last accessed on 3. April 2021 at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/03/06/iraq-islamic-state-military-nato-advisors/>

“In the mid-2000s, the George W. Bush administration handed considerable responsibility for Afghanistan’s security to NATO. Much as now in Iraq, it was considered safe to do so because the enemy—in that case the Taliban—was seen as having been largely defeated. And, also like today, it was hoped that getting European governments to dispatch soldiers to Afghanistan would free up American troops, who were stretched thin by competing demands from the war in Iraq. What happened instead is a cautionary tale for the present moment. While many of America’s NATO allies stepped up in response to the Bush administration’s call for help, and though their forces served with courage and honor on the ground in Afghanistan, all too often these troops lacked essential enabling capabilities necessary for the battles into which they had been thrust. In other cases, so-called national caveats undermined the effectiveness of coalition members by barring them from performing basic tasks, including, in the case of one country, conducting offensive operations. Inevitably, it fell to the United States to compensate for its allies’ material shortfalls and limitations stemming from national caveats.”

Nikolaj Nielsen and Elena Sanchez Nicolas, ‘3,000 troops from 19 EU states in Iraq. Will they stay?’ *EU Observer*, 8. January 2020, last accessed on 3. April 2021, at: <https://euobserver.com/foreign/147065>

“Around 3,000 soldiers from 19 EU states were deployed in Iraq, plus another 200 from 10 EU states stationed under Nato command, as of late 2019, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), a global think tank.”

Ron DePasquale, ‘Some NATO Troops Begin Leaving Iraq’, *The New York Times*, 7. January 2020, last accessed on 3. April 2021, at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/07/world/middleeast/nato-troops-iraq.html>

‘NATO is removing some of the trainers who have been working with Iraqi soldiers battling the Islamic State, in the aftermath of the American killing of Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani of Iran in Baghdad. The NATO secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, announced on Monday that the training had been temporarily suspended.’

Yuri M. Zhukov, ‘NATO’s Mediterranean Mission – What the Alliance is Doing in the Aegean Sea’, *Foreign Affairs*, 21. February 2016, last accessed on 1. April 2021, at:

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2016-02-21/natos-mediterranean-mission>

“The ability to operate in Turkish territorial waters—the origin point for migrant traffic headed toward the EU—gives NATO a key advantage over previous EU efforts. The EU’s second naval operation against people smuggling in the Central Mediterranean, Operation Sophia, was limited to international waters. The Libyan government did not authorize the EU mission to operate in its territorial waters, forcing warships to stay 12 nautical miles off of the Libyan coast at all times. NATO will not have such restrictions, as it is working within the waters of alliance members.”