

NATO Mission Iraq (NMI)

At the NATO Summit in Brussels in July 2018, Allied leaders launched NATO Mission Iraq, following a request and upon invitation from the Government of Iraq. The mission was established in Baghdad in October 2018. Its commander is Lieutenant General Per Olsen from Denmark.

NATO Mission Iraq is a non-combat advisory and training and capacity-building mission. Through it NATO supports Iraq in strengthening its security institutions and forces, so that they themselves are able to stabilize their country, fight terrorism, and prevent the return of Daesh. To achieve this, NATO advises relevant Iraqi defence and security officials in the Ministry of Defence, the Office of the National Security Advisor, and the Prime Minister's National Operations Centre. The mission also advises Iraq's professional military education institutions in the greater Baghdad area. Specific areas of focus include policy and strategy; force generation and development; resource management; Women, Peace and Security; leadership development; and good governance in the security sector.

In February 2021, NATO Defence Ministers decided to further expand the NATO mission, following a request by the Iraqi government.

In the future, NATO Mission Iraq may expand its advisory activities to other locations and Iraqi security institutions. This would be based on Iraq's request and following approval by NATO's North Atlantic Council.

All activities of NATO Mission Iraq are agreed upon by the Iraqi government and conducted in full respect of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. As they operate in a non-combat mission, NATO personnel do not deploy alongside Iraqi forces during their operations. The NATO mission works in close collaboration with the Iraqi Ministry of Defence. It only trains and advises members of the Iraqi security institutions and forces who are under the direct control of the Government of Iraq. Throughout its activities, NATO Mission Iraq promotes inclusiveness, gender awareness and respect for international humanitarian law and human rights.

All thirty NATO members and three partner nations (Australia, Finland and Sweden) contribute to NATO Mission Iraq. Currently, the mission consists of about 500 personnel (including civilians, military and support elements). For 2021, NATO Mission Iraq aims to expand its current strength by a few hundred more support staff and advisors. This expansion will allow the mission to enhance its engagements with Iraqi defence and security officials. Increases in NATO Mission Iraq's personnel will be incremental, conditions-based, demand-driven, and in full consultation with the Iraqi authorities.

NATO complements the broader international effort to help Iraq eradicate terrorism and promote stability. NATO Mission Iraq coordinates with other stakeholders, such as Operation Inherent Resolve, the United Nations, and the European Union. NATO as an institution is also a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS/Daesh, which it supports through AWACS intelligence flights.

Since May 2020 - through its Euro Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre - NATO has also been helping the Iraqi authorities with their request for assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Lieutenant General Per Olsen



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg meets leaders, instructors and students at the Iraqi School of Military Communications in Taji (September 2019)



NATO Mission Iraq Gender Advisor presents during a Code of Conduct and Harassment Course in Baghdad area (2019)



NATO Mission Iraq medical advisors are supporting the Iraqi Department of Military Medical Affairs in further developing military medical instruction (2019)



NATO Mission Iraq advisor explains fundamental training theories with Iraqi counterpart at Al-Rustimaya on February 3, 2021. (NATO photo by Sgt. I. Vega)



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