

Crises of the Political System In Iraq
Dialogue of the Political Leaders and the Elite

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Editor

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Introduction

The Crisis of Iraq, the Consensual Political System

Ibrahim Bahr Al-Olom
August, 2019

In the fall of 2012, the “Monthly Tuesday Forum”, also known as “The Bahr Al-Olom Dialogue Forum”, was created as a space for dialogue with the Iraqi elite and decision makers. It aimed to shed light on problems in the structure of the Iraqi political system, identify obstacles facing government institutions, and find solutions for political, economic, and social issues afflicting the country.

For more than 15 years, following April 2003, crises were multiplying quickly. Some were convinced that the Iraqi political system suffers from structural defects that require a careful examination of its foundations.

Conversely, some think that these crises are the product of a State that has been absent for decades, as well as the military dictatorship that had been in power for half a century. Thus, the crises arose naturally during the transition into non-dictatorship, mirroring conflicts accumulated throughout history. The country’s ability to contain and manage them determines the outcome of the transition into non-dictatorship.

However, the status quo is not limited to either one of the above points of view. If we were to look solely at the negative consequences of the current political system, without consideration for the new environments and spheres it has created, we would think it is a horribly failed experience. If, on the contrary, we only focused on relatively positive outcomes, we would have an equally limited view of reality.

To properly determine the status quo, the research hypothesis attempted to test the first point of view through dialogue with concerned parties. For reasons we shall not elaborate here, gathering parties over a roundtable was unsuccessful. Our second option was to search for channels of dialogue between Iraqi leaders to discuss this grand problematic.

Discussions took place between 2012-2013. During that period, the discord had intensified between political blocs as well as legislative and executive powers. This project was meant to be part of the movement for the improvement of the country's conditions; that is until the turbulent 2014 elections and the invasion of a third of Iraq by Daesh. In October 2017, Iraq was able to free its territories in cooperation with the Global Coalition Against Daesh and regional countries, namely Iran, and prevent the separation of Kurdistan. However, participation rates in the 2018 elections were low and protests broke out.

The People Whose Existence Was Threatened

In 2018, a discussion took place with a foreign friend with deep insight on Iraqi and international affairs. We debated matters plaguing Iraq, such as unemployment and weak public services. He highlighted a point that he, as an outsider, thought was important: In the middle of 2014, most Iraqis believed their State was facing disintegration because of three main threats.

The first threat was terrorists like Daesh and terrorist incubators in northern and western provinces, which Iraq was able to defeat for the first time. The second was the separation of Kurdistan, which was successfully thwarted. The third was Shiite-Shiite clashes looming over Basra, swiftly prevented before taking place.

Several factors, chiefly religious authorities, led the people to participate in thwarting these three threats. However, political leaders must build upon these victories for a stronger State, as the Iraqi people remain the real actor capable of fighting off threats and building functional institutions.

Consensus: A Problem Within the Political System

Some wonder whether developments in Iraq over the past two years have fixed any flaws in the country's political system. In a symposium that took place in Beirut in 2012, I spoke about the obstacles facing Iraqi politics and institutions. In my opinion, the core problem is that our system is based on constituent quotas, rendering it an incompetent system. Iraqi constituents have replaced citizen entitlements, as determined by the Constitution. Thus, the principle of equal opportunity depends on constituency and partisanship. Sectarian and ethnic lines became pillars of the new Iraqi State and spawned administrative and financial corruption. Political party quotas became deeply rooted in the structure of the State of Iraq, from ministries to various institutions, overshadowing competence and expertise, and generating corruption.

Inept Electoral Coalitions

Political coalitions of the Iraqi Parliament were clearly formed through coercion. This led to acts of rebellion by individuals and groups. In my opinion, countries of the region had great influence on the creation of coalitions between 2005-2010. The Iraqi people did not have a say in their formation. Poor parliamentary representation ensued.

I still remember how, in 2014, seats in the parliamentary chamber were allocated according to parliamentary coalitions. This may be the case in other countries around the world, but in Iraq, it was actually a manifestation of sectarianism. This pushed us and several MPs from different lists to submit a request to the Speaker to reallocate seats by alphabetical order. The request was indeed responded to, and seats were rearranged accordingly. While this is a mere formality, it reflects the will to change.

National Coalitions

During the elections of 2018, matters seemed to improve, most likely due to Iraqi citizens from all over the country partaking in the battle against terrorists and their feeling of urgent solidarity. The people's sense of belonging to the nation was solidified, and they even began hosting displaced citizens. This was positively reflected by the parliamentary coalitions following 2018 elections.

Electoral lists in the 3rd cycle surpassed confessionism and ideology, and two main blocs were formed: The Reform and Reconstruction blocs, which people of all ethnicities and confessions joined. There was a clear advance in the political scene that became markedly different from previous years. However, it was governed by other problems, such as the quota system, which created heat over positions of power: political blocs had to agree over an independent for Prime Minister. This would come to the benefit of the religious authority of Najaf. What was meant to be a chance to act against the quota system and select a Prime Minister based on qualifications ended up with political parties taking advantage for their own interests.

Between Opposition and the Quota System

In a normal parliamentary setting, there are two parties: the first is the political majority charged with the formation of a government, and the second is the opposition that monitors government performance. The Opposition must be solid and capable, but instead, it was nearly absent, and problems with the Majority revolved around the distribution of powers.

When forming the Government, the Prime Minister gave political parties the chance to divide ministries amongst each other and select most ministers. We had hoped that Minister Adel Abdulmahdi's ministry would be a different case, but unfortunately, parties remained dominant: The problem is not that they intend to destroy the Iraqi deep state, but rather that they reinforce it to promote the quota system.

In order to benefit from experiences of previous years, we must push away from the quota system - which is bound to destroy the State - and strive for a correct foundation of State pillars. Thus, the Opposition must fully play its role, away from interests and power positions.

Dialogues Between Political Leaders in 2012-2013

The project we are discussing here was supposed to see the light in 2014. Political leaders participated in the Forum, explaining their understanding of the situation and diagnosing the crisis in a practical manner. However, following Daesh terror acts during the third parliamentary cycle, we were unsure of whether we could carry on with this project. Fortunately, with the 2018 elections, the dialogue about the crisis resurfaced, and the project became active once again.

Political Leaders' Thoughts on the Crisis

The Iraqi political system crisis is complex. It presents many ramifications and is intertwined with regional and international spheres. It needs to be deconstructed and its elements reprioritized in order for us to tackle it.

The rationale and opinions expressed by political leaders in the Forum can be summarized through the following points:

1 - The absence of a historical front: The problem of the modern State of Iraq is that there are no founding fathers of the State. It is a historical leadership crisis that has led to the State's structural dysfunction. All political, geopolitical, economic, or cultural change necessitates the completion of the State's foundation by a national historical front.

Solution: An Iraqi national historical front that undertakes a national civil scheme to solve internal and geopolitical conflicts intertwined with the Arab, Turkish, and Iranian spheres.

2 - The absence of a national scheme: Aside from the Iraqi Constitution and national reconciliation, it seems that no third scheme has been undertaken, and that political leaders are not willing to elaborate a vision for a national scheme as they have for the Constitution and national reconciliation.

Solution: For political parties and their various directions to elaborate and agree over a national scheme.

3 - The absence of a cultural and educational scheme: This scheme requires a deeper knowledge of the past to solve current issues and achieve coexistence in the midst of diversity.

Solution: To form a government based on political majority, as opposed to confessional or ethnic majority, to properly serve the nation as a whole.

4 - The struggle over money: While the Iraqi crisis is multilayered, the struggle over money lies at its core.

Solution: For the Shiite political powers to change the direction of the crisis without governing the country on their own, nor with foreign interference.

5 - The lack of the will to reach solutions: Consensual democracy has become customary in Iraq. Despite the criticism it faces, it has indeed created balance.

Solution: A culture of solution-seeking instead of a culture of crises; full Constitutional support for change; conjuring the experiences of other countries that have gone through similar crises; sharper critique and execution by those laying plans the political future of Iraq; and creating trust between political parties.

6 - The crisis of Iraq's Constitution of 2005: This Constitution is difficult to apply, rooted in antiquated thinking, and lacks a sense of national identity.

Solution: The elaboration of a new democratic approach based on citizenship and a new social contract to put an end to sectarianism.

7 - Conflict Management and Multipling of Options: Iraq has been historically plagued by several crises over resources, ideology, and conflict of interest. Many are influenced by foreign countries, chiefly the USA which instilled liberal democracy in Iraq against the will of its people. The biggest crisis is leadership, as the country's institutions possess weak resources and are led by multiple decision-makers, which makes solution-finding difficult.

Solution: The elaboration of a political rhetoric that persuades all Iraqi segments; avoiding sectarian coalitions in favor of a common vision with other segments; and proper practice of Constitutional mechanisms to create change.

8 - The absence of Guarantees of state Admisitration: Viewpoints on the Constitution still clash, and so does the application of its Acts. Constitutional institutions have not been built fully due to the controversy of Kurdistan.

Solution: Either a serious national dialogue to establish the Constitution as

Iraq's cornerstone, or a new Constitution that helps strengthen the private sector and rethink the management of the State's financial resources.

9 - The absence of a State of Citizenship: The absence of an identity for the political system and the conflict of constituents, this creates legislative and political deficiencies and poor security.

Solution: Completion of laws; structuring security forces; forming the Armed Forces' General Command; keeping political conflict away from security institutions; deciding whether to transform governorates into provinces; laying frameworks to shift constituent coalitions into political ones; and laying clear plans for change.

10 - Absent administrations and proper planning, and programs: The crisis persists due to the lack of a common vision and efficient tools in the country's administrations.

Solution: An administrative revolution that can begin once administrators achieve a common vision, plan, and program; and an administratively strong capital.

11 - The lack of trust Among its components: The crisis will persist if discrimination does not end. The concepts of partnership and balance in the Constitution need further elaboration.

Solution: Overcoming the past and finding solutions to its problems, such as victims of the former regime and deteriorated apparatuses among others.

The political system governing Iraq since 2003 presents many flaws, but the political experience, Constitution, and elections were rich experiences that have cost many their lives. To put an end to the instability that comes with them, we need modern, non-military security plans, and must limit Takfirist Fatwas that have caused countless deaths.

Methodology

Such content can be equally enriching for politicians and researchers. It introduces leaders' visions and unveils similarities and differences between them, hence why we archived politicians' opinions in detail.

The book is composed of three chapters. The first is a brief introduction of the conference and participants' interventions. The second fully details the Forum. The third and last chapter is an English summary of the talks and book's preface. Thus, readers can view the abstract as well as more detailed content in the book.

I would like to thank all political leaders who have contributed to the success of this project. I would also like to thank those who have helped edit this content and transform it into something beneficial, chiefly Mr. Ali Al Gharifi, Editor-in-Chief of Al Mowaten, the researcher Mr. Hussein Al Adili, Mr. Assaad Al Matiri, Mr. Salah Al Ghazi, Mr. Hussein Al Gharabi, as well as Ms. Bouthaina Al Hakim for her translation, Mr. Laith Abdul Sada, Mr. Athir Abdul Sada, and the proofreading unit of the Baher Al-Olom Charity Foundation.

CHAPTER I

The crises of Iraq, the absences of founding fathers

Hussain Darwish Al-Adili
October 2012

The Model of the Middle Eastern State

Our current Middle Eastern states are not the outcome of the spontaneous development of evolving nations over the course of time; but rather a production, a fabrication subsequent to Sykes-Picot's region settlement agreement.

As a matter of fact, the natural historical and political evolvement of a state requires the presence of a political entity, which our states lacked, as they have always been a part of an empire or a caliphate. Iraq, for instance, was established in 1921 by the will of England, and was considered as one of the remnants of the defeated Ottoman Empire.

And while the ordinary course of events would require that a state be the outcome of a nation, our states nonetheless evolved from nations that are politically immature. Our current condition, issues, failures, revolutions and uprisings are but a result of the expiry of the fabricated Middle Eastern state.

The Black Triad

For the most part, the Middle Eastern State project has, since its inception, adopted false foundations and standards. The problem was that the founding elite ruled out the possibility of statehood when it adopted a black triad for its construction, which consisted of slavery, tyranny and exclusion; slavery versus citizenship, tyranny versus democracy and exclusion versus pluralism and co-existence. If the founders had adopted a national project, it would have been possible to gamble on the formation of the state's nation gradually.

The Absence of State Identity

The founding of a nation- after the establishment of the state- must adopt the principle of citizenship, which respects ethnic and sectarian diversity, and at the same time does not make it a basis for the political affiliation of the state. All citizens are equal irrespective of their identities and sub-affiliations; the national identity produces their national belonging and interaction. Identity is an expression of what is common to the members of the political humanitarian community. But what happened on the ground is the favoritism shown by the founding elite toward specific (ethnic, sectarian) identities at the expense of other identities, which resulted in exclusion, marginalization and internal conflict in the state. The standards of the founding elite and their practices created a movement of conflict between the components of the state and destroyed the nation. The founders did not bow to the national civil state project; they have adopted a sub-identity among the constituent identities of the state and have made it an official identity.

I believe that the Arab Spring or the Arab revolutions are a clear expression of rejection of the Middle Eastern State project. This model has fallen, or is on its way to falling. The events that took place in Iraq, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and now in Syria are an expression of the failure of the project of a good national civil state in terms of composition, establishment and administration. These states cannot overcome this course of events. They are similar in terms of form and politics, and hence would witness the same fate.

The American Policy Towards the Middle East

How do we imagine the nature of Western American policy towards the Middle East, which is witnessing the death and birth of States? This region has been stagnant for 80 years within well-known internal and external political equations. Now the region has changed. How can we then capture Western American strategies or scenarios that deal with the reality of the new region, an area that is vital and strategic to the world as an international gateway and center of energy?

The policy-makers of the U.S and the West will adopt different scenarios for potential strategies in dealing with the realities of the new region states after the profound changes that have taken place in the Middle Eastern state model. These transformations will result in enormous changes in structure, identity and interests, which have characterized the Middle East over the past decades.

There has been a profound change in the composition of societies and Middle Eastern countries as a result of revolutions and upheavals that are

consistent with the agendas of international interests. The current conflict is about managing the conflict to employ these transformations in such a way as to prevent them from getting out of control. The new geo-political/ geo-societal map, modeled by the current transformations, will change the form of the Middle Eastern political equations that have prevailed for decades, a fact that entails the preparation of scenarios that adopt new strategies to deal with the new Middle Eastern reality.

Three Scenarios Are Expected

There is no confirmed information about the nature of the strategy that the West will adopt to deal with the current changes. However, three possible Western American scenarios are envisaged. They are: country categorization, religious antagonism and containment.

The Scenario of Foci

This scenario considers the Middle East and North Africa as focal points divided into the following: safe areas, disturbed areas and explosive areas, in line with the new map that will be shaped by the transformations in the region. Each focus may include one or more states, and is subject to the nature of the geopolitical and geo-societal location of the state, the nature of its regional context and the pattern of its influence on the region.

The safe areas are those states whose security and stability should be maintained under any circumstances for political, economic or military objectives. The disturbed areas are those countries that are destined to live in the internal structural disorder that deviates them from the equations of conflict and competition in their regional system. The explosive sites are countries whose explosive reality is reconfigured to shape the region in proportion to geo-strategic variables. For example, Israel and the Gulf states are considered safe places whose security is achieved through direct support and by creating chaos in their regional neighborhood. Each country is preoccupied with its internal problems so as not to be able to threaten the safe areas, while control of chaos is achieved through political expansion and coordination with military forces that suppress any attempt to extend the disadvantages of chaos to safe outposts.

The Scenario of Sectarian Antagonism:

The geopolitical map will be redrawn with respect to the Islamic sectarian conflict- which is strongly present in the structure of societies and countries in the Middle East, and has been exposed by the revolutions and uprisings of the

region- in order to create major geo-strategic centers of power for the region. The two candidates for a strategic position are Turkey as a Sunni religious center, and Iran as a Shiite religious center.

Turkey is the only country that has the potential to become a Sunni center of power due to its Ottoman heritage, strong economy and outstanding geopolitical location. Saudi Arabia, despite its political and economic weight, is not qualified to be a Sunni center of power because of its traditional structure and affiliation with Wahhabism. Egypt, despite its religious political weight, is too weak to be an active Sunni strategic center of power because of its severe economic weakness. As for the Shiite center of power, Iran is the only country qualified; the result is that the two established Turkish-Sunni and Iranian-Shiite powers would enter into a comprehensive conflict of interests.

The principle behind the sectarian antagonism scenario is to enable the Muslim Brotherhood to gain power in several countries, and then to reach a strategic understanding with Turkey in order to establish a strategic Sunni power versus the Iranian power.

And while the Shiite axis is still largely engaged in a vital conflict with The U.S. and the West, those will be closer to the Turkish power sponsoring the Sunni axis to steer the vital interests of the region and direct events towards their strategic objectives.

The Scenario of Containment

It is possible to adopt the containment scenario instead of the abovementioned scenarios, and the containment here is closer to the scenario of sectarian antagonism. The difference is that the containment scenario does not allow for the formation of a Shiite power against the Sunni power.

The containment scenario is based on direct understandings with the Islamic forces produced in the Middle East, especially the Muslim Brotherhood. The focus of the understandings would be to protect the safe areas (Israel and the Gulf states) from all threats, including the Iranian threat, as well as to distance, limit and confront the growing Islamic fundamentalist Salafist currents in the region in exchange for American economic and political support for the political Islamic states.

Alternative Strategies

Constructive scenarios can be produced, and would be advantageous compared to the aforementioned calamitous scenarios that, if achieved, would likely lead to massive conflicts in the region.

Turkey Is a Civil Center

The “Civil Turkish Power” can be adopted. In fact, Turkey’s assets qualify it to become a civil center of power instead of being a sectarian/nationalist center of power. The Middle East needs a civil strategic control center amidst the ethnic-sectarian contradictions that threaten the entire region.

Turkey is a country with a pattern of civil Islam, a special geographic setting, a soft and growing economic power and a positive presence in more than one political and societal arena. What is needed is its modeling as a civil center of power that constitutes a balancing element preventing the entire Middle East from falling into sectarian strife and a Shiite-Sunni war. If Turkey surrenders to the strategy of sectarian antagonism or that of containment on the basis of it being an Ottoman center, the entire region will be dragged into internal and intra-state conflicts and wars.

Iraq Is a Pivotal Center

Iraq is also a pivotal center in the region through which an effective strategic center can be formed. Iraq can turn into a strategic stabilizing state amid conflicting strategies. If Iraq is fragmented or remains weak, the entire region will be forced to reproduce itself on ethnic-sectarian bases. The achievement of Iraq’s strategic mission requires the reconstruction of the existing Iraqi state structure, which is currently based on a consensual ethno-sectarian basis, to become an effective, unified national civil state.

CHAPTER II

The crises of Iraq, the absence of a national project

Adil Abdul-Mahdi
November 2012

Our performance in the opposition has not been outstanding, but the momentum that the Iraqi people have brought with their sacrifices has created conditions that contributed to change. Despite sacrifices, we still carry a great momentum, but we do not capitalize on it. We set restrictions and internal ideas, part of which inherited and part transferred to us because of the conditions of the previous stages of the opposition.

Iraq has been through three phases since 2003 until today.

Phase I: The Constitution

The first 2005 elections were built on an alliance called the Shiite-Kurdish Alliance, between the two main Kurdish parties and the main Shiite parties. The drafting of the Constitution was a driving force for the establishment of the project, consensus was the motto of the stage, as we should draft a unified constitution at the end of the stage, and the government emanating from the project should also be a national consensus government. There are efforts by the two alliances aimed at including a third coalition in the positive constitutional referendum.

Phase II: National Reconciliation

Phase II occurred in parallel with the second round of elections. At this stage, the Iraqi Accord Front joined the two main parties. Here, the spur of terrorism and violence has changed the whole theory. When we were in the Governing Council discussing the law of state administration, the vision for the army, for example, was based on the assumption that the army would be

small, and the country's revenues would focus on agriculture, infrastructure, services, industry and investment. The emergence of terrorism subverted this arrangement, and there emerged a crucial necessity for the military doctrine.

Then came the second stage which imposed several concepts such as quotas and agreements to achieve a certain interest circumventing the Constitution, as well as agreements in the Parliament and within the blocs to identify specific issues and roles, and which were intended to solve urgent matters; what caused an imbalance of relations between forces, quotas and conflict. Instead of actually aiming at a genuine reconciliation that establishes real agreements, we have become more and more involved in a state of polarization, and the status of executive power has increased significantly.

Phase III: Absence of the National Project

This phase occurred after the Erbil agreement, without which the government would not have been formed. However, the agreement was not taken seriously. We all adopt the mentality of the opposition. Kurds for instance still adopt that of national liberation, while everyone needs to adapt to the status quo. How can a force that still considers itself a national liberation force run a state (Iraq) and a region (Kurdistan)?

Geography or Interests

We stand between two theories; either we build our positions on geography or on interests.

For instance, Germany built its positions in the two World Wars on geography; it was defeated, occupied and sanctioned. The shift in approach it adopted after World War II, which tipped in favor of its interests, contributed in the achievement of its goals, through the European Union.

As for us Arabs, we have always relied on our geography. We are decreasing in size; our countries are divided, resulting in losses both in terms of geography and interests. This does not imply that geography must not be part of the big picture, but rather should be serving interests.

We have entered the third phase with the emergence of a major force, "the rule of law", which gradually became the carrier of the project. Today we do not have parliamentary powers or a group of forces that make decisions on core issues. Facts indicate that the decisions of these forces have no effect when the project holder takes different decisions. This is the actual situation today. The government has not yet submitted its ministerial program, and we have no powers carrying the project. If the political and national forces and elites do not confront this issue objectively and state with all sincerity that this path will

not lead to the country's well-being, the situation will not improve and the interest of the country will be at stake.

The Political Front Project

The political forces do not want to meet to formulate a common vision as they did in the first and second stages. I believe that we will move from crisis to crisis, and we all bare responsibility. Therefore, it is in the interest of everyone to be objective. Today, we are facing two problems; the first is that of the obstructionist minority: laws, legislation and government decisions have been hampered. On the other hand, there is a fear that the majority will dominate power. We wonder how to achieve political balance among the majority and minorities, so as not to marginalize a component or disrupt interests, decisions and laws.

I proposed the establishment of a political front with eight representatives, which could be doubled or tripled, and which can rely on the main forces in the parliament- such as the National Alliance, the Kurdish Alliance and the Iraqi Forces Coalition- to form it, so as not to resort to unconstitutional interpretations and the establishment of new institutions. Decisions shall be taken by a majority of nine members, provided that at least half of the members of each of the three lists vote in favor of the resolution. The allocation of seats for each list is agreed upon among the list members.

When members of the political front reach an agreement, they can move the latter to the legislative and executive authorities to regulate the affairs of the country.

This is a general perception. We have great capabilities to progress if we solve these problems. The ground for solutions is available, but there are fears and a lack of confidence, which complicate the matter. As long as the administration of the situation is subject to crises, the problem is getting deeper and we are not laying the foundations for its solution.

CHAPTER III

The crises of Iraq, educational and historical roots

*Ali Mohammad Hussain Al-Adeb
December 2012*

History

It is necessary to revisit history, for history affects individuals and their respective societies through its cumulative events. And because past generations are more conscious and mature than the present generation, it would be imperative that we follow the views and opinions of our ancestors in order to be able to find possible solutions to our problems. This is what we refer to as “the “reproduction of history”, or the reproduction of past events.

People of a certain tribe or sect have certain cultural accumulations. Moreover, the human mind is subject to cultural inheritance; it is persuaded by historical conflicts and events. These historical events are not transient but are a set of ideas, practices, behaviors, and beliefs that take shape and affect people, and thus we find different groups of people. For instance, individuals belonging to a certain tribe or religion would have cultural accumulations based on their origins. In fact, their ancestors have perhaps been involved in intellectual, cultural and behavioral conflicts throughout history, which have influenced the current generation.

The Arab world has had its share of national conflicts, which effects we witness today in Iraq. Every person, community, and nation considers itself superior to others, and that therefore, it must be followed as a leader. Arabs have always considered themselves superior to the rest of the world, yet they have abandoned their own values. Instead, they follow in the steps of the West more and more every day.

And while the purpose of Islam was to make the Arab nation grow in level

and knowledge, this nation is now famous for murder, kidnap and torture. These were prominent characteristics of pre-Islamic Arabia, the era of ignorance, or *Jahiliyyah*, where Arabs took pride in killing and seizing property of each other. Do you find any differences between such practices and those of our current culture?

Does an Islamic Nation Celebrate the Murder of Imam Hussain?

How many narratives exist on Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain? These were recounted in the presence of the prophet's companions, including those who were in Karbala. For instance, "Hassan and Hussein are the lords of young people in paradise" is a narration that is not solely adopted by Shiites, but by Muslims in general. How can we consider our nation "Islamic" while we celebrate the murder of the lord of young people in paradise?

Jahiliyyah was a practice, a belief, and a behavior. Islam emanated and promised to save this nation, for it introduced a new culture that came to replace the old one. But was the former able to deeply entrench itself in an individual's thought and behavior?

We introduced democracy and declared that the dictatorship - or Ba'athist-era- is over. Now, we follow democracy, and our elections are democratic. Nonetheless, if we are to consider a province for instance that embraces, produces and leads terrorism, how can we allow it to engage in democratic elections? What kind of democracy would that be? Such democracy will not help us achieve anything.

Commercial Islam

In fact, the Islamic project stemmed with the aim of initiating change within people. Those worshiped idols at one time, before they started worshipping to God whose orders they received through Prophet Mohammad. Why was Imam Hussain murdered then? And why was his murder celebrated?

That is, people were merely after power. After the conquest of Mecca, Arabs chose to follow Islam in order to try to make changes from within; hence Islam became commercial. The same goes to introducing democracy to the Parliament. The democracy project cannot be considered a project for change, and will not lead us anywhere.

As a matter of fact, the coalitions of the political projects are seeking control of the country. This brings the game for power back, where each party is a threat to others, and where individuals are only concerned with the well-being and evolvment of their own communities- or what we call marginalization of and misbelief in others.

We must be able to accept those facts without reluctance, for we are not responsible for the mistakes that have been made. But one might wonder why is it that we do not build on those mistakes while relating history. The latter needs to be analyzed, and politicians must learn from it. The Islamic nation included all nationalities, none of which considered itself better than the others, whereas our thinking is still based on discrimination between social classes. That is, we want to imitate the Gulf, where, similar to the caliphate system, one family rules the country for generations. Is this what we call democracy?

Let us for instance take the example of President Obama: he is black, has Kenyan origins, and comes from an unknown family. But while a few years ago discriminatory incidents occurred between white people and those of color, no one denounced Obama becoming president. In fact, they voted for him again. This is a democratic country. As for us, we still discriminate amongst Kurds, Turkmens, and Arabs: our behavior has not changed.

A Political Project Emerges from Culture

The political project for change stems from culture, awareness, and history. We became followers of an infected history. Even though we still print, read, and even memorize the Qur'an, we do not apply it to our daily lives.

There are different types of regimes: religious, civil, and tribal. Which regime do we follow?

Under a civil regime, all citizens, including the president, must respect the law enacted by Parliament. This regime then grants every citizen rights, without exception. But citizens have duties as well, and anyone who does not respect the law is sanctioned. As for us, we are still discussing our law. We do not even have a constitutional court, which means that we are after a law-less life. On the other hand, people in a religious society follow and abide by religious values. It is hence obvious that we neither follow a religious regime nor a civil one.

The tribal regime was common before Islam; each tribe took pride in being either stronger, or bigger than others. However, tribes had laws that prevented them from establishing states, and did not succeed in establishing a state in the Arabian Peninsula. Islam founded the first state and led tribal communities to abide its law. Do we follow the same path today?

The National Project

Iraq must have a national project. While there exists a public and a private space, the latter concerns only the individual, whose freedom is respected. However, when the individual coexists with other individuals of beliefs different than

his own, they must all act as partners within the country.

On a different note, a backward society is one that lacks culture. We do not have the right to be proud of holding a degree, for a degree that does not contribute in bettering the conditions within a society is insignificant. If the culture is not embedded in the behavior of the community, it is not right to call it a culture.

Today, our project is still centered on power, and the quota system is still everybody's objective. This is our reality and the reason behind our unstable government and policies. We are following the wrong approach if we are aiming at serving our country. A project that would save Iraq is not an easy one to achieve; it is an educational and cultural project based on historical awareness, and is implemented in the present.

Civilizations centered in and originated from Iraq, and Islam expanded from our country to the rest of the world. However, the latter evolved as we regressed. Whereas Iraq produced and embraced cultures, intellectuals and leaders, these must understand that they cannot maintain a civilization without reaching a certain consensus among its various components, a task that has become difficult nowadays.

Why would we allow external conspiracies? Why would we allow Turkey and Qatar to interfere in our affairs? How did we become unable of denouncing such a behavior? For instance, a general protocol is that either the prime minister or the president regulates foreign relationships whereas in our case, this task is not solely confined to the aforementioned; that is, politicians are randomly meeting with presidents. We have to respect ourselves and our decisions. We cannot keep relying on others, thinking they might help us.

Iraq's borders as we know them today will remain unchanged, and we have to accept this fact. We have Arabs and Kurds, and Turkmens among other minorities. This is not a new concept; our country's scenario does not differ from other countries'.

The work of the state as an institution must fall in the service of the country. We surpass other countries in terms of capacities and resources, but while we have been followed in the past, we have now become followers. Politicians, when implementing their new approach, must take this fact into consideration, and the situation will improve once we work towards a political majority that includes all parties, in the service of the country.

CHAPTER IV

The crises of Iraq, conflict over money

Ahmad Abdel Hadi Chalabi
February 2013

A Project Proposal

A group of leaders and thinkers in the United Iraqi Alliance has drafted, ahead of the parliamentary elections, a proposal in the form of an electoral statement, and which could be submitted by the government to the parliament when seeking a vote of confidence. This proposal addressed most of the prevailing issues today, among which are the following:

- The sovereignty of Iraq;
- The emancipation of the country from the negative aspects of the Security Council's decisions;
- The issue of banks and the Central Bank;
- The consolidation of the industrial and agricultural sectors;
- The petroleum policy and exploitation of the oil wealth in Iraq; and
- Improvement of Iraq's foreign relations.

Upon the establishment of the United Iraqi Alliance, we requested that this project be included in the government's project, but our plea remained unrequited. Had this project been implemented, we would have been able to evade numerous conflicts.

The Conflict in Iraq is About Money

The conflict of power in Iraq is in fact a conflict of money. Iraq's budget

has exceeded the considerable sum of \$500 billion between the years 2004 and 2012. More importantly, Iraq's budget exceeds those of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine combined.

In fact, the sums of money that entered Iraq between 2006 and 2012 amounted for \$370 billion, \$207 Billion of which exited the country through the Central Bank's auction. However, the investment budget during the same period did not surpass the sum of \$124 billion, a fact that would raise the question with respect to the end-use of money, which was evidently not fully allocated for investment in development projects.

Corruption in Iraq

The aforementioned figures provide a clear manifestation of corruption and money laundering, and prove that the conflict is indeed one of money. In fact, with those amounts, we could have achieved a great deal in Iraq.

With regards to housing, while 2 million units are required, the government has not even provided 20,000. The problem in fact is not about building, but rather about providing Iraqi citizens with the ability to own a house. Handling this issue is among the most important foundations of stability in Iraq.

As for electricity the private sector in Kurdistan has invested \$ billion to establish power stations with a productive capacity of 0 kilowatts. This means that the federal government which invested more than \$ billion should have provided 0 kilowatts. Where is all this electrical power?

In addition to that, we will be spending \$19 trillion from this year's budget, which accounts for \$138 trillion on security and defense (armed forces) equipment. While this is a considerable sum, one might wonder if there is however enough security and defense in Iraq. Where does all the money go?

A Complex Crisis

Our crisis is not of mere political nature, for it takes social and economic aspects and also includes the service sector. On the other hand, it is certainly possible for parties in conflict to transform the crisis into a religious one or to give it a national dimension, this way, it becomes easier to mobilize supporters, but our crisis will remain unsolved.

We've been facing crisis after crisis since 2011. Whereas there might exist people who have harmed the country in one way or another, Iraq's national entity, unity and sovereignty must not be consequently threatened.

Dr. Hussain Shahrastani, Deputy Prime Minister, noted that the measures

adopted have helped 100,000 persons without having to alter the law. Why did we await a crisis in order to grant those people their rights? We have to thoroughly think about this, for it could be an indicator of a solution.

The Syrian Crisis

Iraq cannot interfere in Syria's conflict as long as the parties' positions are subject to their religious beliefs and orientations. Once the Iraqi voice is unified, Iraq would be able to play the main role in solving the Syrian crisis. This achievement is vital with regards to Iraq's safety and democracy.

The region around the Iraqi-Syrian borders is under the control of Al-Nusra Front. It has also been said that the recent delay in the Syrian opposition's operations will be the spark of a conflict in the west of Iraq, in support of Al-Nusra Front. Why do we get ourselves into this?

In addition, the resolution of the Syrian crisis is vital for Iraq from a strategic point of view: Iranian flights between Iran and Syria pass through Iraq, and petroleum exports are transferred from Iraq to Syria.

Leading the Political Process

The current parliament is composed of 325 members, 53% of which are Shiites. However, given that they do not constitute a vast majority, Shiites would still need allies if they were to monopolize power, but can still lead the political process. In fact, no party can succeed in ruling Iraq while opposing to the entire nation.

Furthermore, 60% of the Iraqi territory is in conflict, and the area is not entirely under the government's control. Nevertheless, we cannot follow in Saddam Hussain's footsteps, for he has turned the Iraqi army into an army of occupation in the south and in Kurdistan. We cannot repeat this experience.

It becomes obvious with time that the government's ability to deal with crises and critical situations is declining, whereas political proposals must be drafted and put in place. Would this same government, if unchanged, be able of providing solutions?

CHAPTER V

The crises of Iraq, the absence of the will to resolve

Ibrahim Al-Jaafari
March 2013

Delving into history, it shows us that a crisis outbreak in any country stems from trivial issues that gradually grow, generating huge losses. For instance, both World Wars began with minor problems that quickly worsened and spread into different regions, resulting in a significant number of casualties.

A crisis occurs somewhere between a problem and a catastrophe. While problems exist among parties and state organs in general, we are way ahead of those problems as we have entered into a new, complicated stage, one that might lead to institutional paralysis.

The Emergence of the Crisis

When a conflict spreads to all state's authorities, it develops into a catastrophe, leading to the collapse of the ruling regime. Since the fall of the Baathist regime in 2003, and until 2012, we, as expected, faced continuous problems. Mounting in importance, those problems took a different shape in April 2012 when they reached the edge of a crisis. During the same month, a group of politicians and I met with five political personalities in Erbil. As a crisis was bound to occur, it was agreed during the meeting that a vote of no confidence would be given to the government. Meanwhile, I was offered the position of prime minister given that they were considering a substitute, but it was an offer I declined. Shortly after, Nouri Al-Maliki suggested that the parliament be dissolved, and early elections held.

I held a neutral position, I neither supported nor opposed to the decisions made. However, I believed that a vote of no confidence or dissolution of parliament was not in the benefit of the country, for both would hinder the current as well as future democratic processes.

The crisis is exacerbating, and different political powers are getting involved in it. Among the problems leading to crises are the problems between Kurdistan and the federal government, problems between Iraq and the countries in the region, judicial files, and the competition among political powers. In addition to that, the international intervention in Iraq's affairs has further aggravated the crisis.

Anbar's Protests

The crisis was manifested through protests in Anbar, where people were demanding justice in court, and requesting that problems concerning wages and retirement be solved. The normal reaction of any democratic country would be a democratic response.

A protest reflects the public opinion. It is a step towards rectifying a wrong situation. Respecting and answering to the public opinion is inevitable. However, despite their humanitarian dimension and legitimate demands, these protests were discernably infiltrated: Izzat Al-Douri's speech in the early stages of the protests, religious slogans, and slogans in contradiction with the correct political understanding of the concept of state occurred. We must differentiate between citizens' demands and infiltrations. Of course, there are parties directing and controlling the protests in the back stage, and it is necessary for citizens to recognize the existence of these parties. This behind-the-scenes leadership is different from the one on field: while the former finances and directs the protest, the latter follows it.

The Relationship with Turkey

In 2004, we established strategic relations between Iraq and Turkey, the states, rather than their governments, given that relations based on current governments will expire as those change. Today, we must work on improving these relations and making Turkey a strategic ally without allowing it to interfere in our affairs. Nevertheless, we should not use this relation against Kurds, for it is known that Turkey adopted an adverse position towards them during the Iraq War. Turkey did not interact with the coalition forces against the Ba'athist Regime. As a matter of fact, the reason behind its position lies in its fear of Kurdistan: the fall of the Ba'athist Regime would strengthen Kurds, as they plead for an autonomous government, and the same would happen in the south of Turkey where Kurds would also ask for an autonomous government.

Turkey's position led the U.S. to take a position against the Turkish army.

However, Turkey took advantage of the situation in order to end the dominance of the army over the government.

We must build equal relations among political powers, irrespective of nationality and religion. We cannot change geography, Turkey is our neighbor, and we must build good, strategic relations with it.

The Current Crisis

The crisis is not intractable, but I believe that the concerned parties do not have the will to solve it.

Sunnis have not been given the opportunity to take part in the opposition, a fact that has resulted in societal imbalance. However, the Kurdish party, along with the Shiite party did not have a problem including the Sunni party given the importance of equal representation of different parties in the Iraqi Governing Council. Unfortunately, the distribution remains as is.

Consensual democracy has become custom, and problems at the judicial, political, executive, and legislative levels are accumulating. We must find a solution.

Experience versus Culture

People who have the craft of theorization and implementation are qualified to work towards planning for the future of Iraq. When we formed a government in 2003, we lacked experienced politicians; whereas today, we have a diverse list of ex and current ministers and parliament members. Our options are not limited to academics anymore. We need those political experts.

Whereas it would be legal to create an independent region in Al-Anbar and its surroundings, it would lead to the division of the country. Even if it is a citizens' right to have an independent region, is it going to make up for their violated rights, or does it actually aim at overthrowing the government? Is it going to lead us to a Sunni-Shiite war?

We cannot compare our democracy to that of the West. Only ten years have passed since the fall of the Ba'athist Regime, and we are going through phases that were experienced by the West before it reached this level of democracy.

The Lack of Confidence Among Political Parties

The problems we are dealing with could be effectively resolved through planned resolution programs and the reestablishment of confidence among

political groups. While multiple apparent reasons may seem to govern those problems, at the core lies the lack of confidence among parties, which must be reinstated on religious, national and political levels in order to protect our national achievements.

Political Score Settlement

Executive bodies and the judiciary have certainly made a lot of mistakes. However, the solution lies in addressing the malfunctions rather than exploiting the situation in order to settle political scores. Why do we postpone setting a budget for the country? This delay has negative effects on citizens. The parliament must agree on a budget in order to restore the confidence among citizens and political parties.

A New Culture

We thrive for a new culture that protects our country, one that establishes a bridge between us and other nations, sects and religions: a culture of common space. We also must differentiate between concepts of patriotism, citizenship, and national bloc. Protecting the country is in the current generation's hands.

Investing in Resources

As previously mentioned, we have a budget- of roughly \$100 billion- that is equivalent to those of Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, and Jordan combined, whereas their cumulative population exceeds ours. While one might argue that Iraq is in debt, it is about time we exploit its resources. Besides oil wealth, there are the holy shrines that we must benefit from.

A Different Mentality

On a different note, we must adopt a mentality different that adopted during the era of Saddam Hussain. The dictatorship nature of the latter's regime led to its overthrow. Nevertheless, today, we are ruled by a government that has been elected by the citizens.

We must thus be stronger than the crisis itself. Other populations have gone through the same problems; and some have even undergone situations which are worse than ours. While these problems shape a population, their impacts could take either a positive or a negative turn, depending on the way people approach them.

We must not be distracted by secondary issues, our primary focus must be on investing in resources and idle funds, reestablishing trust among political parties and citizens, and exploiting neglected sectors.

We need to focus on finding a solution for the crisis instead of focusing on the crisis itself, and we need to keep in mind that other states and nations have gone through the same issues we are facing today.

CHAPTER VI

The crises of Iraq, the 2005 Constitution

Saleh Al-Mutlaq
April 2013

When a state faces problems, the wise and the elders of the state work on resolving them. Today, Iraq is going through a very dangerous and disturbing stage.

Citizens who are active in society would one day be able to evolve and take control of their matters. Consequently, the state will earn the respect of other states and will be able to build a bright future. Today, we are looking into ways and working towards facing the danger threatening Iraq.

Thought Leading Politics

The new political stage we have been witnessing may have preoccupied us with its numerous problems. However, a policy that aims at rebuilding the country will not be established without a national intellect that is not subject to subordination. A policy without intellect is the same as an unloaded gun. This is what we lacked during the past century, after which it has become a daily routine to see murders in the streets and act normal. What is the reason behind this reality? Isn't Iraq the country of culture, civilization and knowledge? Is our history a myth?

The answer is we were irresponsible. We abandoned the humanitarian message inherited from our ancestors. We abandoned our will to transit from an existence under a regime that had no chance of survival, to a new existence where the regime would provide our needs and fulfill our future vision.

In fact, a new regime's mission is not restricted to reform. It has to rebuild the country so that the latter could move to a new stage. We need to create an

Iraqi vision, one that adopts an authentic Iraqi democratic approach, and we need to work patiently on impregnating this vision with a national spirit rather than one based on partition.

Two Approaches for Change:

Two approaches have appeared after the fall of the Baathist regime: the first relies on foreign help to deal with the crisis, while the second seeks change from within.

Among supporters of the first are politicians who have planned for the destruction of the state, including all its institutions, in order to build it again. Those however, did not provide enough assets to rebuild the state. On the other hand, supporters of the second approach had a different goal, which focused on changing the regime.

And while it has been ten years since the fall of the latter, we have not yet been able to establish democracy or to build a strong, evolving and stable economy. Today, ours is heavily reliant on oil, whereas other sources of the state's revenue account for less than 7% of it.

We must draw lessons from our past and work thoroughly for our future in order to build a good country, and grant citizens their rights. No group or party can consider the country his, for it belongs to all of us.

If we keep committing mistakes without planning for a real and inclusive reform, these mistakes would grow and would lead us to a dead end, which is very dangerous. This era was supposed to be one of freedom, where a transparent and sound political current would be established.

The Constitution

Iraq's primary concern today is its constitution, which was ineffectively drafted within the period of three months set by Americans, who themselves put eleven years to draft theirs. One might wonder about the reason why they would provide Iraqis with such a tight timeline to draft their constitution. While this social contract requires the agreement of all society's components, ours was set in a hurry and in an atmosphere of fear.

Today, there is a controversy with regards to the constitution: while some believe it is being of use even though it has been hastily drafted, others- among which are the main political powers- are certain that it is the main problem stagnating the country's development. However, the addition of Article 142,

which grants three provinces the right to reject any amendment, makes impossible any change in the constitution.

The Shiite-Kurdish Alliance

Another obstacle that we face is the alliance between two components, or two political powers, in the north and south, respectively, against other political components. This has resulted in a division in our society.

A State Built on a Quota System

Also, one of the flaws in our political process is building the state based on the components, and the absence of a true national identity. This state has been built based on the concept of the victor and the defeated. Thus, there still are people who are being subject to oppression.

Today, we stand before two options: we could either build a state on the grounds of nationalism, or on those of its political components.

The lack of nationalists nowadays makes it difficult for a national project to develop. If we were to build a state that respects citizenship, it would solely have justice at its core. Subsequently, we would have to select those who could endure the political process and let go of the past, revenge and hatred. Otherwise, it would be impossible to build a future in a state like ours.

The Kurdish Rebellion

Rebellion occurs within the federal government and today, we witness a case of Kurdish rebellion and expansion. The federal government does not have the necessary power to limit this rebellion.

We also witness protests in other provinces, and we see infiltrations among protesters, which do not reflect the latter's true nature. Whereas they had a certain influence on people, these infiltrations were very few and were controlled from the beginning.

But overlooking these protestors would lead to one of many scenarios. For instance, they would be dragged into a fight among each other, which is not in our benefit; they would resort to extremism against the government, which is very dangerous and further complicates the problem; or they would return defeated without reaching any of their goals, and this is the most dangerous among these three options. We want our citizens alive, and we want them to face us when they believe we are wrong, and to protest peacefully, similarly to what we are witnessing today.

It is erroneous to believe that it is possible to lead people like a flock. Do you know that people in these provinces have never learned how to protest? Hundreds of thousands are protesting today. This is a new phenomenon resulting from the accumulation of our mistakes. We must acknowledge these mistakes, as well as our duty to respect the protesters and grant them their rights. I believe that a leader who manages to provide people's rights and demands before they claim them, and accepts to be overthrown for their sake, is capable of leading a country like Iraq.

As for building the state and its institutions, it is evident that we were not able to achieve big accomplishments. We neither accorded importance to the private sector and the economy, nor did we attract investors to our country. This is mainly due to security conditions and the fact that the political condition in Iraq is not appealing for investment.

A New Social Contract

Today, we must collectively draft a new social agreement, and we must establish a committee of elders that could think wisely and steadily of a way to address our problems.

In 2006, a group of politicians decided to join the Iraqi Islamic Party, and they formed the Iraqi Accord Front. Within the Iraqi National Dialogue Front, we agreed that we must have a national project based on which the country would be built. Today, the Iraqi National Dialogue Front decides to re-join the government even though it is an anti-government front.

This scenario is repeating itself today. Why do we force people back into this kind of destruction? Of course, the decision we have made caused us an electoral loss, but it also helps us protect our country.

Provincial Elections

The elections are not taking the shape we hoped for. While the last elections took a religious orientation, the present elections are taking a religious and tribal orientation. Unfortunately, they are rarely based on a national project, a fact that is stagnating the country from evolving. Let us think before the elections occur, of a way to protect the nation.

We need to live in a unified Iraq. Those who are able to do so are the elders, some of whom will be present during the sessions. They will play a role in holding a national conference that gathers politicians, citizens, and grass-root leaderships, assisting us in overcoming the crisis.

CHAPTER VII

The crises of Iraq, Conflict Management and the multiplicity of options

Dia Al-Asadi
May 2013

The country today is facing a set of crises. Not all crises are political; we now have a series of crises and problems that have resulted in a historical heritage, and the historical legacy takes a geographical, economical, societal or political dimension. Hence, current crises must take one of the aforementioned aspects. Here, one might ask, which aspect are we tackling with regards to crises? Is the existing crisis in Iraq of a pure political nature, or does it have other dimensions? Studies, research and available data say that the crisis is multifaceted, but it does not find a clear expression in the political scene.

The Shift in Awareness and Perception

In the 1990s, there was a remarkable shift in the strata of Iraqi society. This transformation has created a pattern of life quite different from that of pre-1990s Iraq, in the sense that the economic transition was also accompanied by social and political transformations, as well as a transformation in awareness, perception, and thinking; all these requirements brought about by the economic transition produced a different social fabric.

If the transformation had continued naturally, it would have produced another form of social structure. But because of the economic embargo and harsh conditions and circumstances of the 1990s, these unexpected transformations required unexpected results. Thus, the transformation that followed the fall of the dictatorship may have stimulated this crisis and the set of crises that resulted from it.

According to the conflict theory, there are four zones of conflict:

The first is called the hypothetical zone. There is no region in the world where there is no conflict. Conflict occurs even within the human self.

The second is concerned with the superficial conflict zone, which occurs when different groups aim at reaching the same goal, but through different approaches and means.

The third, called the hidden conflict zone, is one of the most serious types of conflict. This conflict exists in post-Saddam Iraq, perhaps because the dictatorial regime was trying to suppress all forms of difference and multiplicity. Conflict is a form of difference, and the dictatorship has not allowed people to show their differences. Whereas this type was concealed under the surface; the fall of the regime allowed it to manifest: the democratic pluralistic setting allowed all forms of conflict to emerge.

The Reasons for Conflict:

According to the theory of conflict, several reasons are behind the latter, which could consequently take different forms, the most prominent being the following:

- 1- Conflict over resources;
- 2- Historical conflict;
- 3- Conflict over interests;
- 4- Ideological conflict;
- 5- Conflict of the oppressed.

Regional and International Repercussions

Is the crisis in Iraq local, regional or global? The Iraqi crisis is very sensitive to the regional and global situations, and some of its aspects are a direct result of those. Today, we cannot consider the causes of conflict in Iraq as exclusively internal. Iraq today is linked to regional and global situations, and we all realize that post-Saddam Iraq was intended to become a model that the United States offers to the world as a success of democratic liberalism, promoting it as the optimal form of the political system.

This is the claimed political achievement of the United States, which believes that liberal democracy is the best option for the world. Therefore, if the liberal democratic system succeeds in Iraq and in the region, the American vision of the world will succeed. Iraq is a test platform and land of choice for another project. The project is not intended for Iraqis, but rather has a global

vision. If we were to look at the region, we would realize that one of the most important causes of the conflict affecting Iraq are the wills of the regional states, as well as multiple regional projects and visions; all of which are significant in Iraq and very important for resolving the conflict or any problem.

The Economic Changes

In addition to the social transformation that took place in Iraq in the 1990s, economic transformations occurred: there has been a breakdown in the economic structure and in the state institutions as a result of domestic policies, and the international embargo imposed on Iraq. We all know that the economic system in Iraq was unstable even during the Baathist era; the Iraqi economic structure was not better than it is now.

Intellectual Transformations

The Baathist regime was secular, even if in some of its features it appeared to be sectarian. One of the requirements of the secular system is to develop a democratic and pluralistic life. Yet, there was a big contradiction within the Baathist regime, which was secular but undemocratic: it was a dictatorship.

Understanding the Crisis

A set of questions could help understand and identify the current crisis: is it a crisis of protestors? Is it a crisis of a political system? Is it a sit-in crisis? Is it a crisis of certain practices of state organs? Is it a media crisis? Is it a crisis of overlapping powers?

On the other hand, is the current political crisis accidental, temporary or chronic? This is an existential question related to the space-time dimension. If the current crisis was accidental, it could simply be resolved; but if it were related to the space-time dimension, it would not be easy to deal with.

The Sectarian Conflict

What are the causes of conflict? The simple problem that is happening today in our institutions soon turns into a pattern of conflict. We always want to take a side: either we are Sunnis or Shiites, even within the framework of professional institutions that have nothing to do with religion. Is there a clear and correct awareness of the political crisis? This is an intellectual issue.

We said that the first question concerning the crisis is the question of

nature; the second is existential and historical; and the third is cognitive, that is, it concerns the perception of the person. Is there a clear and explicit awareness of the political crisis according to the problem of thought? If we come to a group of people who are engaged in the political process today, from the executive and legislative bodies, we will find that each one of them describes the current crisis quite differently: Therefore, this is an issue of perception and intellect, and many of the current problems could have been solved if they have been approached in an objective way away from any preconceptions.

The Characterization of the Crisis

Is there a clear and correct characterization of the political crisis? When it comes to description, the problem falls into the use of vocabulary and the use of language. There is no doubt that characterization is subject to events, and resorts to improvisation.

If we recall the way in which the state dealt with the current problems, it would appear as if we are isolated from the events taking place around the world. Today, all or most of the countries of the world have had conflicts, problems and disturbances. Every country in the world offers a lesson and an experience that can be used. We have not resorted to any of these in resolving our problems.

On dealing with the crisis unfortunately in many of our institutions we resort to the leader of the institution be it the director or the head of the department who in turn evokes the mentality of the tribe chief or the head of the house. This mentality requires others to respect this senior for his position and his age even if he made a mistake.

Many of our officials today do not “think outside the box”; we do not want to leave our comfort zone yet. That’s why, when we look at our problems, we do this from a one-sided perspective and do not consider multiple angles. This is the problem of management and multiple options. In fact, the manager’s ability to solve problems is related to the options he has: the more they are, the greater his ability to be creative in his approaches to solve problems.

Most state institutions have modest capabilities and primitive ways of working. This is already a problem. Our institutions still operate in a way that is beyond the historical and temporal context.

Is there Will to Solve the Crisis?

This is one of the big questions. If there is will, you will find the way. Is there a will to solve the problem? We have previously noted that Iraq today is a

conflict arena for different powers- whether regional, international or national. Do these forces have a common will to solve their problems in Iraq or even solve Iraq's problems? Can the Iraqis get rid of the conflict of will? Can they direct it towards serving Iraq's interests? The multiplicity of decision makers, and their impact on variables which are not under their control, impede the resolution of crises. While there is a crisis in the political reality, it developed in Iraq to a group of conflicts, and the latter also generated a lot of repercussions, mostly outside the control of individuals. We ended up with conflicts of historical, political, economic and social dimensions, and thus the crisis turned into a conflict.

Understanding the Crisis

In order to understand the nature of the crisis we have to analyze its elements. What are the parties involved? What is the purpose of the crisis? What means are used? Who are the victims? What are the solutions needed for the set of crises we are experiencing?

Solutions

Solutions are subject to the nature of the problems. If we talk about cultural problems we must find cultural solutions; the same goes for problems in the political discourse. The political blocs and the influential forces have not yet managed to form, unfortunately, a national speech relevant to all the spectrums of Iraq: Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds. If we had a unified speech to which everyone could relate and feel a sense of belonging, we would be able to resolve one aspect of the conflict.

There are several stages of conflict resolution. First, the conflict must be understood, and this requires an understanding of its discourse. Then we move to the stage of peace, and then to the resolution of the dispute. Unfortunately, the concerned parties do not follow these steps, as if the conflict is a matter of improvisation left to the person who is handling it. The conflict is a science belonging to an epistemological and cognitive field as it requires specific tools, and there are procedures to be followed in order to deal with it.

The issue is also linked to the nature of the political system. Today we cannot talk about solving Iraq's problems and crises except by solving the problems that lie within the political system such as consensus quotas and constitutional problems. The Constitution also contains many problems related to the structure of the political system; all of which need to be resolved and a clear vision of the nature of state building needs to be formed.

Breaking Traditional Barriers

I am speaking now in my capacity as the head of a political bloc. Al-Ahrar bloc belongs to the path of its leader, Sayyed Muqtada al-Sadr. The first step in the movement of Sayyed Muqtada al-Sadr - after he realized that this conflict would be exacerbated and would reach an irreversible stage- was to break the traditional system of political action in Iraq, where the executive branch represented Shiites, and the Legislative power represented Sunnis. Sayyed Muqtada al-Sadr tried to break this rigid conventional understanding. He left this alliance, which is officially called the National Alliance. But if you ask any Iraqi, he will say it is a Shiite alliance.

This step is an important initiative with an important message: we can break away from these alliances, which are the cause of a historical and cultural crisis, as well as an awareness crisis.

The second step consists of finding a clear and honest speech in which we talk about the causes of crises and problems. The next step is to exercise all our constitutional and democratic mechanisms to achieve the change and the goals we want. There have been no attempts to overthrow the government, but there have been attempts to direct political action towards constitutional mechanisms.

The crisis has reached the extent that regional states have described the situation in Iraq as sectarian. We were hoping that the government would not adopt the terms “Sunnis”, “Shiites” and “Kurds” in the following phase; if this seems impossible at the moment, the attempt is still necessary.

When Sunnis and Shiites reach power, they represent a political entity rather than Shiism and Sunnism. For instance, if the Sunni came to power and was not just, the Sunnis must remove him from power, and the same applies for the Shiite. The issue, then, is not sectarian, but a matter of justice.

During the last elections, we worked on dividing the cluster into a group of lists, resulting in five groups with respect to provinces, because the system insures that small blocs win a few seats, there was a check for (59) seats. I hereby offer our vision for the management of local governments. Our set of principles:

Principle 1: Everyone must be involved in the management of local governments, and this is a fundamental principle.

Principle 2: Local councils are service councils and not councils for political conflict.

Principle 3: Those who cannot serve, and those who cannot defend the masses should not preoccupy seats in the provincial councils.

What we wish today is to be able to serve all Iraqis without exception, and defend their achievements.

CHAPTER VIII

The crises of Iraq, The absence of Guarantees of State Administration

*Barham Salih
May 2013*

It seems that Iraq has reached a situation that can be described as a continuous cycle of crises, which give rise to deeper, more serious crises than their predecessors.

A decade has passed since the overthrow of the former regime. It has been marked by achievements such as the drafting of the constitution and running of the elections; but also by the recognition of the fact that it has witnessed serious failures whose consequences cannot be underestimated.

We cannot consider all our problems and failures the consequences of the crimes of Saddam Hussain, but we have to assume a share of responsibility and work towards solving these crises.

The Conflict Arena

Once again, the historical heritage is heavy and has repercussions such as the problems of the modern state that emerged after the First World War. One of these problems is the national affiliation between citizenship, sectarianism and other geopolitical labels in Iraq. The geopolitics are complex and are heavily influenced by the current situation in the region. Yes, Iraq is a pivotal, important and influential country in this region, but it is directly influenced by regional changes, especially in the midst of all these transformations and the great struggle over its future.

Different Interpretations of the Constitution

Ten years after the adoption of the constitution and its acceptance by the majority of the Iraqi people, there are still disparities in point of views about it, rendering it dysfunctional.

The Kurds are not satisfied with their situation. On the other hand, the vast majority of the Arabs in Iraq consider that this situation exceeds constitutional provisions. Accordingly, the discrepancy in interpreting the constitution is reflected.

There are different theoretical and practical interpretations regarding the administration of the state according to the constitution. We every day pay the price of these discrepancies with the blood of innocent people and instability threatens the very core of the national project.

And in spite of the achievements of the past era, which we cherish, it is expected that reaching radical solutions in a short period of time will be difficult.

The Iraqi Problem

Kurdish citizens are not indifferent to the situation outside Kurdistan. In my opinion, attention to what is happening in Baghdad and prospects of the political process and the political situation is a real thing. I hope that we could manage to solve these problems through the recent visits between the federal government and Kurdistan Regional Government. But I am sure that the problem is not only between the Kurds and the Arabs, but is deeper than that. It is an Iraqi problem in all its details and dimensions.

The Solution

The solution must be based on the principles of participation. In my estimation, Iraq's main components are committed to remaining within a unified state to date, but there are real different opinions on how to rule this country and how to manage its resources.

Two Options

We must return to the Constitution when it comes to concepts of partnership, consensus, responsibility, rights and privileges in governance among the components of Iraq; and make this Constitution the cornerstone in building an honest national dialogue. If we do not reach a common conviction in this

regard, we must recognize that the current formula may not lead us to what is required in terms of co-existence.

Economic Development

Economic development is undoubtedly an important and pivotal part of the solution in Iraq given the possibilities and resources of the country. The rentier economy is considered to be one of the weaknesses of Iraq. We want a growing economy capable of empowering the Iraqi individual. This will not be done through the state, but through strengthening the private sector and reviewing some of the foundations that govern the management of the state's financial resources.

Activating the Private Sector

In Kurdistan, we have managed to overcome many of our economic problems by activating the private sector and encouraging private investment. Baghdad and the provinces of the south must benefit from our experience and successes, and even from our failures, which help us progress.

Some think that Kurdish nationalists see Iraq's problems as an opportunity for the Kurdish Nationalist Movement to assert its demands. This is not the case. Kurds are aware that their stability and prosperity are closely linked to the stability of the situation in other Iraqi areas. Over the years, the differences between Baghdad and Kurdistan have not turned into a state of social conflict between the Kurds and the Arabs, as in the time of the former regime. The politicians will not be able to undermine the will of coexistence among the Iraqi components.

The Solution is in Baghdad

I do not underestimate the magnitude of the problems between Baghdad and the region, but I believe that we have the will to overcome those problems. In fact, the solution lies in an Iraqi project centered in Baghdad.

The Kurdish problem and that of the western regions of Iraq, as well as the problem of the protests will not be solved without dialogue. We need a sincere and honest national dialogue based on the accurate interpretation of the current situation among the Iraqi components, during which we speak frankly about our vision and orientations. This solution will be national, based on a federal democratic project that makes the Iraqi citizen, whether Kurdish or Arab, Shiite or Sunni, the core.

CHAPTER IX

The crises of Iraq, The absence of a State of Citizenship

Abdulkareem Alsamrriie
July 2013

Iraq before 2003

In 2003, the invasion led by the U.S. saved us from a tyrannical dictatorship that was a burden on Iraqis, and which weakened the country. At the time, Iraqi citizens did not have any form of freedom of speech and expression, and were denied their most basic rights.

Iraq After 2003

During this period, we witnessed a difficult political situation. It is true that we were under occupation, but it saved us from the Ba'athist regime. Between 2003 and 2005, we almost felt that Iraq had already begun to move properly towards building democracy, as we were able to draft a constitution and hold elections.

The Situation of Iraqis

The Iraqi population was divided into three categories: the first one being the Kurds; in fact, Kurdistan has been stable since the beginning of the nineties because of the near-isolation of its territories from Iraq. The second part included the majority of Iraqis, who considered the occupation an opportunity to move to a new stage in which they could lead a normal life and where Iraq can improve its economic situation. As for the third category, it believed that political resistance in the face of the occupation is the right approach to save the country.

Imbalance occurred in light of these perceptions and given that not everyone took part in the political resistance. Iraqi citizens hoped to reach several achievements, notably an agreement upon the Constitution. In fact, there was no consensus on the provisions of the latter; thus, we demanded that an article that allows the political elite to amend those be stipulated. Indeed, article 142 was stipulated and a commission that studied the amendment for 4 years was formed; yet the fundamental issues were not amended.

Terrorism Infiltrated the Armed Forces

We hoped to build balanced security forces, but today there are still infiltrations in the armed forces from terrorists and incompetent components. The Americans supervised the building of these forces following the dissolution of the Iraqi army and state institutions.

We Still Aspire for a Better Election Law

An election commission was formed at the previous session and I think this is an achievement in itself. It is true that the political blocs are the ones who supervised its formation twice and I am sure that they are not independent of the political front, but nevertheless worked with high proficiency and managed to run several elections.

Among the factors that affected the elections is the voter reluctance. Those factors were not the result of a shortcoming or unprofessionalism of this commission. However, the problems that occurred during the formation of the government are based on factors other than the elections, some of which are related to the election law.

Failing to Enact the Federal Court Act

We have failed to form an agreed upon federal court, although the Constitution provided for its establishment and authorities, among which is the interpretation of the articles of the Constitution. The existing court was formed prior to the Constitution without compliance to a certain law and interpreted the Constitution even though it did not have that power.

It is very unfair to criticize the judiciary; it is distinct and works impeccably. Yes, there are observations on some of its aspects, yet it is not fair to generalize. The problems mainly lie within the Federal Court and the Central Criminal Court, where the conflict is ongoing.

We Failed to Reach a National Reconciliation

Iraqis hoped that national reconciliation would be achieved. In order to do that, we have to benefit from the experience of Kurdistan. If we are to build national reconciliation today, this reconciliation should be based on finding solutions.

Separation of Powers

This concept is one of the milestones of democracy. There is not a country in the world that has three independent legislative, executive and constitutional powers. There is interdependence between the legislative and executive branches. As for the judiciary, there is a commitment to the provisions of the Constitution and the provisions of the laws. One of the wishes of Iraqi citizens is the separation of powers in the light of what is stated in the Constitution.

Media Chaos

What we witness today is media chaos rather than mere freedom of information. Therefore, we must control this chaos and define it according to laws governing the freedom of the press.

Democracy is a Culture

It is delusional to think of democracy only in terms of elections. We need a democratic culture that will enable us to hold elections, change governments and peacefully negotiate power. Everyone needs this culture, and its absence is reflected on the elections and their results.

Solving the Crisis

I can outline three main axes on how to deal with crisis:

- 1- The legislative axis
 - 2- The security axis
 3. The political axis
- The Legislative Axis

There must be cooperation between the government and the parliament. We should be able to complete the next legislative steps in the remainder of this session at least, so that we can establish a basis for the following stage.

The Federal Court Act should be accomplished by means of political consensus so as not to contest it in the Court's interpretations of the Constitution.

The parties law must be legislated. The state must allocate resources to the parties; these resources must be all exposed and under the direction of the supervisory authorities, which can hold parties accountable.

The oil and gas law is one of the outstanding problems between the federal government and Kurdistan, as there are several copies of this law.

As for the laws of national reconciliation, I have stated that it is one of the most important issues and we can achieve great things regarding it.

If we manage to enact the amnesty law, and amend accountability and justice laws among others, protests may end soon. In fact, protesters see this as a major achievement, particularly with regards to the amnesty law.

The law of the Federal Council cannot be accomplished during this period. In the past, the presidential council had the right to object to the laws and return them to parliament for revision, whereas today, this is the task of the President of the Republic and the law enacted by the parliament is final and cannot be amended.

- The Security Axis

The armed forces should be restructured and security institutions legalized so as not to cause authority overlap. In addition, some institutions face constitutional problems and objections from the part of certain politicians or political blocs. With this respect, those institutions require either the enactment of laws that render them codified and legal, or their affiliation to ministries that have their own laws.

Military teams must be linked to the army's chief of staff. The General Command of the Armed Forces shall be formed by law and shall have determined authorities.

Security institutions must be detached from political conflicts. The role of the border forces must be activated to prevent the passage of terrorists, arms and drugs. In fact, the security file is one of the main axes to which quick solutions must be found.

- The Political axis

We must start by asking about the nature of the Iraq we want, is it one that is based on provinces, or on independent regions? The agreement on the form of the country is important to grant power to the provinces or the regions.

In order to end a coalition of components, we must encourage coalitions of

parties. If we can enter the upcoming elections with lists encompassing all political groups, it will be a very important step for the transformations in Iraq.

There are some economic and other issues that I have not tackled. I have limited my speech to the general axes, from which proposals have emerged whether on the legislative, executive or political levels. I hope that the behavior of the parties will be one that helps us overcome this stage and we ask God Almighty to help us set a model example for the region.

CHAPTER X

The crises of Iraq, The absence of Administration and Proper Planning

*Seyeed Ammar Al-Hakim
October 2013*

Regional Changes

Iraq is not isolated from the world; it is part of this regional system by which it is affected and with which it interacts. Therefore, it is easy to imagine the Iraqi reality, assess and analyze it in the light of the development and major transformations in the region. We shall look at the problems and identify the procedures required to address them.

Achievement is not Commensurate with Potential

It might seem that issues and problematics prevail on several levels. We notice many infiltrations when we look at the security file.

The reality of the Iraqi services, development and economy indicates that the enormous budgets, wealth and the fact that Iraq is open to the outside world, as well as the abolition of the embargo, attract investors to the market.

As for our relation with regional states, it is not as affable as we would like it to be. We must develop a vision that makes dealing with us beneficial for others. If we manage to make this happen, we will be able to reach out to them.

The Roadmap

We have great potential in our minds, competence, energy, culture, wealth and strategic position, but we have to define a road map in order to figure a way

to establish safety in Iraq and address the problems that weigh on us.

The Unified Iraqi Vision

I think that the first step we must take while addressing our problems is reaching a common vision among Iraqis on what should be done. We do not spend enough time conceiving a unified vision for Iraqis, one that revolves around our ambition with regards to politics, security and development in the country.

Strategic Planning

The vision is Iraqi, it is not imported; however, others can contribute in strategic planning. As a matter of fact, there are companies specialized in the matter, as well as international experts who can contribute to the strategic plans of the vision we set.

One of the difficulties we face today is that officials in the provinces or at a given department find themselves facing a myriad of problems. However, they do not possess the potential to solve them all. This results in physical and financial efforts wasted without any tangible results achieved.

On the other hand, when we have clear and comprehensive projects that citizens can identify with, they will feel that we have a plan and a vision, and that we are progressing.

Absence of Efficient Tools

We need efficient tools, and I believe that we could have reached achievements even in the presence of the quota system.

And while it would be wrong to assume that there is a lack of Iraqi experts, the resort to foreign experts can solve the problem of bias, which Iraqi committees are accused of.

Absence of a Management System

We need a successful administrative and management system. The crisis in Iraq is managerial and touches upon all areas: political, security, economic, services and relations.

Our management system has been built upon a failed methodology. The educational curricula taught today in the faculties of business, management and

economics are out of date and irrelevant in other countries. Also, a scientific report has brought to my attention the fact that "In the whole Middle East, there is not a single college of management and economics, among other disciplines, that has made it to world university rankings.

Iraq Needs a Managerial Revolution

We need a managerial revolution. For instance, let us assume that the tuition fees per student at a certain university are in the order of \$100,000 per year. This student, upon graduation, may come up with one idea whose impact could be worth hundreds of millions of dollars, and which could change a particular managerial pattern.

Our problems today are mainly the result of the lack of a clear vision, and the absence of a system.

A Just Modern State

We need a modern state, and that means we must take on where the others have left. Isolation has been imposed on Iraq thirty years ago, and we are facing its consequences today. The isolation began in the mid-1980s, and the communication and global technology revolution occurred during the stage when Iraq was under siege.

You hear a lot about the interpretation of a fair modern state in different fields. We believe that we need projects in all governorates that are in line with and complementary to the State project.

We also need a unified vision and an inclusive strategic plan, where we are able of educating the people of the provinces, so that the latter could rely on each other. On the other hand, if we provide for the provinces the factors that render them independent from one another, we would be preparing to their disintegration.

The Unity of Iraq

The unity of Iraq is not a slogan; it is a vision, a plan and a program that makes the Iraqis complement each other. Also, nationalism is not a just sense or a slogan, but the building of real plans that lead to consolidation, and requires a unified, detailed vision.

Crisis Stabilization Policy

The dismantling and resolution of crises in light of these major transformations, remains a high ambition. This fact has led us to stabilize those crises instead of actually dealing with them.

I think it would be convenient to adopt the same policy when dealing with regional crises; one that goes in line with the circumstances of the country. We must, from now until the elections, work on finalizing the election law, setting the election period, and holding the elections on time. But what about the next stage?

The same political forces will participate in the elections. Today, we must think of a new plan. But how can we create a glimmer of hope with this reality, and how do we work in line with the road map that we propose?

There Is Not a Sectarian Crisis among Politicians

We do not have a sectarian crisis in the political class; politicians cooperate with each other. If sectarianism were ever involved, it would be under a certain political agenda. However, we do not want the conflict to become a national sectarian conflict that divides people.

Iraq, through its cultural depth and potential, must always generate thoughts and projects. We must not all be similar, there's no benefit in that, but how do we address our differences so as not to create conflicts?

The Electricity Crisis is not Sectarian

In the upcoming elections, we must give the conflict a new aspect, where the competition would be based on the programs rather than people. In other words, our battle must revolve around providing electricity. Parties shall share their programs and visions concerning solutions for this ongoing issue. Electricity does not belong to Shiites, Sunnis or Kurds, and we won't have to deal with it on a sectarian basis.

The Political Majority

We should work on forming a political majority that is not built on an ethno-sectarian basis, and which can rule in the light of a given program.

Multiple lists are not a problem, but each list must have its own program. Therefore, if either party disengages from the agreed upon program, its problem would not only be with its rival or with the political parties, but with those who

voted for it expecting implementation of this program.

We want a comprehensive electoral program and a political group that has a majority, irrespective of ethno-sectarian considerations. And while we might have a government of national unity, there will always be a party holding a political majority, as well as a program.

Iraq: Scattered Pieces that Must Be Put Together

I believe that all sides of society would gather around a coherent group and a clear vision. I also believe that all the countries in the region would interact with such a group, and that is the road to success. We must not lose the elements of strength and success required; they all exist, but today they are scattered and we have to collect them in order to complete the picture.

In light of these major transformations, the regional political map is being redrawn. Where is Iraq on this map? Where are we in this new equation? How can we be an important pillar in the reality of the regional system? We cannot be so unless we solve our internal problems and unify our positions.

CHAPTER XI

The crises of Iraq, The absence of Trust Among its Components

*Hadi Al-Amiri
November 2013*

The Political Crisis

It would be essential to examine the causes behind a political crisis when addressing the latter, in order to find solutions. We must start diagnosing the political crisis that the country is going through today, regardless of the situation in the region.

A Crisis of Trust Among Components

I think that one of the real reasons behind the crisis is the problem of trust among the components. We have recently met with the Secretary-General of the Arab League in Cairo, Amr Moussa, along with Ahmed bin Heli; we were a group of Iraqis, Kurds, and members of the Islamic Party. The discussion revolved around the reasons behind the deterioration of the situation in Iraq, the causes behind the problems- among which is the occupation- and the resolution of the Iraqi crisis.

Terrorism

Among the main causes of the crisis are the occupation and blind terrorism. Today, the Shiite component is ruling, yet still adopts the mentality of the opposition. As a matter of fact, we react to the simplest things, and we have the right to do given the experience we have been through. But this does not solely apply to Shiites; Sunnis as well consider they were oppressed. The regime has targeted all the components of the Iraqi population. This fear has led to the

problem of trust; therefore, one of the key factors to tackle the crisis is to bridge the trust gap among the components of the Iraqi population.

Addressing the Issue of Trust

As aforementioned, the issue of trust among the Iraqi components is one that needs to be addressed as it affects our current situation, and this requires wisdom and reason. This is the case for all components: Kurdish, Sunni, and Shiite. As a matter of fact, the trust issue has had a big impact on the political blocs and currents. However, we will not be able to resolve the matter unless we adopt a comprehensive approach, in the sense that I would no longer think of the component I belong to only, but of the Iraqi population as a whole.

The Concept of Partnership

I believe that we still did not agree on many of the fundamentals; therefore, we cannot meet and talk about partnership. What is the definition of partnership within a government? Partnership is a broad subject and needs to be thoroughly defined. Furthermore, we want a real and balanced partnership. However where would balance lead us to? Are we aiming at a balance among the components or the political blocs?

Amnesty

What is general amnesty? Who does it cover? While amnesty is applicable for the innocent, how do we distinguish those from the guilty? Why would we destroy the whole judicial system in order to free everyone? If we do not address these issues, our work will be in vain.

Arrests

Security today is caught between two theories: terrorism and arrests on the one hand, and militias on the other. Terrorism reaches out to the Kurdish Turkmen regions, as well as to Sunni and Shiite areas.

When talking about terrorism today, one must mention militias. Our opinion is clear on the matter: the weapons must be monopolized by the state, which is responsible for security protection. In fact, the excessive talk about militias in this context is not only aimed at justifying terrorism, but at defending it as well.

Authorities

What are the limits of intervention among the three authorities? Is it permissible for the executive branch to intervene in the judiciary and the rule of justice? The lack of delimitation of these powers and their overlap is one of the causes of the existing political crisis.

A Transitional Phase

Justice must be achieved for all. For that, we need to work on overcoming the transitional phase smoothly, and its consequences must be dealt with courageously, logically and equitably.

We did not oppose the regime for a loaf of bread; our revolution is not a revolution of hunger. In the 1970s, when we fought the Iraqi regime, it was at the peak of economic growth and prosperity; what prompted us to fight the regime were oppression and injustice.

With regards to the parliament, our sole issue is related to the salaries of the members of parliament.

The Iraqi project holds many flaws. The government failed, and thus the parliament and the judiciary failed and the situation deteriorated. Therefore, I believe that reviving the new democratic experience is our responsibility, and this constitution, with its shortcomings, is the best constitution in the region. I also believe that our democratic experience and the elections, with all its problems, is a rich experience.

Today, we bare a responsibility. How can we turn the country into a democratic one today while we have just emerged yesterday from a totalitarian regime? How can we preserve this experience and not destroy it with our own hands? How will the process of reform take shape?

The Security Situation

Several factors overlap on the security level, for one can not look at the subject from a restricted angle:

- 1 - The repercussions of the political conflicts on the security situation;
- 2 - The repercussions of the events of the neighboring countries: the border was open between Syria and Iraq, leading to a merge between Al Qaeda in both countries. This is one of the main factors that led to the deterioration of the security situation.

3 - The instigating fatwas, issued by scholars and permitting the killing of Shiites. This is the case in Saudi Arabia, where a fatwa is stronger than material and moral support.

The Judiciary Issue

Some people have been sentenced to capital punishment for several years and their trials are still being postponed. As for the smuggling of prisoners, I think the security measures are weak, and our plans are monotonous and outdated.

If we do not deal with the judiciary and the political situation we will not be able to control terrorism. But we need serious work to improve the security situation and we need new security plans. We also need the cooperation of neighboring countries to limit the fatwas that allow Iraqi bloodshed.