MNC-I BUA Intel Daily Slides

Feb 08

  • The two countries signed project MOU in Aug 07, updating a 1996 provisional agreement (AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 003254, Natural Gas From Iraq, 281320Z SEP 07; "New pipeline to transport Iraq gas via Turkey", Today’s Zaman, 28 January 2008; "Turkey starts study of Iraq gas pipeline", UPI, 28 January 2008)


  • Original estimated cost of the project in 1996 was more than $2.5 billion (AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 003254, Natural Gas From Iraq, 281320Z SEP 07)

Strategic Theme 1: Joint project will support Iraqi goals to develop national petroleum sector infrastructure
Strategic Theme 2: Joint project will expand Iraqi export and revenue capacity
Western Baghdad Jaysh al-Mahdi Leadership Take Measures to Enforce Freeze After Being Singled Out as Root of Problem, Mid- to Late January 2008; Various Commanders Replace

Senior Sadrists reportedly consider JAM Bde in S. Karkh as only Bde not adhering to freeze
CIOC Trends data – SIGACTS III, and TF Troy Tracker

OSINT:
Al Jazeera – Scores killed in Iraq Market Blasts, 1 February 2008
Reuters – Iraq vows to “crush terrorists” after 99 killed, 1 February 2008
BBC News – Iraq market bombs toll nears 100, 2 February 2008
Washington Post – Death Toll Rises in Friday’s Baghdad Bomb Attacks, 2 February 2008
Syria to Host Arab League Summit

• (U) 28 Jan, Arab League Sec. Gen. Amr Mousa announced SY to host summit as scheduled in late March
  • Summit is a prestigious annual event attended by Arab heads of state
  • Hosting summit would boost Syria’s regional credentials
• (U) 19 Jan, Mousa described meeting in Damascus with Asad as “totally positive”
  • After Damascus visit, Mousa expressed importance of future visit to Riyadh
• (U) Presidential vacuum in Lebanon has threatened SY’s bid to host Arab League summit
  • 5 JAN, Saudi King Abdallah said SA would not participate in summit in Damascus unless president elected in Lebanon
  • “Informed source” disclosed “Arab efforts” to move venue for summit to Arab League (AL) HQ in Egypt

Sources:

• Christian Science Monitor, 08JAN08, Can the Arab League Solve Lebanon’s Political Crisis

• Reuters, 19JAN08, Arab League Chief in Syria over Lebanon Crisis

• Petra, 28JAN08, Mousa: Arab Summit to be held in Damascus on 29-30 March
JAN 08: PRTs Report Declining Sadr Trend Popularity (Baghdad 000296, 31 Jan 08)

DEC 07: (Poll Charts MNF-I Trust Figure Dec 07)

NOV 07 and Graphs (MND-B poll interviews 4224 Baghdad respondents from 05 – 11 November 2007 with a margin for error of 1.5 percent; MNC-I poll interviewed 8487 respondents nationwide from 08 – 23 November 2007 with a margin of error of 1 percent;)

(C/REL) Assessment: Sadr and JAM are losing ground despite “freeze,” suggesting elections may not avail large gains for Sadrist. Recognition of lack of popularity likely contributing factor in favor of “freeze” extension and increased outreach.
Page 8 redacted for the following reason:

1.4b, 1.4d
Diverging Themes Among Sunni Resistance Groups

- (U) Joint statement by Hamas al-Iraq (Hal) and Islamic Front for Iraqi Resistance (JAMI), both members of Political Council for Iraqi Resistance (PCIR)
  - Alleges “organized crime” behind the Baghdad marketplace bombings
  - Calls for international investigation

- (U) JARF (also PCIR member) releases hard line statement
  - Describes incidents as “crimes committed by the occupation forces and the agent government”
  - Denounces and condemns those behind the attacks
  - Calls for retaliation and protection of the innocent

Sources:
1) FEB 3 2008, HAMAS-Iraq and JAMI condemn the recent bombings at Baghdad markets; imply that the Coalition was responsible

2) 23 1626C JAN 08 HBIED ATTK ON IA IN MOSUL

3) IQATF MND-B EXSUM (Female Suicide Bomber Atmospherics)

4) 2FEB 08 London Quds Press (Internet Version-WWW)

JAMI = (Al-Jabha al-Islamiya lil-Moqawama al-Iraqiya)
JAMI part of PCIR
Claims to have existed since 2004
Dr. Sayf Al-Din Mahmud, the spokesman of JAMI
Sources:

• Threat Report: Alleged planned attacks against coalition and MNF-I forces in IZ
• Threat Report: Islamic State of Iraq planned to kill Iraqi VP Mahdi, with a vehicle-borne
• Threat Report: Location of AQI and Juno al-Sama’ Members in Baghdad, IZ
Sources:
• CLC attack numbers for Jan 08 from Effects Assessment Cell, MNC-I

• CACE Reconciliation Compilation, 05 Feb 08

Theme: CLCs continue to be an effective force multiplier against AQI as they fill security gaps in their area of operations. Their effectiveness in curtailing AQI’s freedom of movement and operations will persist in drawing attacks from AQI and on a smaller scale, JAM.
Shia Insurgent Shaykh Baqir and Associates Encounter Difficulties with Mainstream Jaysh al-Mahdi Commander Tahsi in Sadr City, Early February 2008

021918Z Feb 08

Shia Insurgent Shaykh Baqir Outlines Chain of Command, Expectations for Group in Baghdad to Help Prevent Collapse of Jaysh al-Mahdi, Late December 2007

281913Z Dec 07

Assessment: Baqir sees Sadr City as sanctuary with JAM’s role to secure the edges from encroachment by CF and ISF. Baqir’s authorization to remove and discipline JAM members in effort to solidify positions in Sadr City could lead to violence between groups and larger scale splintering of JAM and SG Criminals.
Russia to Forgive Majority of Iraq’s Saddam-Era Debt

- Expected restructuring of $13B outstanding
  - Deal to apply to 91% of Iraq’s estimated $13 billion obligation to Russia
  - Iraq’s obligation to Russia would be limited to approximately $1 billion
  - Agreement will be signed during Zebari’s 11 February trip to Russia

- Progress on other Iraqi obligations
  - Early repayment by GOL on $471 million IMF agreement
  - Russian agreement follows late 2007 Iraqi settlement with the Government of Bulgaria

Assessment: Russia’s announcement is another positive development in Iraq’s ongoing effort to restructure its obligations with international creditors. As part of the agreement, however, Russia is likely to expect preferential treatment in Iraq’s tender for the development of the West Qurna Oil Field in al-Basrah Province.

Sources:

- Fox News, 080208, Iraqi President Welcomes Russian Decision to Write-off Debt
- AP, 080208, Iraq Welcomes Russian Debt Write-Off
- Dow Jones Newswires, 080208, Iraq Welcomes Write-Off
- IMF Press Release, 071214, Iraq Completes Early Repayment of Entire Outstanding Obligations to the IMF
Diyala Highlights Abna al-Iraq Shift in Concerns

- Baqubah highlights concerns
  - Demonstrations call for PDOP removal
  - Threaten to withdraw from checkpoints
  - Members recognize leverage
  - Tension between Abna al-Iraq and ISF
  - AQI likely attempt to exploit issue

- Regional concerns
  - Gol support
  - Employment prospects
  - Pay
  - Recognition
  - Inclusion in national-level issues

[S//REL] Assessment: Improved security situation allows Abna al-Iraq to concentrate on secondary issues. The Abna al-Iraq movement has been integral to the improved security situation and national support must continue to prevent threat groups from returning.

Sources:
1. Concerns
   (U) Task Force special OSINT report: Middle East Online, 8 Feb 08; Voices of Iraq, 9 Feb 08; Al Jazeera, 8 Feb 08; Eye Media Company, 9 Feb 08

2. Diyala make-up
   (S//REL MCFI//DISP-IRQ) Diyala Operations Center: 9 Feb 08, email correspondence between team lead and 1AD MND-N Reconciliation

“We are securing our area, we want to be official Iraqi Security Forces, and we want to be officially recognized by the Iraqi government.”
The ING Conference Update

- (U) Shahmani unveiled two-phase National Plan:
  - (U) Phase 1:
    - Extricate Iraq from international custodianship, promote a sovereign Iraq
    - Dissolve sectarianism and racism
  - (U) Phase 2:
    - Implement a complete political program in order to finalize Iraqi sovereignty and combating violence and extremism.
- (U) ING members - renounced violence, extremism, and welcomed anyone wishing to promote peace.

Sources:
1). IOTF Arabic Media Coverage – Sunday 10th February 2008: Iraqi National Gathering held foundation conference in Baghdad yesterday
2). Report on Formation of Iraqi Patriotic Bloc, Remarks by its Leader Al-Shahmani, Aswat al-Iraq in Arabic 09 Feb 08
3). Inauguration of the Iraqi National Gathering Calls for the Abolition of Sectarianism, Voice of Iraq 09 February 2008
MoO just concluded first-round negotiations with several large international oil companies (Hassan Hafidh, “Oil Majors to Resume Talks on Iraq Tech Pacts”, Dow Jones, 11 Feb 08; Ben Lando, “Iraq Oil Deals Near Completion”, UPI, 4 Feb 08)

- Negotiations focused on the terms of technical support agreements (TSAs) for five producing oil fields (Hassan Hafidh, “Oil Majors to Resume Talks on Iraq Tech Pacts”, Dow Jones, 11 Feb 08, Dow Jones, 11 Feb 08; Ben Lando, “Iraq Oil Deals Near Completion”, UPI, 4 Feb 08; ”Iraq Set to Sign Oilfield Agreements”, Offshore Technology, 1 Feb 08)

- Further oil field development could increase national production by 500,000 barrels per day (Hassan Hafidh, “Oil Majors to Resume Talks on Iraq Tech Pacts”, Dow Jones, 11 Feb 08; ”Iraq Set to Sign Oilfield Agreements”, Offshore Technology, 1 Feb 08)

- Negotiations will continue on 25 February, TSAs could be signed as early as March 2008 (Hassan Hafidh, “Oil Majors to Resume Talks on Iraq Tech Pacts”, Dow Jones, 11 Feb 08; ”Iraq Set to Sign Oilfield Agreements”, Offshore Technology, 1 Feb 08)

Strategic Theme #1: Iraq working with international investors to develop oil resources.
Strategic Theme #2: Oil field expansion projects to increase national crude oil output.
AQI Media Efforts Degraded

- AQI issues statement signed 10 FEB
  - Denies 01 FEB Baghdad and 23 JAN Mosul attacks
  - Statement in response to calls by online supporters of AQI; calls attacks “shocking and malicious”
- AQI media slow to respond to accusations
  - 5-day lag-time in July 07
  - 10-day lag-time in February 08
- Posting written and structured poorly

Sources:

- Christian Science Monitor, 080201, Female Suicide Bombers Shatter Baghdad Calm
- 00974-08, 080111, Passage of Media Collection- OBJ Fritz
- (b)(3) 50 USC 3024(i) Overview and Strategies of AQI
- Caversham BBC Web Monitoring, 080211, ISI Denies Responsibility for Attacks