

Iraq

KEY FACTS

Official name: Al Jumhuriya al Iraqia (The Republic of Iraq)

Head of State: President Jalal Talabani (PUK) (from 2005; re-elected 12 Nov 2010)

Head of government: Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki (Dawa) (from 2006; re-elected 11 Nov 2010)

Ruling party: National Alliance coalition, led by Al Iraqiya (Iraqi National Movement), with I'tilaf Dawlat al Qanon (State of Law Coalition) and Al Ittifaq al Watani al Iraqi (National Iraqi Alliance) (known as Watani List) (from 14 Jun 2010)

Area: 434,924 square km

Population: 33.70 million (2012)* (Figure includes the UN estimated 4.6 million living in exile)

Capital: Baghdad

Official language: Arabic and Kurdish

Currency: New Iraqi dinar (ID) 1,000 fils

Exchange rate: ID1,162.20 per US\$ (Jul 2013)

GDP per capita: US\$6,305 (2012)*

GDP real growth: 8.43% (2012)*

GDP: US\$212.50 billion (2012)*

Labour force: 7.54 million (2011)

Unemployment: 27.50% (Average figure, does not include underemployment)

Inflation: 6.09% (2012)*

Oil production: 3.12 million bpd (2012)

Natural gas production: 800.00 million cum (2012)

Balance of trade: US\$39.05 billion (2011)

Annual FDI: US\$1.40 billion (2011)

* estimated figure



Iraq's population had little to cheer about in 2013. Ten years after the ousting of Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein, the country once again risked slipping back into anarchy, rift by the Sunni/Shi'a divide that in 2006 and 2007 had threatened to push it in to civil war. The Shi'ite dominated Baghdad government looked increasingly unable to cope with growing, almost daily, Sunni bombings. In April 2013, according to the United Nations (UN) an estimated 700 people died in one week; in May over 200 people died in attacks in both Baghdad and the southern city of Basra. The London *Economist* reported that the UN mission in Baghdad had resumed issuing casualty figures. The government's inability to control the situation and its general inadequacies had resulted in many of its citizens despairing of ever seeing their country's divisions resolved politically –

and peacefully. The bulk of the attacks were attributed to al Qaeda and to its new ally, the Jaysh Rijal al Tariq al Naqshabandi (Army of the Men of the Naqshbandi Order).

The extent to which the increased violence created fissures between Iraq's three principal components, Shi'a, Sunni and Kurd, was difficult to assess. The most visible manifestation was the division of once homogeneous areas into Shi'a and Sunni sectors. The Kurds have certainly been no slouches in securing their areas and especially the oilfields, by precautionary troop movements. Many Kurds saw the unrest as an opportunity as much as a threat. In Iraqi Kurdistan, peace reigns and oil revenues have generated a prosperity unmatched in the region, turning the Kurdish capital Erbil into a fashionable Middle East destination to rival Beirut.

Sunni insurgencies, Shi'a response

In some of Baghdad's higher profile Shi'a districts, notably that of Sadr City, government authority and competence has not merely been questioned, but replaced, as militiamen assumed the role of law-enforcers and government workers faded away. The Shi'ite unrest, coupled with the Sunni insurgency, placed the government of Shi'ite Prime Minister Nouri Kamal al Maliki very much on the back foot. While its failure to deal with the Sunni insurgency would inevitably antagonise the Shi'a community, any over-reaction would risk fuelling Sunni grievances. In Sadr City many more extreme Shi'a, the members of the so-called Mahdi Army, awaited a call to arms from the radical figurehead and political figure, Moktada al Sadr. Mr Sadr, however, appeared to prefer to side with Prime Minister Maliki, urging caution rather than violence. In part Mr Maliki owed his 2010 election victory to the Shi'a cleric. If that allegiance was significant, almost as important was the emergence of another powerful, Shi'a militia, the Asaib al Haq. Confronted with this development, Mr Maliki had little choice but to forge a link with the political wing of Asaib al Haq. The link was reported to be a strong one; Asaib al Haq members had been virtually integrated into government forces to the irritation of supporters of Mr Sadr. The extent to which this was a calculated political – pre-election – move by the Prime Minister was unclear. But what was probably at stake was the overall leadership of the Shi'a community.

Stability?

Once again the question underlying Iraq's security failures was that outlined in the *New York Times* by Thomas Friedman: 'Was Iraq the way it was because Saddam Hussein was the way Saddam was, or was Saddam the way Saddam was because Iraq was the way Iraq was – a collection of warring sects incapable of self-rule and only governable with an iron fist?' In 2013 the tensions that had continued to simmer during the presence of the US military once again began to boil over. The disputes among senior Iraqi politicians confirmed that Iraq still had a long way to go to establish anything resembling the political reconciliation that the US had hoped would accompany the 2007–08 'surge' in the deployment of US troops and the creation of teams of 'Awakening' fighters (former Sunni militants who had

switched sides). The surge may have achieved some semblance of improved security, but as was to be expected it proved incapable of creating any degree of lasting political maturity. Iraq was left with unresolved political, religious and tribal divisions and squabbling politicians.

The virtual vacuum at the summit was often 'filled', at local levels, by tribal leaders who could for the most part, count on the immediate support of their tribal members. This vacuum, coinciding with the departure of the majority of US forces gave rise to tribal leaders often taking matters into their own hands. Tribal loyalties still count for a lot in Iraq, a country that history has taught to cohabit with numerous foreign presences. The decision on the part of tribal leaders to join forces with the US was seen as a key moment, not only in the military campaign but also in defeating terrorist insurgents. The local tribes that had assumed authority to assist the US continued to count on the loyalty of their supporters.

In a number of respects it was surprising that Iraq, as a body politic, managed to maintain any degree of economic and social stability. In parliament the members of the secular, Sunni-backed Iraqiya parliamentary block had initially decided to boycott parliament and not to take their seats in cabinet. Meanwhile, the president of the autonomous Kurdistan region, Massoud Barzani, was at loggerheads with Prime Minister Maliki. At the same time, the influential Shi'a cleric Moqtada al Sadr was also voicing criticism of the embattled Prime Minister. The opposition

to Maliki among members of his less-than-unified national unity government had ultimately escalated into calls for him to be removed from power, but his opponents lacked the parliamentary votes to do so. The Iraqi authorities had also issued an arrest warrant for Vice President Tareq al Hashemi, a Sunni member of Iraqiya, who had fled the country, insisting that the charges against him were politically motivated; he was later given multiple death sentences *in absentia* for a number of crimes, including murder.

UN Secretary General Ban told the heads of Iraq's political blocs that poor relations among Iraqi leaders had become a problem that 'hampered the adoption of necessary reforms and constitutionally mandated legislation, impeding effective governance, the delivery of services and the fair distribution of resources.' Of considerable concern was the knock-on threat from the civil war in Syria. In 2013, a further domestic concern, apart from the political standoff, was the state of health of President Jalal Talabani. In late 2012 the president had been admitted to a German clinic in a critical, if stable medical condition. His doctors doubted that he would be able to carry out his duties again. In mid-September 2013 his condition and whereabouts were still unknown. Although their President was a Kurdish, rather than an Arab leader, most Iraqis hold him in respect and his possible demise would be seen as a serious loss. President Talabani had suffered several medical scares since 2007, but had been able to continue his role in resolving Iraqi

KEY INDICATORS

Iraq

	Unit	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Population	m	*30.41	*31.23	*32.05	*32.85	*33.70
Gross domestic product (GDP)	US\$bn	91.50	65.80	82.20	482.40	*212.50
GDP per capita	US\$	2,845	2,056	2,531	3,513	*6,305
GDP real growth	%	9.5	4.2	0.8	9.9	*8.4
Inflation	%	2.7	-2.2	2.4	6.0	*6.1
Oil output	'000 bpd	2,423.0	2,482.0	2,460.0	2,798.0	3,115.0
Natural gas output	bn cum	–	–	1.3	1.9	0.8
Exports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	62,013.0	38,439.0	51,934.0	79,683.6	*94,207.0
Imports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	40,812.0	45,765.0	50,280.0	40,632.5	*50,155.0
Balance of trade	US\$m	21,201.0	-7,329.0	1,654.0	39,051.1	*4,405.2
Current account	US\$m	11,049.0	-12,762.0	-5,053.0	26,202.7	*14,890.0
Total reserves minus gold	US\$m	50,042.5	46,255.4	50,377.0	53,915.8	*68,733.4
Foreign exchange	US\$m	49,635.8	44,168.9	48,339.6	51,812.1	*66,746.1
Exchange rate	per US\$	1,155.05	1,170.00	1,170.00	1,170.00	*1,166.00
* estimated figure						

political issues, especially those affecting relations between Baghdad and Erbil (the Kurdish capital). There was no lack of potential candidates to replace Mr Talabani, who was in his second term as President. However few of them had Mr Talabani's political skills (according to a report by the right-wing American Enterprise Institute, he would '... negotiate one day with Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani in Farsi, the next day with American diplomats in fluent English, debate with Prime Minister Maliki in Arabic and then instruct his own staff in Kurdish') and sense of moderation. Rather ironically the Kurds were entitled to select the candidates for the position, granted by the political agreements that lay behind the system of distribution of posts. One name that constantly featured in the discussion of successors was that of the former prime minister of Kurdistan, Barham Saleh, who, it was reported, would have Washington's support. Some reports suggested that some Sunni politicians aspired to the presidency by recourse to Iraq's sectarian quota system.

In the absence of President Talabani, Vice President Khudair Khuzai (following the departure of Tariq al Hashemi fleeing charges of terrorism) had assumed the responsibilities of the president for a month, or until another president was elected. One US report suggested that the Kurds might advocate the candidacy of Iraqi foreign minister Hoshyar Zebari. However, this might open the door to disagreements over the appointment of his replacement as foreign minister. There were also divergent factions within Kurdistan itself. Mr Talabani's party had seen some power struggles and defections, reflecting the growing influence of the president of the autonomous Kurdistan region, Massoud Barzani.

The economy

In its May 2013 annual assessment of the Iraqi economy the International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted that Iraq was exceptionally rich in oil, but that its economy suffered from severe structural weaknesses, such as its small non-oil sector, the dominant role of the government in all areas of the economy and a poor business environment. Nevertheless, partly thanks to the increase in oil production since 2003 (see Hydrocarbons below), Iraq had achieved a rise in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita from US\$1,300 in 2004 to US\$6,300 in 2012 in a very difficult security and political context. During this period, the IMF's co-operation was

instrumental in maintaining macro-economic stability – even though progress on structural reforms and job creation have been mixed.

The IMF considered that Iraq's recent macro-economic developments have been broadly positive. Economic growth reached 8.4 per cent in 2012 and is expected to rise to 9 per cent in 2013 as oil production increases to 3.3 million barrels per day (bpd). Inflation declined from about 6 per cent at the end of 2011 to 3.6 per cent at the end of 2012 and looked set to increase only slightly in 2013. International reserves of the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI) rose from US\$61 billion at end-2011 to US\$70 billion at the end of 2012 and fiscal reserves held at the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) increased from US\$16.5 billion to US\$18 billion.

Thanks to higher-than-expected oil revenues and the under-execution of the investment budget, Iraq's fiscal surpluses reached almost 5 per cent of GDP in 2011 and 4 per cent in 2012. However, with a break-even oil price of about US\$100, Iraq's fiscal performance is very vulnerable to oil revenue shocks – either from falling oil prices or export shortfalls. Furthermore, fiscal discipline has weakened over the past two years, with poor budget planning and execution, large off-budget spending and low investment execution rates. The 2013 budget included large unfunded commitments, increasing fiscal risks, including the possible depletion of fiscal reserves, if the budget were to be fully executed.

The policy of a *de facto* peg to the US dollar provides a key nominal anchor to the economy and the nominal exchange rate in the official market has remained stable since 2010. However, since late 2011, the Iraqi authorities have enforced existing exchange restrictions and introduced new restrictions in response to concerns about money laundering and illegal foreign exchange outflows related to the increased demand for foreign exchange. As a result, the spread between the official rate and the parallel market rate – which had been up to that point below 2 per cent – started to climb, passing the 9 per cent mark in May 2013.

Over the medium term, Iraq's macro-economic outlook will continue to be driven by developments in the oil sector. The IMF forecast that oil production will rise gradually by about 400–500 thousand barrels per day per year, reaching 5.7 million bpd by 2018. Overall, growth is projected to remain above 8 per cent and inflation at 5–6 per cent over the medium term.

In the view of the IMF, risks to the macro-economic outlook remain high. They include weak policy implementation, particularly in the fiscal area; further deterioration of the political and security situation; a larger-than-projected decline in global oil prices; and delays in developing Iraq's oil fields and oil export capacity, possibly due to security issues but also to uneven production

Uneven hydrocarbons

According to the US government Energy Information Administration (EIA) Iraq has the fifth largest proven crude oil reserves in the world after Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Canada and Iran, and even passed Iran as the second largest producer of crude oil in Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) at the end of 2012. Current oil production is only a fraction of Iraq's potential. Amazingly, ten years after the end of the war, not many of Iraq's known oilfields are actually being exploited, making Iraq one of the few places left in the world where identified hydrocarbon resources have yet to be developed. Iraq's energy sector is inevitably heavily based on oil, which means to say that over 90 per cent of its energy needs are met from petroleum reserves, topped up by its natural gas and hydropower.

Although the wars left an expensive legacy, by 2013 Iraq had at least begun to develop its oil and gas reserves, but before any resources can be properly exploited, Iraq needs to develop the necessary – and lacking – infrastructure if it is ever to reach its production potential. The EIA quoted estimates by Iraq's deputy prime minister for energy, suggesting that a capital expenditure of US\$30 billion per year in renewing, replacing or restoring its energy infrastructure was required if Iraq was to meet its production targets. Any progress has been largely hindered by fractious political disputes and the continuing lack of a legal framework under which the development of Iraq's oil and gas might occur. Iraq's proposed Hydrocarbon Law, which would govern contracting and regulation, has been under review in the Council of Ministers since October 2008, but by mid-2013 had still not received final approval.

Development plans

The EIA reports that Iraq has begun an ambitious programme to develop its oil fields and to increase its oil production. Passage of the delayed Hydrocarbon Law, which would provide a legal framework

for investment in the hydrocarbon sector, remains a main policy objective. Despite the absence of the Hydrocarbons Law, the ministry of oil signed long-term contracts between November 2008 and May 2010 with international oil companies. Under the first phase, companies bid to further develop giant oil fields that were already producing. Phase two contracts were signed to develop oil fields that were already explored but not fully developed or producing commercially. Together, contracts for both phases cover oil fields with proven reserves of over 60 billion barrels. If these fields are developed as initially planned, they would increase total Iraqi production capacity to almost 12 million bpd, or about 9 million bpd above 2012 production levels.

The contracts call for Iraq to reach this production target by 2017. However, these contracts are being re-negotiated to more modest levels and Iraq is revising its production targets to 9.5 million bpd by 2017. However, even these revised targets may be overly optimistic, given delays in developing its energy infrastructure. Iraq has since held a third bidding round for natural gas fields and a fourth round (with few bids submitted) for fields that contain predominantly crude oil. A fifth round has been scheduled in 2013 for the development of the 4 billion barrel Nasiriya oil field in Thi-Qar province, together with

the construction and operation of a new 300,000bpd refinery.

Reserves

Iraq revised its estimate of proven oil reserves upwards, from 115 billion barrels in 2011 to 141 billion barrels in January 2013, according to the respected US based *Oil and Gas Journal*. Iraq's hydrocarbon resources are by no means evenly divided across often contentious sectarian-demographic lines. Most known resources happen to be concentrated in the Shi'ite areas of the south and in the north, the ethnically Kurdish regions, with limited resources under the control of the Sunni minority in central Iraq.

Thus, the bulk of the known oil and gas reserves form a strip along the eastern edge of the country. The EIA notes that Iraq has five super-giant fields (over 5 billion barrels) in the south that account for 60 per cent of the country's proven oil reserves. An estimated 17 per cent of oil reserves are in the north of Iraq, near Kirkuk, Mosul and Khanaqin. Control over rights to reserves is an inevitable source of friction between the Kurds and other ethnic groups in the region. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has estimated that the Kurdistan Regional government (KRG) area contains four billion barrels of proven reserves. However, this region is now being actively explored

and the KRG stated that it could contain 45 billion barrels of unproven oil resources.

Production

Iraqi crude oil production averaged 3 million bpd in 2012 and Iraq passed Iran as Opec's second largest crude oil producer at the end of the year (although this may have had more to do with international sanctions against Iran than increased production in Iraq). About three-fourths of Iraq's crude oil production comes from the southern fields, with the remainder primarily from the northern fields near Kirkuk. The majority of Iraqi oil production comes from just three giant fields: Kirkuk, the North Rumaila field in southern Iraq and the South Rumaila field. The ministry of oil oversees oil and gas production and development in all but the Kurdish territory through its operating entities, the North Oil Company (NOC) and the Midland Oil Company (MDOC) in the north and central regions and the South Oil Company (SOC) and the Missan Oil Company (MOC) in southern regions. Production in the northern region controlled by the KRG fluctuates because of disputes with the central Iraqi government, but independent assessments by FACTS Global Energy and the *Middle East Economic Survey* suggest that crude oil production capacity in the KRG could reach about 400,000bpd by the end of 2013.

Kurdish issues

Kurdish politicians like to depict their region – or their 'country' – as a safe haven for persecuted minorities. Certainly, the security that prevails is recognised and appreciated by Kurdish Christians; less so by the Kurdish Turkmens and even less by the Arab population. Unsurprisingly, the police force is Kurdish to a man.

Kurdish disputes with Baghdad date back to the rule of Saddam Hussein when some 300,000 Kurds were thrown off their land to be replaced by Arabs. Following the US led invasion of Iraq the *Peshmergas* (Kurdish armed fighters) regained control and the new Iraqi Constitution provided for the 'rectification' of the Arabisation policy. The policy may have made sense, but its realisation has been a long time coming – if at all. Thus, in Kirkuk, the police may be Kurdish, but units of the Iraqi national army are also garrisoned in the city.

At the heart of the tensions between Erbil and Baghdad lies the question of oil revenues. The Constitution states that Kurdistan should receive 17 per cent of the state budget. Baghdad accuses the Erbil authorities of flouting the Constitution by selling oil directly to Turkey without adjusting its overall budget revenues. These tensions are reflected at the summit of the government in meetings between Prime Minister Maliki and the Kurdish President Massoud Barzani, who was reportedly involved in the manoeuvring to depose Mr Maliki in 2012.

Kurdish memories are long and any Iraqi military presence in their region is both unsettling and worrying for most of the Kurdish population. Since 1963, the Ba'ath Party, fuelled by Arab nationalism, certainly set about making life difficult, even impossible, for the Kurds. Few

can forget the massacre – with chemical weapons – of an estimated 5,000 Kurds in Halabja in 1988 by Iraqi forces.

The tensions between Erbil and Baghdad have had one effect that could well have been anticipated. The Turkish government had long been opposed to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein or any foreign intervention in Iraq. Ankara had enough problems in responding to the uprisings of its own Kurdish Workers party (PKK). In 2012, however, Turkey's relations with Kurdistan improved enormously. Turkey's position represented something of a *volte face*, as it now advocated Kurdish autonomy. The world's press may fret over the influence of Iran in Iraq, but the Baghdad government worries far more about Turkey's growing influence and links with Erbil and its political community.

In the view of the EIA Iraq faces many challenges in meeting the planned timetable for oil production. One of the major obstacles is the lack of an outlet for significant increases in crude oil production. Both Iraqi refining and export infrastructure are severely constrained, with bottlenecks preventing more crude oil processing. Iraqi oil exports are currently running at near full capacity in the south, while export capacity in the north has been restricted by sabotage, deteriorating pipelines and the inability to receive more oil from the south of Iraq via a deteriorated Strategic Pipeline. Pipeline capacity would need to be expanded in any case to export significantly higher volumes. Progress has been slow because of political disputes between factions within Iraq, especially those between the central government in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional government. Iraq also has disagreements regarding shared oil fields with Kuwait and Iran.

Production increases of the scale planned will also require substantial increases in natural gas and/or water injection to maintain oil reservoir pressure and boost oil production. Iraq has associated gas that could be used, but it is currently being flared. According to a report issued by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Iraq was the fourth largest natural gas flaring country in 2010. Another option is to use water for re-injection and while locally available water is currently being used in the south of Iraq, fresh water is a scarce commodity in the Middle East. Large amounts of seawater will likely have to be pumped in via pipelines that have yet to be built for the Common Seawater Supply Facility. It was estimated that 10 to 15 million bpd of seawater could be necessary for Iraq's original production expansion plans, at a cost of over US\$10 billion. ExxonMobil, which was originally assigned to lead the project, dropped out in 2012, putting these plans behind schedule. The final scope of the project won't be known until Iraq decides what its re-negotiated production targets will be. The IEA estimates that the project will not come online before 2017 at the earliest.

Iraq exported 2.4 million bpd of crude oil in 2012, according to tanker data from Lloyd's List Intelligence. About 2.1 million bpd of these exports came from Iraq's Gulf ports, with the rest exported via the Iraq-Turkey pipeline in the north. The majority of Iraqi oil exports go to the United States and to refineries in Asia.

Iraq's oil and gas industry is the largest industrial customer of electricity in Iraq.

Large-scale increases in oil production would also require large increases in electric power generation. However, Iraq has struggled to keep up with the demand for electricity, with shortages common across the country. Significant upgrades to the electricity sector would be needed to supply additional power. Although over 20 gigawatts (GW) of new generating capacity are planned by 2015, delays in meeting projected targets would mean insufficient supply to meet the projected demands of the oil sector.

Kurdish issues

In its review of the Iraqi energy situation, the EIA touches upon the sensitive issue of the KRG's numerous disputes with Iraqi national authorities related to sovereignty issues. Unsurprisingly, the plan by the NOC to boost production at the Kirkuk field in North Iraq at the edge of the KRG region has been met with objections by the KRG, which insists that development plans at this field require KRG co-operation and approval. More generally, the Iraqi oil ministry insists that all hydrocarbon contracts must be signed with the national government and that all oil produced in the KRG region be shipped via the State Oil Marketing Organisation (SOMO), Iraq's oil exporting arm. However, the KRG passed its own hydrocarbons law in 2007 in the absence of a national Iraqi law governing investment in hydrocarbons. In late 2011, the KRG challenged the authority of the national government when it signed oil production sharing agreements with ExxonMobil to develop 6 blocks in northern Iraq, some of which are in disputed border areas. The KRG has since signed additional contracts with majors such as Chevron, Gazprom and Total. A number of international oil companies have been asked by the Iraqi government to choose between an involvement in projects in the KRG and those signed with Iraq's national authorities. TPAO of Turkey has also been asked to withdraw from its involvement in the KRG because of disputes regarding Turkey's involvement in KRG energy projects. Another KRG oil dispute has revolved around exports of crude oil produced in the KRG region from earlier contracts. The KRG had agreed to send 175,000bpd of crude oil into the Iraqi northern oil export pipeline. However, the KRG began reducing their contribution in late 2011, charging that the central government failed to make agreed payments to cover foreign oil company development. The KRG contributions were halted

altogether in April 2012, but they were later re-started in August of the same year. Oil exports directly from the KRG are another unresolved issue. The KRG began exporting 15,000bpd of condensate and 20,000bpd of crude oil to Turkey by truck. The KRG is looking at building its own pipelines to export crude oil directly via Turkey, bypassing the national export pipeline system, although Turkey has not officially agreed to this plan. Genel Energy plans to build the 420,000bpd Kurdistan Iraq Crude Export (KICE) pipeline that will connect its fields in the Kurdish regions in northern Iraq to the border with Turkey. In addition, the KRG has explored supplying natural gas to Turkey. The KRG has ambitious plans for its crude oil exports. KRG President Barzani suggested that crude oil exports from the KRG could average 250,000bpd in 2013 and then rise to one million bpd by 2015 and to 2 million bpd by 2019.

Risk assessment

Politics	Poor
Economy	Fair
Regional stability	Poor

COUNTRY PROFILE

Historical profile

For 400 years, until the end of the First World War, the region was part of the Ottoman Empire.

1920 Iraq was placed under British mandate. The Great Iraqi Revolution began in May as a revolt against British rule. It united Sunnis, Shi'as and tribal groupings but by the end of the year had failed.

1921 Amir Faisal ibn Hussain (a member of the Arab Hashemite dynasty) was proclaimed Iraq's first King.

1932 Iraq became an independent state. 1933 King Faisal died and was succeeded by his son, Ghazi.

1939 King Ghazi was killed in a car crash and was succeeded by the infant Faisal II, whose uncle, Prince Abd al Ilah, acted as regent.

1953 King Faisal II assumed full powers. 1958 A military coup overthrew the monarchy and a republic was proclaimed.

1963 Pan-Arab elements in the armed forces staged a coup and formed a government under Colonel (later Field Marshal) Abd as Salem Muhammad Aref. 1966 Aref was killed in an airplane crash and was succeeded by his brother, Major General Abd ar Rahman Muhammad Aref.

1968 Major General Aref was removed from office in a coup organised by the Hizb al Ba'ath al Arabiyah al Ishdiraki (Ba'ath) (Socialist Arab Rebirth Party). The Ba'ath government was headed by Major

General Ahmad Hassan al Bakr (a former prime minister) and supreme authority was vested in the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC).

1970 The RCC and the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) signed a peace agreement.

1972 Iraq nationalised the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC).

1979 The vice president of the RCC, Saddam Hussein (already the real power in Iraq), replaced Al Bakr as president.

1980–88 The Iran-Iraq War broke out after Iraq invaded Iran over a disputed border area.

1988 A chemical attack ordered by Saddam Hussein on the northern Kurdish town of Halabja, killed 5,000 people.

1990 Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August. The invasion was condemned by the international community. Iraqi troops destroyed over 400 oil wells, causing environmental and economic havoc. Following the invasion, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) imposed an arms embargo and economic sanctions on Iraq (Resolution 661) and passed Resolution 678, which authorised member states to use force if Iraq had not withdrawn from Kuwait by 15 January 1991.

1991 The Gulf War started in the early hours of 17 January when coalition forces launched an aerial bombing campaign against Iraq and Iraqi forces in Kuwait. US-led ground forces (from around 30 countries, including Syria, Egypt and Morocco) moved into Kuwait on 24 February and drove the Iraqi forces there back into Iraq. The UN maintained the arms embargo and economic sanctions on Iraq after the end of the War in an attempt to force it to disarm of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). After a Kurdish and Shi'a Muslim-led uprising was brutally quashed by Saddam Hussein's regime, the US, UK and France imposed 'no-fly zones' on Iraq to protect the Kurds in the north and the Shi'as in the south. The UN administered the three northern provinces of Dahuk, Arbil and As Sulaymaniyah, which allowed the Kurds to develop their own semi-autonomous Kurdish enclave, with its own parliament.

1993 The US launched 24 cruise missiles at targets in Baghdad after an alleged Iraqi plot to assassinate former US president George Bush was uncovered.

1994 Saddam Hussein appointed himself prime minister as well as president.

1995 The population voted in a referendum on Saddam Hussein's presidency and, inevitably, supported him. The Iraq oil-for-food programme, administered by the UN, began.

1996 Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, his brother and their families, were granted asylum in Jordan; the two men were

subsequently promised a pardon by Saddam Hussein, but were killed on their return to Baghdad. Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, survived an assassination attempt.

1998 Various disputes arose between Iraq and the UN over UN inspections to verify the termination of Iraq's WMD programme; Saddam Hussein excluded the weapons inspectors from Iraq. As a result, the US and the UK launched their largest military attack against Iraq since the Gulf War, bombing installations throughout Iraq.

1999 The spiritual leader of the Shi'a community, Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al Sadr, was assassinated in Najaf.

2000 In his capacity as head of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec), President Hugo Chávez Frías of Venezuela travelled overland to Baghdad – the first democratically elected head of state to enter Iraq since the Gulf War.

2001 Five UN officials working for the UN oil-for-food programme were expelled by Iraqi authorities on charges of spying.

2002 A presidential referendum extended Saddam Hussein's rule for a further seven years. US President Bush demanded that Hussein must prove to the UN weapons inspectors that all WMD had been destroyed, as stipulated in the UN resolution after the First Gulf War – if not the US would launch a war against Iraq. UN weapons inspectors returned to Iraq for the first time in four years, however the information they were shown was not sufficient to convince the US that there were no WMD. President Bush included Iraq, North Korea with Iran in a list of countries that supported terrorism as an 'axis of evil'.

2003 After diplomatic efforts to force Iraq to disarm failed and the expiry of an US ultimatum giving Hussein and his sons 48 hours to leave the country, US-led coalition forces invaded Iraq. Within 20 days central Baghdad was under US control and the Hussein government had collapsed. The Ba'ath party was abolished, together with institutions of the former regime. The UN Security Council lifted economic sanctions and a 25-member Iraq Governing Council (IGC) was appointed, with a rotating nine-member presidency. Hussein's sons, Uday and Qusay, were killed in a skirmish with US troops attempting to arrest them. The leader of the Shi'as, Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al Hakim, was killed in Najaf. An amended US resolution on Iraq, legitimising the US-led administration, was approved by the UN, which stressed early transfer of power to the Iraqis. The security situation deteriorated as guerrilla warfare

intensified. At the end of the year, Saddam Hussein was captured in Tikrit. 2004 After the president of the IGC was killed in a car bomb attack, Iyad Allawi (a Shi'a) was designated prime minister and Ghazi al Yawar (a Sunni tribal leader) was chosen as president. An interim 36-member cabinet was appointed to Transitional Government, until elections for a fully independent government could be held; it had power-sharing responsibilities with the US-led multinational forces in matters of security. The US handed over sovereignty to the Iraqi interim government. Hussein was transferred into Iraqi legal custody. There was heavy fighting for more than a week in an uprising against coalition troops by Shi'a militia loyal to radical cleric, Moqtada al Sadr, in the holy city of Najaf.

2005 The Transitional Government of Iraq recognised the Kurdish Autonomous Region, along with the sovereignty of its government. An estimated eight million people voted in the elections for a Transitional National Assembly. Many Sunni Moslems boycotted the elections, and the Shi'a United Iraqi Alliance won most seats. Iraq's first freely elected parliament in half a century began its opening session after a series of explosions targeted the gathering. Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani was named president. Former president, and Sunni leader, Ghazi al Yawar, and Shi'ite leader, Adel Abdul Mahdi, were named as deputies. The Shi'ite leader, Ibrahim Jaafari, was named prime minister. The Kurdish parliament unanimously elected Massoud Barzani as president of the autonomous region of Kurdistan. In his trial, former president, Saddam Hussein, was accused, along with seven others, of murdering 148 people in 1982 in the Shi'a town of Dujail. Parliamentary elections were held.

2006 With little progress made in forming a new government, the interim prime minister, Ibrahim Jaafari, relinquished the office and was replaced by Nouri al Maliki (Islamic Dawa Party) (a leading party within the Shi'ite grouping, United Iraqi Alliance). The chief judge in Saddam Hussein's trial, Abdullah al Amiri, was removed as being 'no longer neutral', after he made court statements that Saddam had not been a dictator; he was replaced by Muhammad al Urayybi. Saddam Hussein was executed by hanging on 30 December, after being found guilty of crimes against humanity. An unauthorised recording was broadcast on the Internet of the event, showing him being taunted by his captors.

2007 US President Bush dispatched a further 21,500 soldiers, specifically to police Baghdad. Civilian deaths in the four weeks before their arrival were 1,440,

which dropped to 265 in the following four weeks. Iraqi-US forces targeted the followers of the Shi'a cleric, Moqtada al Sadr, known as the Mahdi army, as its leadership fled to Iran. Former vice president, Taha Yassin Ramadan, was executed for crimes against humanity. Seventeen Sunni government members either quit or suspended their involvement in the Unity Government, leaving it weak and vulnerable. The Kurdish government, in northern Iraq, signed four exploration and two refinery contracts, worth about US\$800 million, with several international energy companies. The deals were signed ahead of Iraqi national oil and gas laws and increased tension between the central government and the Kurdish territory. 2008 Final approval by the Presidency Council allowed former Ba'ath party members to return to public life. Russia announced that it was writing off US\$12 billion of debt which had built up under Saddam Hussein. President Ahmadinejad made the first official visit by an Iranian president since the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. The Christian Archbishop of Mosul, Paulos Faraj Rahho, was kidnapped and killed. The leader of al Qaeda in Iraq, Ahmed Ali Ahmed (known as Abu Omar) was sentenced to death for the murder of Archbishop Rahho. Parliament approved a draft law for provincial elections to be held, despite a boycott by the Kurdish bloc and a few Shi'a MPs. Anbar Province was officially handed over to Iraqi control by the US. The province had been one of the most militant and dangerous for US troops until the Sunni population took control of their own security by helping to fight al Qaeda insurgents. The Kuwaiti ambassador took up residence in Iraq, after an 18-year gap since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; diplomatic relations had been restored in 2003. 2009 The US embassy, its largest in the world, was officially opened in Baghdad. Responsibility for security for the central Baghdad Green Zone was handed over to Iraqi forces. Provincial elections were held and won by those candidates that supported the ruling administration of Prime Minister al Maliki. US military personnel withdrew from Iraqi cities, prior to a full re-deployment to the US. In elections for Iraqi Kurdistan, Massoud Barzini won the presidency and the Kurdistan List alliance won the leadership of the Kurdish National Assembly (KNA). The government released the first official estimate of violent deaths during 2004-08, of 85,694, based on death certificates issued by the ministry of health, including some 15,000 unidentified bodies. Barham Salih became prime minister of the Kurdistan autonomous region.

2010 Ali Hassan al-Majid (Chemical Ali), Saddam Hussein's notorious cousin, was hanged for crimes against humanity. In parliamentary elections the Al Iraqiya (Iraqi National Movement) won 25.87 per cent of the vote (91 seats out of 325) and the ruling I'tilaf Dawlat al Qanon (State of Law Coalition) 25.76 per cent (89). The Iraq High Electoral Commission (IHEC) banned 52 members of the Watani Alliance from serving in parliament due to their links to the outlawed Ba'ath Party. Their votes were recalculated and allocated to other candidates of the Watani Alliance. Iraqi Airways was declared bankrupt. The Supreme Court endorsed the election results and Al Iraqiya were given the right to begin negotiations to form a government. The new coalition, the National Alliance, included the two major Shi'a political parties (Al Iraqiya and I'tilaf Dawlat al Qanon) as well as a number of other Shi'a parties including the Watani List. A new parliament was convened and the 325 members were sworn in, even though there was as yet no government. Iraq's General Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Babakir voiced his concern that Iraqi troops were not ready to take over security following the planned US troop withdrawal, which he considered premature. The last US combat troops left Iraq on 19 August, although 50,000 advisory troops were to remain until 2011. By 13 September a coalition government had still to be formed. Tariq Aziz, the most senior Christian to serve Saddam Hussein (deputy prime minister and foreign minister) was found guilty of the persecution of religious parties and sentenced to death. A power-sharing agreement was forged between former prime ministers Iyad Allawi and Nouri al Maliki, so that Maliki was re-appointed prime minister, while Allawi was appointed head of the National Council for Strategic Policies; four Sunni politicians were reinstated, having been banned as former Ba'ath party members. President Talabani said he would refuse to sign the execution order on Tariq Aziz. The new government finally began parliament's first session on 21 November, after an eight month delay. The UN lifted the last sanctions against Iraq, which had first been imposed in 1991.

2011 In January, radical cleric Moqtada al Sadr, returned from four years of self-imposed exile in Iran. Sheikh Nasser al Mohammed al Sabah became the first prime minister of Kuwait to visit Iraq since the 1990 invasion. Prime ministerial discussions covered border issues, finance and security as well as the payment of war reparations said to amount to billions of US dollars. The UK military operations in Iraq ended completely in May,

when 81 naval trainers of the Royal Navy left the country, having completed their training of Iraqi sailors, ready to defend Iraqi territorial waters and its shipping. In July, in a ceremony held in Washington, some Babylonian antiquities that had been looted from the Iraqi Museum in 2003 and found in the US, were formally returned. The central bank announced on August that the Iraqi dinar was to have three zeros removed. The authorities said 30 trillion (US\$26 billion) banknotes were being printed to replace existing notes. In September, the CBI declared its intention of implementing the change in 2013. The US military operations were formally ended on 18 December, as the last 4,000 soldiers left Iraq (200 soldiers remain as advisors). However, 15,000 US personnel will remain the US embassy in Baghdad. 2012 In January a wave of bombings killed almost 200 people, mostly Shia Muslims. On 2 February, the government imposed a ban on smoking in public buildings, including schools, hospitals, offices, theatres and markets. The law will come into effect after April. A dispute between Kurdistan and the central government over control over the right to export oil came to a head on 28 March when Kurdistan threatened to halt all oil exports from its region if the central government continued to withhold payment for the oil from Kurdistan. The threat was repeated in August and for the same reason. On 22 October, Kurdistan began selling its oil into international markets as an independent producer. The first sale of this oil was transported by road-tankers to Turkey; the loads of around 12,000 tonnes were worth around US\$10 million. Central government condemned the sale and characterised it as smuggling. 2013 Hundreds of prisoners escaped from Taji and Abu Ghraib jails on 22 July; many of them were serving death sentences for violence. On 29 July a wave of car bombs killed at least 51 people in mostly Shi'a areas of Baghdad and other cities around the country. Figures published in early August by the United Nations mission in Baghdad suggest 1,057 Iraqis were killed in July, making it the deadliest month in years. A further wave of bombings on 25 August killed as many as 46 people. Another wave of bombings hit most Shi'a areas of Baghdad on 28 August. More than 50 people died. Parliamentary elections held on 21 September in Kurdistan Region were won by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of regional President Massoud Barzani with 38 seats, followed by The Change Movement with 24 seats. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) (the party of President Jalal Talabani) came third with 18 seats. It was not immediately clear whether KDP

and PUK would be able to continue their power sharing arrangement. At least 50 Shi'a died in another suicide bomb attack in the Adhamiyah district of Baghdad on 5 October.

Political structure

Constitution

A public referendum approved a new permanent constitution on 15 October 2005. It came into effect when the elections for the Council of Representatives took place on 15 December 2005.

The constitution declares that the Republic of Iraq is an independent, sovereign nation, and its system of governance is democratic, federal, and representative (parliamentary). Islam is the official religion of the state and is a basic source of legislation. Iraq is part of the Arab nation and the Islamic world.

Universal suffrage begins at aged 18.

The country is divided into 18 provinces (*muhafazah*, singular *muhafazah*): *al Anbar, al Basrah, al Muthanna, al Qadisiyah, An Najaf, Arbil, As Sulaymaniyah, At Ta'mim, Babil, Baghdad, Dahuk, Dhi Qar, Diyala, Karbala', Maysan, Ninawa, Salah ad Din and Wasit*.

Independence date

3 October 1932, independent Kingdom; 14 July 1958, Republic.

Form of state

Republic, federal

The executive

Executive authority consists of the Presidency Council, the Council of Ministers, presided over by the prime minister.

The Presidency Council consists of the president and two deputies; they are elected by the national assembly.

National legislature

The unicameral Majlis al Watani (National Assembly), with 275 members (the constitution defines the number ratio as one representative per 100,000 Iraqi citizens), elected by proportional representation from party lists. All members serve for four-year terms.

Kurdish Autonomous Region (known as Iraqi Kurdistan): the unicameral Civata Nîstimanî Kurdistan (Perleman) (Al Majlis al Watani Li Kurdistan) (Kurdistan National Assembly) (KNA) has 111 members, elected by proportional representation from party lists, with each political party allocated seats in proportion to their share of the vote. By law, 25 per cent of membership must be female and 11 seats are reserved for minority people's candidates. Elections take place every four years. The KNA shares federal power with the Iraqi National Assembly but has a dominant role and responsibility for indigenous matters, including the economy and investment of the region.

Legal system

Under the constitution the Judiciary is independent and represented by courts of different kinds and levels, issuing their rulings according to law. No authority can interfere in the judiciary or in the affairs of justice.

The Federal Judiciary includes the Supreme Judiciary Council, and the Supreme Federal Court. The Iraqi court system is divided into the Civil Courts, Courts of Personal Status, and Criminal Courts.

Last elections

7 March 2010 (National Assembly); 25 July 2009 (Kurdistan National Assembly (KNA) and presidential)

Results: National Assembly: Al Iraqiya (Iraqi National Movement) won 25.87 per cent of the vote (91 seats out of 325); l'tilaf Dawlat al Qanon (State of Law Coalition) 25.76 per cent (89); Al Ittilaf al Watani al Iraqi (National Iraqi Alliance) (known as Watani List) 19.43 per cent (70); Lîstî Kurdistan (Kurdistan List) 15.27 per cent (43); Gorran (Movement for Change) 4.36 per cent (8); Al Tawafuq (Iraqi Accord Front) 2.72 per cent (six); three other political parties won less than five seats each and eight independents failed to win any seats. Turnout was 62.4 per cent.

On 26 April 2010 the Iraq High Electoral Commission (IHEC) banned 52 members of the Watani Alliance from serving in parliament due to their links to the outlawed Ba'ath Party. The votes within constituencies were recalculated and allocated to other candidates of the Watani alliance.

KNA: Kurdistan List alliance 57.34 per cent (59 seats out of 111), Change List 23.75 per cent (25), Service and Reform List 12.8 per cent (13), IMK List 1.45 per cent (2), Turkmen Democratic Movement 0.99 per cent (3), Social Justice and Freedom List 0.82 per cent (1), Chaldean Syriac Assyrian Popular Council 0.58 per cent (3), Reform Turkmen List 0.38 per cent (1), National Rafidain List 0.3 per cent (2), Aram Shahine Dawood (independent Armenian) 0.22 per cent (1) and Erbil Turkmen (independent Turk) 0.21 per cent; 13 other political parties failed to win any seats.

Iraqi Kurdistan presidential: Massoud Barzani won 69.6 per cent, Kamal Mirawdily 25.3 per cent, Halow Ibrahim Ahmed 3.5 per cent, Ahmed Mohammed Rasul 1.4 per cent, Hussein Garmiyani 0.6 per cent.

Next elections

21 January 2010 (presidential) postponed; 2014 (parliamentary)

Political parties

Ruling party

National Alliance coalition, led by Al Iraqiya (Iraqi National Movement), with l'tilaf Dawlat al Qanon (State of Law Coalition) and Al Ittilaf al Watani al Iraqi (National Iraqi Alliance) (known as Watani List) (from 14 Jun 2010)

Main opposition party

Hizb al Fadhila al Islamiyah (Islamic Virtue Party)

Population

33.70 million (2012)* (Figure includes the UN estimated 4.6 million living in exile)

About 42 per cent of the population is aged under 14 years; 55 per cent aged 15–64; 3 per cent aged over 65.

In 2009, the government released the first official estimate of violent deaths during 2004–08, of 85,694, based on death certificates issued by the ministry of health, including some 15,000 unidentified bodies. The figure includes violent deaths of security forces and civilians, but not insurgents or foreigners in general; it also does not include deaths during the first months of the 2003 US-led invasion when there was no functioning Iraqi government to record such details. The number of people injured was estimated at 148,000.

In August 2012, a Kurdish spokesman called on the national government to hold a census. The census had originally been scheduled for October 2010, but was postponed, initially until the end of 2011. The reason for the delay was said to be the ongoing dispute between the minority Kurds and majority Arabs over land and oil in the northern provinces of Anbar, Kirkuk and Nineveh.

Last census: October 1997: 19,184,543 (excluding data for autonomous northern regions)

Population density: 49 inhabitants per square km. Urban population 66 per cent (2010 Unicef).

Annual growth rate: 3.0 per cent, 1990–2010 (Unicef).

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)

900,000 (UNHCR 2004)

Ethnic make-up

Arabs comprise 75 per cent of the population, with Kurds representing a further 20 per cent (mostly located in northern Iraq) and Turkmen, Assyrian and other minorities making up the remaining 5 per cent.

Religions

Shi'a (also known as Shi'ite, Shiite, Shi'is) Muslims are the largest religious group, comprising 54 per cent of the population. Sunni Muslims were politically dominant in the Saddam Hussein period, although accounting for only 42 per cent of the

total. There is a significant number of Christians and a small number of Yazidis and others.

Education

After the 2003 Iraq War, attempts began to re-build Iraq's education system, as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) granted US\$2 million to provide immediate educational needs.

Free education is provided for children between the ages of six and 18.

Literacy rate: 40.1 per cent total, 24.1 per cent female, adult rates in 2002 (World Bank).

Compulsory years: Six and 12

Enrolment rate: 46 per cent in primary education. Only 37 per cent of girls attend school. (Unicef, 2008)

Pupils per teacher: 20 in primary schools.

Health

The Health Ministry announced in January 2012 that 18 new hospitals, costing a total of US\$2 billion, were to be built. The majority will be at least 100-beds each and constructed to world standards. Some will be specialist medical centres, for heart disease, maternity, burns units and psychiatric treatment.

HIV/Aids

HIV prevalence: 0.1 per cent aged 15–49 in 2003 (World Bank)

Life expectancy: 55 years, 2004 (WHO 2006)

Fertility rate/Maternal mortality rate: 4.7 births per woman, 2010 (Unicef)

Child (under 5 years) mortality rate (per 1,000): 34 per 1,000 live births (WHO 2012)

Head of population per physician: 0.66 physicians per 1,000 people, 2004 (WHO 2006)

Welfare

Iraq is struggling to repair its social infrastructure, welfare and pensions are being administered in an *ad hoc* manner until the newly elected government can get to grips with the economy and implement nationwide policies.

All political parties, during the January 2005 election campaign, advocated the introduction of comprehensive state subsidies and welfare measures and to alleviate the widespread poverty the government may have to invest heavily in its welfare programmes.

In 2008 there were an estimated 1.9 million internally displaced persons.

Main cities

Baghdad (capital, estimated population 5.5 million (m) in 2012), Mosul (3.0m), Basra (2.0m), Arbil (1.5m), Sulaymaniyah (901,028), Kirkuk (890,034).

Languages spoken

French and English are spoken in business.

Official language/s

Arabic and Kurdish

Media

The media has been liberated from official sanctions and there has been a rapid growth in all mediums. Private media outlets are typically linked to political, religious and ethnic groupings.

Press

Dailies: In Arabic, newspapers with the highest circulations include *Al Mada* (www.almadapaper.com), *Al Sabah* (www.alsabaah.com), *Al Mashriq* (www.al-mashriq.net), *Al Ahali* (www.ahali-iraq.net). In Kurdish, *Al Ittihad* (www.alittihad.com) and *Khabat* (www.xebat.net), published by the Kurdistan Democratic Party. Iraqi newspapers with English online editions include *Al Sabah* and *Azzaman* (www.azzaman.com).

Broadcasting

The Iraqi Media Net (www.iraqimedianet.net) is the national public radio and television broadcaster.

Radio: The Republic of Iraq Radio (www.iraqimedianet.net), known as Iraqi Radio has two networks RI 1 and H Quraan. There are many local radio stations in operation, including Radio Annas (www.radioannas.com), Al Huda Radio (www.al-hodaonline.com), Radio Sawa (www.radiosawa.com) and Radio Nawa Kurdish (www.radionawa.com). There are international services provided by France, UK and the US available via local relays.

Television: Around 70 per cent of the TV audience watch satellite TV with pan-Arab stations taking the majority share of ratings. Iraqi Media Net

(www.iraqimedianet.net) operates three channels of Al Iraqiya TV, TV2 and Sports TV. Private stations include *Al Sharqiya* (www.alsharqiya.com) and *Al Sumaria* (www.alsumaria.tv). In the semi-autonomous Kurdistan there are three satellite stations, Kurdistan Satellite Channel (www.kurdistan.tv), KurdSat (www.kurdsat.tv) and Zagros (www.zagrostv.com).

Other news agencies: Nina (National Iraqi News Agency): www.ninanews.com Voices of Iraq: www.aswataliraq.info

Economy

With huge proven oil reserves, 143 billion barrels of oil and 3.6 trillion cubic metres of natural gas at the end of 2011, Iraq has the potential to have a modern well-funded economy. However, the problems created under the old regime and the disruption to the economy since 2003 left a huge legacy of poverty, unemployment and underinvestment. The

government has been addressing the country's problems and has begun to initiate change, rebuilding its infrastructure and providing commodities for its people. In early 2008 global oil prices were at a record high and in Iraq rebuilding was underway so GDP growth was 9.5 per cent as Iraq expanded oil production (by an extra 285,000 barrels per day). However as the global economic crisis cut production worldwide, in 2009 GDP growth fell to 4.2 per cent, which decreased to 0.8 per cent in 2010, but was estimated to have grown by 9.9 per cent for 2011. Oil typically provides over 99 per cent of all exports and in 2009 exports of oil was estimated at US\$38.4 billion (down from US\$62 billion in 2008), then as global trade picked up exports rose to a forecast US\$50.7 billion in 2010, rising to US\$62.3 billion in 2011. As the economy has gradually been brought under control, inflation, which had peaked at a record 30.8 per cent in 2007, was quickly brought down to single digits predominately by maintaining a stable exchange rate.

The government operates under a system whereby oil revenue is shared among the regions dominated by the three principal ethnic/religious groups (Shi'a, Sunni and Kurds). It is hoped this measure will ensure unity and a cessation in sectarian bloodshed, as current oil fields are located in the predominately Shi'a region in the south while the best prospects for oil in the future are in the Kurdish region of the north.

In 2010 the IMF agreed to extend to Iraq its largest loan, of US\$3.6 billion, to be used to rebuild infrastructure. The government announced a US\$186 billion five-year development plan, to launch 2,700 projects planned to enhance economic growth, develop infrastructure – with an emphasis on the oil and electricity sectors, reduce regional differences and increase employment by 3.5 million jobs. Although US\$100 billion will be funded through the state budget, the remainder will be provided by local and foreign investment.

The central bank announced in August 2011 that the Iraqi dinar was to have three zeros removed from its notes. The authorities said 30 trillion (US\$26 billion) banknotes were being printed to replace existing notes. In September, the CBI declared its intention of implementing the change in 2013.

In 2011, the UN Human Development Index (HDI) ranked Iraq 132 (out of 187) for national development in health, education and income. Since 2005 Iraq's progress has grown but has not matched the improvement of other Arab States. In 2010, 41.3 per cent of the population

experienced at least one indicator of poverty, while 4 per cent lived on less than the equivalent of US\$1.25 per day; the headcount poverty rate was 14.2 per cent of the population (2000–10). Migrant workers provided US\$71 million in remittances in 2010 (0.3 per cent of GDP) and were estimated to have reached US\$77 million in 2011.

External trade

In 2005 the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (Gafta) was ratified by 17 members, including Iraq, creating an Arab economic bloc. A customs union was established whereby tariffs within Gafta will be reduced by a percentage each year, until none remain. By late-2009 Iraq was still in negotiation with WTO for membership. Iraq has an open trade investment regime whereby a customs duty of 5 per cent is levied on all import goods, except primary commodities such as food, medicines, clothing and humanitarian items. Construction work on a new railway began in April 2012. The service is specifically designed for freight, referred to as a 'dry canal' from Basra to Turkey. The US\$1.4 billion project, backed by a loan from the World Bank, will be part of an integrated transport system linking the Mediterranean with the Gulf and east Asia.

Imports

Commodities include food, medicines and manufactured goods.

Main sources: Turkey (25 per cent of total in 2011), Syria (18.1 per cent), China (11.5 per cent).

Exports

Main exports include crude oil (over 95 per cent), non-oil items include raw materials, food and live animals.

Main destinations: US (23.3 per cent of total in 2011) India (19.2 per cent), China (14 per cent).

Agriculture

The area of cultivatable land in Iraq is estimated to be around 12 million hectares (ha). About four million ha of this arable land consists of rain-fed agriculture and the remaining eight million depends on irrigation. Less than 50 per cent of this land is actually cultivated. However, irrigation systems are badly in need of repair and salinity is increasingly affecting large areas of arable land.

The most important crops are barley and wheat (yields of each exceed one million tonnes in a good year) and rice; and after cereals, which account for most of the arable land, cotton, dates, vegetables and fruit.

Historically, dates were the most valuable exports after oil (with an annual value of around US\$75 million). Production plummeted due to the war with Iran

(1980–88), and to pollution which affected millions of trees in the south, following the 1991 Gulf War.

There is a small fishing industry, mostly based on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Without import and export activities it will remain insignificant.

Forests cover around 800,000ha, or 1.8 per cent of the land area and are mainly confined to the northern part of the country. There is no significant commercial exploitation.

Industry and manufacturing

Iraq's major industries centre on the petroleum, chemical, textile, construction and food processing sectors. Much of Iraq's industrial base was affected by war and sanctions. Before the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq was second only to Saudi Arabia in terms of oil production and reserves. Iraq's oil industry was boosted and re-invested into by the UN oil-for-food programme, although it was far from pre-1991 levels. During 2004 and 2005 there were efforts to re-build Iraq's industrial and manufacturing base, particularly in oil production.

Tourism

Iraq has much to offer visitors who enjoy historic sites and museums. It has two of the world's major rivers (Tigris and Euphrates) flowing through it, ending in the Mesopotamian Marshes that were restored after 2003, and containing the unique culture of the Marsh Arabs.

Iraq is still considered too dangerous for most travellers and Western governments continue to issue warnings to their citizens not to undertake visits unless absolutely necessary. As such the tourist industry is constrained by Iraq's recent history and continued unrest. Nevertheless, the government is engaged in attracting foreign investment in capital works and infrastructure to provide for tourists. One plan, proposed in 2010 is to convert some of Saddam Hussein's former palaces into tourist resorts.

To improve the quality of care, educational courses in tourism studies and conference organisation have been instigated.

In May 2011, it was claimed that Iraq needed an additional 500 hotels (in the four main cities) of five-, four- and three-star rates to meet demand, particularly for business visits.

Iraq is the home of important Shi'a holy sites which around 12 million Muslims visit annually.

Mining

The mining sector contributes about 8 per cent to GDP and employs 4 per cent of the working population.

Iraq has huge resources of phosphates and its sulphur reserves are among the world's largest; there is significant potential for sulphur exports.

Other minerals include glass sand, raw materials for the construction industry, and modest quantities of iron ore, lead, copper and gypsum.

Hydrocarbons

Proven oil reserves were 143.1 billion barrels of oil at the end of 2011, with production of 2.79 million barrels per day (bpd). It is considered, by experts in the field, that Iraq has known and unknown reserves of oil yet to be exploited, which may contain anything from 45–100 billion bpd of recoverable oil. In 2007 most oil production was derived from just three giant fields (super giant fields yield 5 billion bpd, of which Iraq has nine; giant fields yield 1 billion bpd, of which there are 22 known). War damage to the northern oil fields around Kirkuk caused a significant drop in production from the pre-war level of 680,000bpd to 206,000bpd in 2007. In March 2012, the deputy prime minister announced that Iraq was now producing 3 million bpd and that it was increasing production to 3.4 million bpd, with exports expected at 2.6 million bpd. Oil output in July 2012 was three million bpd, ranking Iraq second in the world for oil output and outperforming Iran for the first time since the 1980s. Iraq's medium-term target is to produce 12 million bpd by 2017.

The Russian energy company, Lukoil, began production drilling and construction of a central processing facility at the West Qurna-2 oil field on 25 April 2012.

When fully operational the site is expected to produce 150,000bpd. West Qurna-2, is the world's second largest undeveloped oil field with recoverable reserves of 14 billion barrels of oil.

In 2009 the UK-based oil company Heritage announced it had discovered an oil field of 2.3–4.2 billion barrels in Kurdish Iraq. It was announced in January 2011 that a significant find of natural gas, estimated at 348 billion cubic metres (cum), in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq. In June, following the completion of an oil pipeline exporting oil from the region, China's Sinopec out-bid South Korea's National Oil Company, with an offer of US\$7.8 billion to purchase Addax Petroleum Corporation, which has large oil assets in Kurdish Iraq. In 2009, the minister of oil announced that oil capacity was predicted to reach 12 million bpd by 2015 following the signing of a number of contracts: the Russian Lukoil and Norwegian Statoil firms won a joint contract to exploit the supergiant West Qurna field (with around 13 billion barrels of oil), the

Anglo-Dutch Shell oil will develop the Majnoon field (with around 12.6 billion barrels of oil), and the Chinese state oil company CNPC now has the rights to the Halfaya field (with 4.1 billion barrels of oil). The Al Ahdab oil field in central Iraq began production on 1 July with 60,000bpd, according to its operator the CNPC. When fully operational, by December 2011, production will rise to 120,000bpd.

In November 2011 the government approved an agreement with the Dutch energy company Shell and the Japanese Mitsubishi Corporation to form a joint venture to gather raw gas from three major oil fields, currently being flared off, to be packaged and sold as gas exports. Iraq will hold a 51 per cent majority share in the new enterprise, called Basrah Gas Company (BGC). An estimated 19,810 cubic metres of gas is flared off each day, which if captured and sold would have been worth US\$1.8 billion per year at 2011 prices.

Refining capacity had grown to 924,000 bpd in 2011, an increase of 19.2 per cent on the 2009 figures.

Proven natural gas reserves were 3.6 trillion cum at the end of 2011. However, probable reserves are considerably higher with as much as 8.4 trillion cum. About 70 per cent of Iraq's natural gas supplies are by-products of oil production. Natural gas production was 1.9 billion cum in 2011, which had shown a steady decline since the 3.2 billion cum in 2000. The largest gas fields are in the north at Kirkuk, and in Rumaila and Zubair in the south and are all oil field associated gas. Iraq signed a multi-million dollar purchase agreement for Iranian natural gas (25 million cum per day) on 7 June 2011, to be delivered to two Iraqi power plants in the north-east via a new gas pipeline, due to be completed in 2012.

In November 2012, Iran announced that it had begun to build a new 225km, US\$3 billion, natural gas pipeline to its border with Iraq to be completed in June 2013. Iran, Iraq and Syria had signed a US\$10 billion agreement in 2011 to build an extended, 1,500km gas pipeline through Iraq (close to Baghdad) and then to Syria, with the ultimate sale of 110 million cum per day.

Iraq has some small low-grade coal deposits, with some limited exploitation before 1990 supplying the domestic chemicals industry. These mines are thought to have fallen into disuse following the destruction of industrial capacity and imposition of UN sanctions in the 1990s.

Energy

Total installed generating capacity was 4,000MW in 2006, with a further 200–300MW imported daily. Consumption was 9,299MW, and the goal has been to increase generating capacity to 6,000MW. The electricity infrastructure is undergoing refurbishment and expansion; however an estimate US\$20–25 billion will have to be spent to bring the system into full operation with electricity supplied to all. In the meantime, the government has been attempting to get Baghdad's electricity grid linked to neighbouring country power systems, so as to increase the city's 12–14 hours of power. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) extended a US\$5.5 billion loan to Iraq, which will be used to upgrade the electricity infrastructure. The loan will be repaid by 2014, at a 1 per cent interest rate per annum.

In May 2010 a new 31.5MW electricity sub-station in Kirkuk became operational. On 3 April 2011, the Kurdistan ministry of electricity signed a US\$18 million contract with the Turkish energy company Shar to connect electricity power lines between the provinces of Sulaimaniya (Iraq) and Erbil (Turkey).

At the peak of summer demand, Iraq requires over 15,000MW of electricity, but the scheduled generating capacity for 2011 was 7,000MW.

In February 2011, the ministry of electricity announced that to resolve the country's energy crisis a sum of US\$6 billion was needed in the 2011 annual budget and that US\$3–4 billion was necessary for several years in the future to allow for growth.

An electricity generating plant, build by Sunir, an Iranian energy development company, was opened on 1 May 2011, in the north-eastern Baghdad suburb of Sadr City. It has two 160MW turbines, which can be run on either oil or natural gas. One turbine went into operation immediately and was linked to the national grid, while the remaining turbine will become operational in June 2011. Plans to install a further two, gas-operated turbines should also be confirmed by June. However, poor infrastructure around the plant hampers operations as 80 fuel trucks must deliver 10,000 hectolitres (264,170 US-gallons) everyday, with poor roads, traffic jams and security checkpoints slowing progress. The installation of a natural gas pipeline to overcome the problems is under discussion.

A parliamentary committee submitted a report to the council of ministers in August 2012, concerning the money spent on the electricity sector. The report stated that US\$27 billion had been spent since 2003 'but electricity has only increased by

1,000MW. The Kurdistan Region has spent US\$1 billion and gained 2,000MWs more.' The report further stated that 'there is huge corruption in the electricity sector in Iraq.'

Financial markets

Stock exchange
Iraq Stock Exchange (ISX)

Banking and insurance

The banking systems, according to the IMF in 2005, is weak and barely functioning. It comprises the Central Bank of Iraq and 26 chartered banks. Two state-owned banks, the Rafidain and Rashid Banks, account for over 90 per cent of the commercial banking assets and 75 per cent of the local branch network. These institutions are heavily over-staffed with too many staff under-skilled and the government may invite foreign involvement in restructuring them. It may also amalgamate four of the smaller, and specialised banks into two regional development banks and well establishing new Islamic banks.

In 2003, the Trade Bank of Iraq (TBI) was established to provide financial and related services to facilitate imports and exports. It is independent of the Central Bank of Iraq.

The authorities will be implementing international accounting and auditing standards, and improving disclosure requirements, to adhere to recognised practices in good governance.

The Iraqi Central Bank (ICB) paid off a total of US\$2.7 billion to 3,500 commercial creditors in February 2011, to ensure protection for the Iraqi dinar on foreign currency markets.

On 2 February 2011, the ICB confirmed that six private and publicly owned banks were using electronic banking systems and that it had allocated US\$10 million to state banks to activate the system. By 2010, 85 per cent of government financial transactions were processed through state banks.

Parliament's Economic Commission announced on 20 March 2011 that it will introduce legislation to organise the work of private and publicly owned banks, to enhance financial and economic development and avoid the growth of irregular business practices.

Central bank

Central Bank of Iraq

Time

GMT plus three hours (daylight saving, April–September, GMT plus four hours)

Geography

Iraq is bounded by Turkey to the north, Iran to the east, Kuwait to the south-east, and Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria to the west. There is also a neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia administered jointly

by the two countries with Iraq's portion covering 3,522 square km. The country's most fertile area and heartland is the flood plain of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which flow in parallel for most of their length from the Turkish and Syrian borders respectively, to the Gulf. The north-east of Iraq is mountainous while the large western desert area is sparsely populated and undeveloped.

Hemisphere

Northern

Climate

There is an excessively hot sub-tropical period with no rainfall from May–September (38–49 degrees Celsius (C)). Dry and pleasantly warm from October–April (20–25 degrees C), with occasional heavy rain. Continental conditions affect the northern mountainous areas which experience severe winters, but the southern plains have warm winters with some rain and very hot, dry summers. The temperature in Baghdad ranges from between 4 degrees C and 16 degrees C in January, to between 24 degrees C and 33 degrees C in July and August. Average annual rainfall is 300mm.

Dress codes

Conservative and modest dress should be worn in public in conformity with local Islamic traditions. Safari suits or short-sleeved suits are acceptable for men at work or at informal meetings; lounge suits in light materials are worn for formal meetings and in the evening.

Entry requirements

All requirements are subject to change and should be thoroughly checked before departure.

Passports

Passports are required by all.

Visa

There are only a few countries designated to issue visas and only to certain authorised visitors. See *Entry Visa Regulations* in the consular section at www.iraqembassy.org for a list.

Prohibited entry

Nationals of Israel and holders of passports with evidence of travel in Israel are denied entry.

Currency advice/regulations

A currency declaration form must be completed on arrival and departure. The import and export of local currency is restricted to small coins only. The import of foreign currency is unlimited but amounts must be declared. Export cannot exceed the amount declared on entry. Travellers cheques are little used.

Customs

Beyond the allotted duty-free allowance, the total value of imports must not exceed ID100. Electrical goods (not for personal

use), commercial artifacts and fruits and plant material are subject to import duty. The export of antiques and artefacts is prohibited.

Health (for visitors)

Travellers should be aware of the poor capacity of Iraqi hospitals to extend medical care and that communications and essential services, including power and water cannot be relied on. Comprehensive medical insurance covering repatriation is essential. There are severe shortages of essential drugs. Detailed health advice should be sought before visiting Iraq.

Mandatory precautions

A certificate of vaccination against yellow fever, if travelling from an infected area.

Advisable precautions

Precautions should include vaccinations, or booster shots, for typhoid, diphtheria, tetanus, polio and hepatitis A; some vaccines may be advised including hepatitis B, TB, cholera and rabies. Anti-malarial precautions should be taken; the use of mosquito nets and repellents and covering up the body after dark can help avoid malaria and hepatitis B.

All water should be regarded as being potentially contaminated. Water used for drinking, brushing teeth or making ice should be boiled or otherwise sterilised. Dairy products are likely to be unpasteurised and should be avoided. Eat only well-cooked meat and fish, preferably served hot. Vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled. Pork, salad and mayonnaise may carry increased risk.

Hotels

There are few and should be booked in advance. Payment in hard currency is required and a 10 per cent service charge is added.

Credit cards

Not in use.

Public holidays (national)

Fixed dates

1 Jan (New Year's Day), 17 Apr (FAO Day), 1 May (Labour Day), 14 Jul (Republic Day).

Variable dates

Eid al Adha (four days), Islamic New Year, Birth of the Prophet, Eid al Fitr (two days). **Islamic year 1435 (5 Nov 2013–24 Oct 2014)**: The Islamic year contains 354 or 355 days, with the result that Muslim feasts advance by 10–12 days against the Gregorian calendar. Dates of feasts vary according to the sighting of the new moon, so cannot be forecast exactly.

Working hours

The weekly closing day is Friday.

Banking

Sat–Wed: 0800–1230; Thur: 0800–1100. During Ramadan: 0800–1000.

Business

Sat–Wed: 0800–1400; Thursday: 0800–1300.

Government

Summer hours: Sat–Wed: 0800–1230; Thu: 0800–1100. Winter hours: Sat–Wed: 0830–1430 Thu: 0830–1330.

Shops

Small shops tend to open very early, close during the middle of the day and then re-open from around 1600–1900 or later. Food markets open around 0900 and close at mid-day or when supplies are exhausted.

Telecommunications

The first subsea cable, providing digital connectivity, landed in mid-January 2012. It was Iraq's first cable and is a milestone in providing a high-capacity system with speed and reliability.

Mobile/cell phones

GSM 900 services are available. Numbers begin 7801/2/3/4, plus 6 digits.

Electricity supply

220V AC, 50 cycles

Weights and measures

Metric system.

Social customs/useful tips

Traditional Islamic culture predominates, with Quranic law playing an active role in the day-to-day life of the country. Visitors should be careful to respect this and act accordingly. They should always address their hosts by full name and title. Traditional Arab hospitality is generally offered. In business meetings formal courtesies are expected. Visiting cards are regularly exchanged and these should be printed in Arabic as well as English. Meetings may not always be on a one-to-one basis and it is often difficult to confine conversation to the business in hand, as many topics may be discussed in order to assess the character of potential business partners. Patience and good humour are required. Always refer to the stretch of water south of Iraq as the Arabian Gulf or the Gulf – never the Persian Gulf.

It is unwise to discuss religion or politics, and desirable to have an informed view on contemporary issues (such as Israel) in case such subjects arise.

During the Ramadan fasting month, both smoking and drinking in public are forbidden.

Security

Visitors should keep in touch with developments in the Middle East as any increase in regional tension might affect travel advice. The security situation in Iraq

remains dangerous with insurgent forces targetting coalition interests and personnel as well as international agencies, such as the UN and the Red Cross. There are daily bombings in central and southern Iraq.

Getting there

Air

National airline: Iraqi Airways

International airport/s: Baghdad International Airport (BGW), 18km west of Baghdad; Basra International Airport.

Other airport/s: Smaller airfields exist at Hadithah, Kirkuk and Mosul.

Airport tax: Departure tax: ID2,000.

Surface

Road: The only two borders open are the highway from Amman, Jordan, to Baghdad (2,331km across the desert) and from Turkey via the road through Zakhko and Mosul; this crosses Iraqi Kurdistan territory and the Kurds sometimes impose taxes on goods carried.

Travel by road remains hazardous and is not recommended.

Rail: The line between Mosul and Aleppo, Syria was reopened, although the service was suspended.

Water: All ports remain closed to civilian traffic.

Main port/s: Umm Qasr and Khor al Zubair are the major commercial ports.

Getting about

National transport

Air: Services are subject to US military restrictions. Prior to 2003 Iraqi Airways flew from Baghdad to Basra. There are domestic airports at Mosul and Kirkuk.

Road: Despite the Iraq War, the country's 40,800km road system is in relatively good condition with 84 per cent paved.

Rail: Prior to 2003, the rail network included three-class services with sleeping accommodation, restaurant cars and air-conditioning. Rail links between most major centres include Baghdad-Mosul, Baghdad-Arbil and Baghdad-Basra.

In June 2011 a preliminary deal was signed by French engineering company Alstom to build a high-speed rail line linking Basra and Baghdad. The line would also connect with Karbala and Najaf in a total network of 650km.

City transport

Taxis: Prior to 2003, taxis were available in major cities and at hotels. There were shared and regular taxis. There was a standard fare system and taxis were meters. A surcharge was made after 2200

hours. Fares should be clearly agreed in advance. Tipping is not expected.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

The addresses listed below are a selection only. While World of Information makes every endeavour to check these addresses, we cannot guarantee that changes have not been made, especially to telephone numbers and area codes. We would welcome any corrections. Readers should be aware that the details following may not be current. Telephone numbers probably won't work.

Telephone area codes

The international direct dialling code (IDD) for Iraq is +964, followed by area code and subscriber's number:

Baghdad	1	Mosul	60
Basra	40	Najaf	33
Erbil	66	Nasiriya	42
Kirkuk	50	Sulayimaniya	53
Kut	23	Tikrit	21

Useful telephone numbers

Police: 104

Fire: 115

Ambulance: 122

Emergency hospital: 719-5191

Operator: 537-2191

Directory enquiries: 102

International operator: 105

Chambers of Commerce

Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce, Sadoon Street, PO Box 3388 Al-Alwia, Baghdad (tel: 718-7348; fax: 718-1115; e-mail: union@uruklink.net).

Baghdad Chamber of Commerce, Mustansir Street, PO Box 24168 Almsarif, Baghdad (tel: 887-6111; fax: 887-9563).

Basrah Chamber of Commerce, Al-Azizyah Street, Alashad, Basrah (tel: 211-343; fax: 212-478).

Mosul Chamber of Commerce, Khalid Ibn Al-Waleed, PO Box 35, Mosul (tel: 774-771; fax: 771-359).

Banking

Bank of Baghdad, PO 3192, Alawiyah (tel: 822-7083).

Credit Bank of Iraq, PO Box 3420, Baghdad (tel: 360-0494).

Dar Es Salaam Investment Bank, PO Box 3067, Alawiyah (tel: 360-4646).

Industrial Bank of Iraq, al Khullani Square, PO Box 5825, Baghdad (tel: 887-2181).

Iraq Middle East Investment Bank, PO Box 10379, Baghdad (tel: 360-4242).

Rafidain Bank, New Banks' Street, Massarif, PO Box 11360, Baghdad (tel: 887-0522; fax: 415-8616).

Rashid Bank, PO Box 7177, Tourism Building, Haifa Street, Baghdad (tel: 884-5287, 885-3433; fax: 882-6201).

Central bank

Central Bank of Iraq, PO Box 64, Rashid Street, Baghdad, Iraq (tel: 886-5171; fax: 886-6802).

Stock exchange

Iraq Stock Exchange (ISX), www.isx-iq.net

Travel information

Baghdad International Airport, Baghdad (tel: 887-2500, 886-3999; fax: 887-5808).

Ministries

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (email: press@iraqmofamail.net; internet: www.iraqmofa.net).

Directorate of Foreign Economic Relations, Ministry of Trade, Khulafa Street, al Khullani Square, Baghdad (tel: 887-2682).

Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialisation, Nidhal Street, near Sa'adoun Petrol Station, Baghdad (tel: 887-2006).

Ministry of Oil, al Mansour, PO Box 6178, Baghdad (tel: 541-0031).

Other useful addresses

Iraqi Embassy (in the UK), 169 Knightsbridge, London SW7 1DW (tel: (+44-20) 7602-8456 and 7581 2264; fax: (+44-20) 7589-3356).

Iraqi Embassy (in the USA), 1801 P Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036 (tel: (+1-202) 483 7500; internet: www.iraqiembassy.org).

Iraq National Oil Company, al Khullani Square, PO Box 476, Baghdad (tel: 887-1115).

Iraqi Federation of Industries, Iraqi Federation of Industries Building, al Khullani Square, Baghdad.

Other news agencies: Nina (National Iraqi News Agency): www.ninanews.com

Voices of Iraq: www.aswataliraq.info

Internet sites

Guide to Iraqi businesses: www.iraqdirectory.com

Iraq Stock Exchange: www.isx-iq.net

Iraq portal: www.portaliraq.com