**Iraq — Kurdish Autonomy Under Threat**

In January 2026, Western countries abandoned the Kurds of Syria. Today, Baghdad is threatening the autonomy of Iraq's Kurds. Iraq's prime minister has announced that he intends to take control of oil fields in disputed Kurdish-majority territories and of international border crossings within the territory administered by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), in violation of the 2005 constitution. I described how Kurdish entities were being dismantled in my 2023 article **"Iraq and Syria: Kurdish Autonomous Regions Under Threat".**

Iraq's determination to dismantle the KRG by depriving it of its economic resources must be seen in the context of the conflict between the United States and Iran. Tehran fears that Iraqi Kurdistan could serve as a rear base for an uprising in Iranian Kurdistan. It is worth remembering that Iraq's prime minister is beholden to Tehran, even as he tries to suggest otherwise by ordering the regular army to take over a Kataib Hezbollah base north of Baghdad. Western countries must defend the Kurds and see through Ali al-Zaidi's pretext of restoring national sovereignty.

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