

## Timeline

**1534-1919** - The Ottoman Empire controls what is now Iraq.

**1917** - Britain takes control of Baghdad near the end of World War One.

**1920** - Iraq is created with the approval of the League of Nations. Iraqis rebel against British rule.

**1921** - Faysal, son of Hussein Bin Ali, the Sharif of Mecca, becomes Iraq's first king.

**1932** - Iraq becomes an independent state.

**1958** - After a military coup led by Brigadier General Agd-al-Karim Qasim and Colonel Abd-al-Salam Muhammad Arif, Iraq becomes a republic. Qasim becomes Prime Minister.

**1963** - Arab Socialist Baath Party (ASBP) expels Qasim in a coup. Arif becomes President and overthrows the Baathists.

**1966** - Major General Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad Arif becomes President after his brother's death.

**1968** - Arif is overthrown by a Baathist coup. The Revolution Command Council (RCC) takes over and makes General Ahmad Hasan-al-Bakr the Chairman and President.

**1970** - The leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), Mullah Mustafa Barzani signs peace agreement with the Iraqi government.

**1972** - The Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) is nationalized.

**1974** - The Kurdish region is granted limited autonomy.

**1979** - Saddam Hussein becomes President.

**1980-1988** - Iran/Iraq war leaves almost one million dead.

**1988** - Iraq attacks the Kurdish town of Halabjah with chemical weapons.

**1990** - Farzad Bazoft, a journalist for the London Observer, is hanged after being accused of spying. Iraq invades Kuwait.

**1991** - A U.S.-led multinational force drives Iraq out of Kuwait. Iraq crushes rebellions in the north and south of Iraq. A UN safe haven to protect the Kurds in northern Iraq requires Iraq to stop all military activity there.

**1993** - Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Baghdad is attacked by U.S. cruise missiles.

**1994** - Kuwait is recognized by the Iraqi National Assembly.

**1995** - UN Security Council Resolution 986 allows Iraq to resume oil exports in order to buy food and medicine.

**1998** - Iraq's refusal to cooperate with UN Special Commission to Oversee the Destruction of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (UNSCOM) leads to a joint U.S. and UK operation to destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

**2001** - The UK and U.S. drop bombs in an attempt to disable Iraq's air defenses.

**2002** - President George W. Bush speaks to the UN General Assembly about the "grave and gathering danger" in Iraq. A UN resolution promises serious consequences if Iraq refuses to comply with UN weapons inspectors.

**2003** - U.S.-led invasion ousts Hussein, his government, and the Baath Party.

**2004** - Iraqi prisoner abuse at the hands of U.S. soldiers emerges. Iyad Allawi becomes Prime Minister.

**2005** - Transitional National Assembly elections are held with Shia United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) taking a majority of votes. Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani becomes President and Shia, Ibrahim Jaafari becomes Prime Minister. Massoud Barzani becomes regional President of Iraq Kurdistan. Shia and Kurdish negotiators endorse a draft constitution, but Sunni representatives reject it. In October, a new constitution is approved, which seeks the creation of an Islamic federal democracy. In December, Iraqis vote for a full term government and president.

**2006** - UIA wins elections without an absolute majority. Sectarian violence erupts. In April, Talabani asks Nouri al-Maliki to form a new government. According to the UN, throughout May and June, approximately 100 civilians per

Day lose their lives to violence. Saddam Hussein is executed in December for crimes against humanity.

**2007** - President Bush's new Iraq strategy brings more U.S. soldiers to Iraq. Over 34,000 civilians were killed due to violence during 2006, according to the UN.

**2008** - Former Baath party members are allowed to run for public office. Iraq and US sign security deal that calls for the withdrawal of all US troops by the end of 2011.

**2009** - Iraq is given more control over security and foreign troops. President Obama plans withdrawal of most U.S. troops.

**2010** - "Chemical" Ali Hassan al-Majid is executed. Top Iraqi officer calls for US troops to remain for another decade as the last US combat forces leave Iraq. Wikileaks releases thousands of classified US military information about the war in Iraq. 50 people are killed in a Christian church by militants. Jalal Talabani is reappointed as president and Nouri al-Maliki as prime minister after parliament reconvenes. All major factions are included in the new government.

**2011** - Moqtada Sadr returns to Iraq from self-imposed exile in Iran for four years. 40 coordinated nation-wide attacks happen in one day. Withdrawal of US troops in Iraq is completed. Sunni politician, Tariq al-Hashemi is accused of running death squads.

**2012** - Sectarian violence breaks out targeting the Shia population killing hundreds. Tariq al-Hashemi is sentenced to be hanged. Sunnis protest against marginalization by Shia-led government.

**2013** - Iraqi troops raid a Sunni anti-government protest killing 50. Sectarian fighting breaks out reaching levels of violence seen in 2008. 500 prisoners, comprised mainly of senior Al-Qaeda members, escape from prison. 900 people killed in October, making it the deadliest month since 2008. UN estimates the death toll has more than doubled since 2012.

**2014** - Radical Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. dissolves his party and withdrawals from politics. The Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIS) captures Mosul and other key towns in Anbar province. Kurdish forces, U.S., and Iran aid in the fight against ISIS as tens of thousands flee. ISIS declares a caliphate and changes its name to Islamic State. Government coalition formed between Shia, Sunni Arabs and Kurds. Kurdish leadership postpones referendum for independence. U.S. forms coalition with 10 Sunni Arab states to fight ISIS.

**2015** - Nimrud and Hatra's archeological sites are destroyed by ISIS. Iraqi government announces that it has regained control of Tikrit from ISIS. ISIS captures city of Ramadi.



## Torture Methods

**RENDITION**, the abduction and transfer of prisoners from one nation to another, has occurred in and around Iraq.

**RAPE, SODOMY, AND SEXUAL ASSAULT** including naked prisoner pyramids, forced public masturbation, forced fellatio, the threat of forced fellatio, and the use and threat of rape by dogs have been used.

**BEATINGS** have taken place where prisoners are kicked, punched, thrown against walls, had teeth and fingernails pulled out, beaten with lights, chairs, and other objects to the point of death.

**BURNING** prisoners with cigarettes and other chemicals has been reported.

**ELECTRIC SHOCK** has been used to intimidate and obtain confessions and information about others.

**DENIAL OF FOOD AND WATER** or only offering foods known to be considered unclean to Muslims such as pork, and forcing prisoners to lick or eat the contents of toilets has led to dysentery and other diseases.

**UNCLEAN AND DIRTY CONDITIONS** resulting in disease and body and hair lice has been worsened by the denial of washing for as long as six weeks at a time.

**BODY FLUIDS** of the guards and interrogators have been used to cover prisoners in feces, urine, and menstrual blood. Wiping menstrual blood on detainees and then denying victims water to wash themselves has occurred to show disrespect for their culture and religion.

**DISRESPECT AND DESTRUCTION OF THE KORAN** has occurred including flushing it down the toilet or leaving it as the only source of toilet paper.

**SENSORY DEPRIVATION** including temperature and light manipulation has been used by Iraqi forces to keep prisoners unaware of the time. Detainees report having their eyes taped shut and music blasted into their small cells, or having their eyes and ears covered while wrapped in bubble wrap. This has resulted in psychological trauma.

**SOLITARY CONFINEMENT** for months at a time has also resulted in psychological trauma.

**WATERBOARDING** is a tactic where a prisoner's head is covered with a towel and water is poured into the mouth to simulate drowning.

**WATER PIN** is a tactic where prisoners are forced to stand on their tip-toes in order to keep from drowning while they are submerged in water.

**STRESS POSITIONS** including being chained for days, chaining one hand and foot in fetal position, being forced to stand in the sun on one leg, being kept hooded, naked and gagged with duct tape have been used.

**CLAUSTROPHOBIA** such as being tied in sleeping bags with electrical cords has occurred.

**THREATS** of live burial, drowning, electrocution, rape and death including mock executions have been used.

## Current Situation

**Language:** Arabic (official), Kurdish (official), Turkmen and Assyrian (official in areas where they are a majority of the population), Armenian

**Population:** 37,056,169 (July 2015 est.)

**Religion:** Muslim (official) 99% (Shia 60%-65%, Sunni 32%-37%), Christian 0.8%, Hindu <.1, Buddhist <.1, Jewish <.1, folk religion <.1, unaffiliated .1, other <.1

**Ethnic Groups:** Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%, Turkmen, Assyrian, or other 5%

**NON-STATE ACTORS**, including ISIS, commit egregious human rights violations such as kidnappings, beheadings, rape, torture, as well as recruitment of child soldiers. The minority Yezidi population has been a group particularly targeted by ISIS, with estimates of 40,000 displaced and many kidnapped and held prisoner by ISIS. The UN estimates that there may be as many as 3,000 Yezidi people in ISIS captivity. ISIS is also known to target individuals they believe to be LGBT and has thrown these individuals from buildings in public demonstrations.

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE** has led to the capture and forced "marriages" of hundreds of Yezidi women including girls as young as 9 by ISIS forces. They are kept as sexual slaves, and are subjected to beatings, rape and torture. Many commit suicide, unable to endure the horrors of life under ISIS.

**GOVERNMENT and SECURITY** has fluctuated. Upon the withdrawal of US forces in 2011, the security situation in Iraq has deteriorated. Sectarian violence increased, including car bombings, suicide attacks and assassinations. The fighting has involved government forces, armed militia groups, and extremist groups. ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) has been responsible for summary executions, kidnappings, torture, and gender based violence. Government forces and pro-government militias have also been responsible for arbitrary arrests, kidnappings, torture, summary executions, and indiscriminate artillery shelling of civilians. Despite electoral irregularities, the 2014 elections were peaceful. Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki was replaced by Hayder al-Abadi, as al-Maliki lost support due to ISIS capturing Mosul.

**INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE** are estimated by UNHCR to be 900,000 in Iraq and two million refugees. Iraqi youth have grown up in an environment of violence, sectarian animosity, and hardship. Many communities and people have been displaced and uprooted.

**CHILD IMPRISONMENT** with children as young as six are reportedly being held in overcrowded, unclean prisons that some call torture dungeons. The prisoners are subjected to adverse temperatures often with only two to three hours of electricity per day, infrequent access to showers as well as rape and sexual assault by guards. The children do not receive education. The trials do not meet international standards for fair trials. Most trials average 25 minutes, are void of witnesses and forced confessions are often the only evidence. While defense lawyers are appointed by the court, most of the lawyers get the case file on the same day as the trial. Some Iraqis report confessing to be affiliated with Al-Qaeda in order to go to a US prison as opposed to an Iraqi prison where torture is imminent. US investigators allege that Sunni children are being tortured, abused, and murdered by Shiite guards.