

**LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS**



# **OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE**

**AND OTHER U.S. GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO**

# **IRAQ & SYRIA**



**JANUARY 1, 2026–MARCH 31, 2026**



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**On the cover:** NATO Mission Iraq personnel are redeployed from Baghdad, Iraq, on March 19-20, 2026, due to increasing regional tensions. (U.S. Air Force photo)



We are pleased to present this Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) report to Congress on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). This report fulfills our quarterly reporting responsibilities pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.

The United States launched OIR in 2014 to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), while setting the conditions for follow-on activities to increase regional stability. The U.S. Government strategy to defeat ISIS includes military operations and support for local security forces, diplomacy, governance, humanitarian assistance, and stabilization programs.

This report describes the activities of the U.S. Government in support of OIR as well as the work of the Department of War (DoW), the Department of State (State), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to further the U.S. Government's policy goals in Iraq and Syria. This report also discusses the planned, ongoing, and completed oversight work conducted by the Lead IG agencies—the DoW, State, and USAID OIGs—and our partner oversight agencies. This report covers the period January 1 through March 31, 2026.

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**Platte B. Moring, III**  
Lead Inspector General for OIR  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense

Handwritten signature of Arne B. Baker in black ink.

**Arne B. Baker**  
Associate Inspector General for OIR  
Senior Official Performing the Duties  
of the Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State

Handwritten signature of Van Nguyen in black ink.

**Van Nguyen**  
Acting Deputy Inspector General  
Performing the Duties of the  
Inspector General  
U.S. Agency for International  
Development

# IN THIS REPORT

## **The Syrian government capture of northeastern Syria in January and the launch of Operation Epic Fury (OEF) in February prompted an accelerated transition and realignment of U.S. forces supporting Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR).**

*pp. 4–6*

- In Syria, U.S. forces closed their remaining bases. The final base closed in mid-April, ending a 10-year Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF–OIR) presence in Syria.
- In Iraq, U.S. forces withdrew from the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center (BDSC), a key logistics base. At the end of the quarter, U.S. forces remained in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region and at the Embassy Baghdad Compound.
- The Office of the Under Secretary of War for Policy (OUSW[P]) reported that despite these events, OIR’s goal—the enduring defeat of ISIS—remained constant.

## **CJTF-OIR and U.S. Mission Iraq evacuated personnel from Iraq as security conditions deteriorated.**

*pp. 20–21*

- U.S. Mission Iraq initiated an ordered departure of all non-essential personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, the U.S. Consulate General in Erbil, and the BDSC.
- CJTF-OIR supported military-assisted departures of U.S. Government personnel as civilian airspace closed in Iraq.
- U.S. Mission Iraq and CJTF-OIR supported departures of U.S. contractors and civilians as they came under Iranian threats, successfully evacuating 2,820 people.

## **At least 150 ISIS fighters escaped detention facilities as a result of the Syrian government offensive and its aftermath.**

*pp. 7–13*

- As the Syrian government advanced, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)—the longtime U.S. forces’ security partner—collapsed. SDF personnel guarding detention facilities holding ISIS detainees redeployed to front lines, at times before government forces could take control.
- U.S. forces were instructed to remain neutral and did not intervene in the hostilities. As security at detention facilities began to degrade, U.S. forces deployed to secure the Panorama detention facility.
- Over several weeks, the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) transferred 5,704 remaining ISIS detainees from detention facilities in Syria to government facilities in Iraq to prevent further ISIS escapes.
- At the al-Hol displaced persons camp, as many as 20,000 residents—including thousands of ISIS family members and affiliates—departed unmonitored, most under the watch of Syrian government forces. The Syrian government closed the camp on February 22.

## On January 29, the SDF agreed to gradually integrate its forces and governing body into the Syrian government.

*pp. 13–19*

- The agreement followed efforts by U.S. diplomatic and defense officials to mediate between the parties.
- The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) assessed that the Syrian government will almost certainly continue to struggle with command and control of its integrated military, especially as it attempts to absorb the new SDF brigades.
- In February, Syria attended a Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS meeting for its first time as a member.

## Iran and its proxies responded to OEF with retaliatory strikes against U.S. military and diplomatic facilities in Iraq and elsewhere in the region.

*pp. 22–29*

- U.S. forces conducted defensive strikes against Iran-aligned militia forces threatening Coalition personnel in Iraq.
- Iran-aligned militias targeted U.S. military and diplomatic sites, Coalition partners, the Iraqi Security Forces, and regional states supporting the United States.
- The United States strongly criticized the Iraqi government for failing to take action to prevent militia attacks in Iraq.

## U.S. counter-ISIS military support to Syrian and Iraqi partner forces slowed to a near halt due to OEF.

*pp. 23–25*

- CJTF-OIR concluded its advisory mission in federal Iraq and transferred responsibilities to the U.S. Military Group-Iraq and the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.
- CJTF-OIR advisory support to the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs and Peshmerga units was suspended temporarily due to urgent force protection issues during OEF.
- Before OEF, U.S. forces continued Operation Hawkeye Strike, a campaign of expanded strikes against ISIS targets in Syria with the last reported strike on February 12.

## The United States continued to deliver foreign assistance to people in Syria and Iraq, where conflict, displacement, and severe weather continued to drive humanitarian needs.

*pp. 27–31, 34–40*

- In Syria, the United States had 23 humanitarian assistance programs and 4 active stabilization programs that supported food assistance, essential services, governance, and health, among other initiatives.
- In Iraq, the United States had 19 active foreign assistance programs that supported internally displaced persons, justice initiatives, and civil society, among other initiatives.
- These programs include those that were transferred from USAID to State management on July 1, 2025. Several programs that were scheduled to end in 2025 were extended into 2026.

## CONTENTS

### 4 MISSION UPDATE

- 4 Overview
- 7 Detainees and Displaced Persons
- 13 Syrian Government
- 19 The Iranian Threat
- 23 Support to Partner Forces
- 26 Iraqi Government and Economy
- 27 U.S. Foreign Assistance to Syria
- 30 U.S. Foreign Assistance to Iraq

### 32 APPENDIXES

- 32 Appendix A: Classified Appendix to this Report
- 32 Appendix B: About the Lead Inspector General
- 33 Appendix C: Methodology for Preparing this Lead IG Report
- 34 Appendix D: U.S. Assistance Programs in Syria and Iraq
- 41 Appendix E: Completed Oversight Projects
- 42 Appendix F: Ongoing Oversight Projects
- 43 Appendix G: Planned Oversight Projects
- 44 Appendix H: Hotline and Investigations
- 45 Acronyms
- 46 Endnotes



NATO Mission Iraq personnel are redeployed from Baghdad, Iraq, on March 19-20, 2026, due to increasing regional tensions. (U.S. Air Force photo)

# MISSION UPDATE

## OVERVIEW

Since 2014, the Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) mission has been to advise, assist, and enable partner forces until they can independently maintain the enduring defeat of ISIS in Iraq and designated areas of Syria, and to set conditions for long-term security cooperation frameworks with partners in those countries.<sup>1</sup>

Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) executes the OIR mission and comprises forces from 21 countries.<sup>2</sup> CJTF-OIR is a component of the 90-member U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.<sup>3</sup> The OIR campaign’s three Lines of Effort (LOE) remained the overarching goals for CJTF-OIR, but were subordinated to tasks associated with Operation Epic Fury (OEF) during the quarter, CJTF-OIR reported.<sup>4</sup> (See Table 1.)

At the start of the quarter, CJTF-OIR was operating under a planned framework to end the military mission of the Global Coalition in Iraq. The United States sought to transition to a bilateral security arrangement with Iraq.<sup>5</sup> In Syria, the United States has been developing a bilateral partnership with Syria in support of the mutual objective of suppressing ISIS remnants in Syria.<sup>6</sup> However, two events during the quarter had significant impacts on the execution of the OIR mission and led to an accelerated shutdown of U.S. and CJTF-OIR bases in both Iraq and Syria.

Table 1.  
OIR Lines of Effort

- LOE 1:**  
Deny ISIS within the Combined Joint Operating Area
- LOE 2:**  
Build Partner Force Capability and Capacity
- LOE 3:**  
Sustain the Global Coalition

**Source:** CJTF-OIR, response to DoD OIG request for information, 25.4 OIR 003, 9/10/2025.

**CJTF-OIR moved its headquarters element in Kuwait to the Joint Training Center in Jordan, co-located with the Damascus Coordination Center.**

**Syrian government takeover of northeastern Syria:** In January, Syrian government forces rapidly—and, according to security analysts, often chaotically—captured most of northeastern Syria from the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), re-asserting Syrian government control of the region for the first time in more than 10 years and prompting an end to the decade-long U.S. counter-ISIS partnership with the SDF.<sup>7</sup>

**Operation Epic Fury (OEF):** On February 28, the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) commenced OEF, a wide-ranging military offensive campaign to dismantle the Iranian regime’s security apparatus.<sup>8</sup> In preparation for OEF, CJTF-OIR reduced and relocated forces. CJTF-OIR’s priorities shifted to force protection, countering Iran-aligned militias, and assisting USCENTCOM with theater-wide strategic and operational requirements.<sup>9</sup> CJTF-OIR was heavily engaged in the conflict, defending against hundreds of unmanned aircraft system and missile attacks and supporting strikes against Iran and Iran-aligned militias in the region.<sup>10</sup>

## MISSION FOOTPRINT

CJTF-OIR adapted to these events with an accelerated transition and force realignment.<sup>11</sup> CJTF-OIR withdrew forces from bases in Iraq and Syria, which were targeted by missiles and drones from Iran and Iran-aligned militias during the conflict. (See Table 2.) CJTF-OIR moved its headquarters element in Kuwait to the Joint Training Center in Jordan, co-located with the Damascus Coordination Center.<sup>12</sup> At the end of the quarter, some CJTF-OIR support elements remained in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar.<sup>13</sup>

## U.S. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Office of the Under Secretary of War for Policy (OUSW[P]) reported that at the end of the quarter, despite these events, the OIR objective—the enduring defeat of ISIS—remained constant.<sup>14</sup>

**Syria:** While the United States welcomed the integration of the SDF into a unified Syrian state, the integration challenged the U.S. military’s ability in the near term to partner with current vetted groups in Syria against ISIS and al-Qaeda.<sup>15</sup> The OUSW(P) reported that the Syrian efforts to integrate security actors, coupled with the accelerated departure of U.S. forces, disrupted U.S. forces’ ability to vet Syrian actors, leaving future Syrian counter-ISIS partnerships in limbo.<sup>16</sup>

The OUSW(P) reported that the United States continued to work toward a bilateral U.S.-Syria relationship that supports the mutual objective of suppressing ISIS remnants in Syria.<sup>17</sup> Areas of focus for a future U.S. defense partnership with Syria could include improving Syria’s command and control over its forces, securing Syria’s borders to counter terrorist infiltration, narcotics and weapons smuggling, and the movement of displaced persons to and from Syria.<sup>18</sup> The OUSW(P) said that the United States would continue to adopt a “burden-sharing” model with Syria in which it will coordinate closely with regional partners to ensure Syria has the personnel, military equipment, and fiscal capacity to secure itself.<sup>19</sup>

Table 2.

Status of CJTF-OIR Bases During the Quarter

SYRIA			
<p>At the start of the quarter, a conditions-based consolidation of forces in Syria as part of the orderly wind-down of OIR was on pause. U.S. forces conducted counter-ISIS operations and advising from four bases in Syria. At the end of the quarter, the final U.S. base in Syria was in the process of drawing down and closed in mid-April, ending the 10-year CJTF-OIR presence in Syria.</p>			
At Tanf Garrison (ATG)	Patrol Base Shaddadi (PBS)	Rumaylan Landing Zone (RLZ)	Northern Landing Zone (NLZ)
<p>This base in southern Syria served as a strategic outpost located along the highway linking Baghdad to Damascus. On February 12, U.S. forces transferred ATG to Syrian government forces after departing a day earlier.</p>	<p>U.S. forces had used the base since 2016, when the SDF captured it from ISIS. On February 15, U.S. forces departed PBS and handed it to Syrian government forces.</p>	<p>The base was a hub for CJTF-OIR counter-ISIS air operations and provided air traffic control to hundreds of U.S. military aircraft. On March 15, the Syrian government assumed control of RLZ in coordination with withdrawing U.S. forces.</p>	<p>The largest U.S. base in Syria was a hub for U.S. forces who partnered with the SDF. U.S. forces began to withdraw from the base in mid-February. NLZ was transferred to the Syrian government in mid-April.</p>
IRAQ			
<p>At the start of the quarter, U.S. and Coalition bases remained in Iraq. U.S. forces had departed from al Asad Air Base in Anbar province during the previous quarter. At the end of the quarter, U.S. forces operated largely from Erbil Air Base and the Erbil Diplomatic Support Center in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR). U.S. forces maintained a presence at Harir Air Base and Camp Dahuk in the IKR and at the Baghdad Embassy Complex in federal Iraq.</p>			
Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center (BDSC)	Union III	Erbil Air Base (EAB)/Erbil Diplomatic Support Center (EDSC)	U.S. Diplomatic Facilities
<p>The BDSC was a key logistics base for U.S. Government activities in Iraq, including CJTF-OIR, offering access to an airfield in close proximity to Baghdad’s International Zone and medical support. After the start of OEF, U.S. forces temporarily withdrew from the base.</p>	<p>North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Mission-Iraq assumed responsibility of the Union III base in Baghdad’s International Zone from CJTF-OIR in August 2025. After the start of OEF, NATO Mission-Iraq withdrew almost all of its 1,200 personnel from Iraq. A “skeleton crew” remained to maintain the base.</p>	<p>Erbil Air Base provided air defense coverage for most remaining U.S. forces in the IKR under heavy attacks by Iran and Iran-aligned militias. In anticipation of OEF, CJTF-OIR reduced personnel numbers there to enhance force protection.</p>	<p>U.S. Mission Iraq initiated steps to carry out the ordered departure of non-essential personnel at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, the U.S. Consulate General Erbil, and the BDSC in response to threats and attacks from Iran-aligned militias after the start of OEF.</p>

Sources: See endnotes on page 52.

**Iraq:** U.S. policy remains focused on an advise-assist-enable model under the Strategic Framework Agreement. The OUSW(P) said that an optimal long-term bilateral security relationship between the United States and Iraq will include counterterrorism-focused security cooperation, intelligence sharing, and episodic presence without permanent basing to enable persistent counterterrorism targeting in Iraq and Syria as needed.<sup>20</sup> State said that the United States’ priorities in Iraq are to end the dominance of Iran-aligned militia groups in Iraqi politics and the threat they pose to the United States, Iraq, and the region; to diminish the Iranian government’s influence in Iraq and to promote a strong business relationship between Iraq, the United States, and shared regional partners.<sup>21</sup>



A Syrian refugee woman walks in the snow in the Basirma Refugee Camp in Erbil province on January 23, 2026. (UNHCR photo)

## DETAINEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

As Syrian government forces advanced into northeastern Syria in January, the SDF—the longtime U.S. counter-ISIS security partner in northeastern Syria—collapsed. Many SDF-managed detention facilities holding ISIS detainees and camps housing ISIS-affiliated displaced persons were in the path of the Syrian government offensive. The SDF retreated from several detention facilities in haste, creating a temporary vacuum for ISIS members to escape.

At the al-Hol displaced persons camp, the SDF departed before the arrival of Syrian forces, creating an opportunity for ISIS affiliates and family members to smuggle themselves out. En-masse departures from the camp continued after government forces took control.<sup>22</sup>

Prior to the Syrian government advance, the SDF, with U.S. backing, support, and training, held approximately 9,000 detainees, including 2,000 from countries other than Iraq and Syria. The detainees had been captured during U.S. and SDF counter-ISIS operations in Syria since 2014.<sup>23</sup>

U.S. officials have warned for years that ISIS fighters in detention and ISIS affiliates and loyalists within al-Hol posed an untenable risk. USCENTCOM regularly described ISIS detainees as an “ISIS army in detention.”<sup>24</sup> USCENTCOM said that the thousands of children exposed to radicalization and indoctrination by ISIS loyalists in al-Hol were the potential “next generation of ISIS.”<sup>25</sup>

The United States invested tens of millions of dollars constructing and modernizing SDF detention facilities and training SDF guards for the detention facilities and the camps.<sup>26</sup> The United States repeatedly urged countries to repatriate and either rehabilitate or prosecute their citizens in detention and in the camps.<sup>27</sup> The OUSW(P) reported that despite this call to action, few governments besides the United States and Iraq repatriated their nationals.<sup>28</sup> To mitigate the risk of more detainees escaping, CJTF-OIR transferred 5,704 ISIS detainees from detention facilities in Syria to government facilities in Iraq over several weeks.<sup>29</sup>

Table 3.

**The Syrian Government Offensive**

**January 7-8:** The Syrian government captures Kurdish-controlled neighborhoods in Aleppo in large-scale offensive.

**January 9:** The SDF and the Syrian government reach a ceasefire agreement, allowing SDF forces to withdraw from Aleppo.

**January 10-17:** The SDF withdraws to defensive positions along the Euphrates River.

**January 17-19:** The Syrian government resumes its offensive at multiple points along the Euphrates, capturing Tabqa, Raqqa, and Dayr az-Zawr cities and forcing an SDF retreat.

**January 19:** The SDF and the Syrian government agree to a ceasefire and general terms of integration.

**January 29:** The SDF and Syrian government agree on parameters for gradual SDF integration.

**End of January:** The Syrian government controls nearly all northeastern Syria; the SDF retains control over two Kurdish enclaves near Kobane and Qamishli.

**Source:** Charles Lister, “Integration or Conflict in Northeastern Syria: Ten Key Points to Consider,” Middle East Institute, 1/29/2026; Al Jazeera, “Kurdish-led SDF Agrees Integration with Syrian Government Forces,” 1/30/2026; CJTF-OIR, response to DoW OIG request for information, 26.2 OIR SUPP007, 4/29/2026.

**ISIS Detainees Escape Amid SDF Withdrawal**

On January 19, as the SDF forces retreated, ISIS fighters escaped from the SDF-run Shaddadi detention facility in northeastern Syria.<sup>30</sup> The OUSW(P) said that as many as 150 detainees escaped.<sup>31</sup> Later, the Syrian government stated that it recaptured a large number of escaped prisoners from Shaddadi, but several dozen remained at large.<sup>32</sup> The incident highlighted the risk of ISIS regeneration through the return of its detained fighters during the instability, CJTF-OIR said.<sup>33</sup>

U.S. forces did not intervene in the hostilities. CJTF-OIR reported that its orders during the January offensive were to “remain vigilant and adopt a neutral pose.”<sup>34</sup> The SDF said that it abandoned its detention centers and al-Hol due to the lack of international support and the need to protect its forces and remaining territory.<sup>35</sup> The SDF said in a statement that before it withdrew from Shaddadi, it issued multiple calls for the Coalition to intervene to help safeguard the facility.<sup>36</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that U.S. forces did take action to set up a perimeter at the Panorama detention facility to secure it.<sup>37</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that in response to the rapidly changing environment, it adjusted its operational priorities to first, bolster force protection due to proximity of U.S. bases to heavy fighting, and second, secure ISIS detainees at facilities affected by the conflict. Continued pressure on ISIS became the third priority.<sup>38</sup>

U.S. officials continued to mediate between the sides during critical phases of the conflict to prevent escalation and civilian casualties. In early January, during the Aleppo fighting, CJTF-OIR mediation contributed to a ceasefire that allowed a peaceful SDF retreat from a highly populated area, preventing significant loss of life, according to CJTF-OIR. This mediation continued through the fighting in January.<sup>39</sup>

## U.S. Operation Relocates Thousands of ISIS Detainees

On January 19, the Syrian government and the SDF agreed to an initial ceasefire. When the ceasefire was extended to a permanent agreement on January 29, the sides began the process of integrating the SDF into the Syrian government.<sup>40</sup> U.S. military leaders had previously indicated an interest in the new Syrian government taking over the detention operations, but doubts remained about the ability of Syrian government personnel to guard and run large detention facilities and maintain security in the northeast, according to media and analyst reports.<sup>41</sup> The CJTF-OIR commander emphasized that the Coalition bore a responsibility to ensure that the ISIS detainees were secure, regardless of which local force or government administered the facilities.<sup>42</sup>

To prevent more detainee escapes, the United States coordinated with the Iraqi government to receive custody of ISIS detainees from facilities in Syria.<sup>43</sup> On January 21, USCENTCOM announced that it had launched a mission to transfer up to 7,000 ISIS detainees to the Iraqi government “to help ensure the terrorists remain in secure detention facilities.”<sup>44</sup> U.S. diplomats worked with the Syrian and Iraqi governments to facilitate the transfers, State reported.<sup>45</sup> U.S. forces transported the detainees by rotary and fixed-wing aircraft and ground convoys to Baghdad International Airport for transfer to Iraqi authorities.<sup>46</sup> On February 13, USCENTCOM reported that it had completed the operation, ultimately transferring 5,704 ISIS detainees from detention facilities in Syria to government facilities in Iraq.<sup>47</sup> The transferred detainees originated from approximately 70 different countries.<sup>48</sup> State reported that the detainees self-reported their countries of origin.<sup>49</sup> The majority of the detainees—more than 3,500—were Syrian, according to Iraq’s National Center for International Judicial Cooperation.<sup>50</sup>

By the end of the quarter, the Syrian government had assumed full operational control and ownership of all detention facilities in northeastern Syria previously managed by the SDF, CJTF-OIR reported. The SDF maintained daily guard force and day-to-day responsibilities at the Panorama Detention Facility.<sup>51</sup> State reported that managing these facilities in a secure and humane manner in the long term requires improvements in detention infrastructure, case management, and judicial capacity, and continuation of basic humanitarian services.<sup>52</sup>

The United States, Iraq, and Syria continued to engage third countries to take back their nationals, but domestic political considerations make it difficult for these countries to act, State said.<sup>53</sup> There were no repatriations of foreign terrorist fighters to their countries of origin during the quarter, State said.<sup>54</sup>

## United States Works with Iraq to Accept, Manage Detainees

CJTF-OIR coordinated the transfer of ISIS detainees from Syria with the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service, which managed the transfer of detainees from Syria and their movement to Iraqi detention facilities, transferring full responsibility to the Iraqi government.<sup>55</sup> The Iraqi government plans to investigate and prosecute the detainees, and it has assured the U.S. Government that it will treat detainees in accordance with its domestic and legal obligations.<sup>56</sup>

State reported that the U.S. Government engaged the Iraqi government and the international community on how to best support Iraq with secure and humane detentions, investigations, prosecutions, and repatriations of the ISIS detainees. State said that it has every expectation that Iraq will fulfill its relevant treaty obligations with respect to the detainees.<sup>57</sup>

At a meeting of the Coalition to Defeat ISIS small group meeting in Riyadh on February 9, U.S. Ambassador to Türkiye and Special Envoy to Syria Thomas J. Barrack and Saudi Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Waleed A. Elkhareiji co-chaired a session to discuss the ISIS detainee transfers from northeast Syria to Iraq, the displaced persons camps, juvenile detention centers, and third-country national repatriations. Coalition members expressed willingness to continue to work with the Iraqi government on addressing their counterterrorism and stabilization needs.<sup>58</sup>

Although U.S. forces have not recently provided supervision and support to Iraqi detention facilities at the scale of previous U.S. support in northeastern Syria, a Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) funding packet is being staffed by CJTF-OIR for one-time stipend payments and potentially supplies and equipment to support Iraq's detention of transferred detainees from Syria.<sup>59</sup> During the quarter, State contributed funding to an international organization to provide support for Iraqi detention facilities. Further, State identified potential U.S. foreign assistance to support Iraq's efforts to detain, investigate, and prosecute the ISIS detainees.<sup>60</sup> However, the Iraqi government is under significant fiscal stress due to the disruption of oil exports and it has not announced a clear plan on how to manage their detention or establish legal pathways to trial or repatriation.<sup>61</sup>

In March, Iraq reported that drone attacks by Iran-aligned militias had struck close to the al-Karkh prison where many of the ISIS detainees transferred from Syria are currently housed, threatening the security of the facility.<sup>62</sup>

## ISIS Likely to Try to Rebuild Following Escapes of Affiliates in Syria

In March, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence assessed that ISIS in Syria will probably seek to “rebuild its ranks, expand support networks, and solicit funds,” from the thousands of ISIS detainees and ISIS-affiliated individuals who escaped or were released from prisons and displaced persons camps previously run by the SDF.<sup>63</sup> The United Nations estimated that approximately 3,000 ISIS fighters remained in Syria and Iraq as of February.<sup>64</sup>

**Syria:** The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) reported that ISIS in Syria is one of the most likely ISIS branches to plot external terrorist attacks. However, ISIS is also directing its international supporters toward its African strongholds and not the Middle East, recognizing Africa as its key sanctuary of global growth.<sup>65</sup> ISIS continues to operate from urban areas, focused in Dayr az Zawr, Hasakah, Damascus, and Aleppo. The group is most active in areas formerly controlled by the SDF, likely exploiting security vacuums created by the rapid integration of these areas under Syrian government control, according to a terrorism monitoring organization.<sup>66</sup> The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General warned that Syrian President Ahmed al-Shara'a was a “priority target” for ISIS, noting five assassination attempts against al-Shara'a and the Foreign Affairs and Interior ministers in 2025.<sup>67</sup>

**Iraq:** ISIS showed little ability in Iraq to exploit instability and distraction of Iraqi security forces during OEF. Recently transferred ISIS detainees demonstrated continuing adherence to ISIS ideology but demonstrated no capacity to orchestrate escape from detention.<sup>68</sup>



An alley inside al-Hol camp, in northeastern Syria, on October 14, 2025. (French Air Force photo)

## Al-Hol Camp Closes, Most Residents Leave Following Government Takeover

On January 20, after withdrawing from the Shaddadi detention facility, SDF forces withdrew from the al-Hol displaced persons camp, where the SDF had maintained security and helped contain a population in the camp that included ISIS family members and loyalists. CJTF-OIR reported that the SDF's sudden departure created a significant security vacuum. The camp was temporarily left without a formal security presence, during which residents and outside groups looted administration buildings, fires broke out, and groups of residents began to move freely within and out of the camp. Humanitarian organizations were unable to safely access the camp.<sup>69</sup>

Though Syrian government forces soon took over the camp administration, al-Hol's population continued to decline. Over several weeks, women and families related to ISIS fighters received organized assistance to leave the camp, primarily traveling to Idlib in northwestern Syria. CJTF-OIR said that these activities to smuggle groups of ISIS loyalists from the camp were reportedly facilitated by local networks.<sup>70</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that government forces neither prevented nor intervened to stop the ISIS smuggling operations from the camp.<sup>71</sup> The Syrian government relocated remaining residents to other facilities, including a camp in Akhtar in Aleppo governorate. CJTF-OIR reported that remaining Iraqi families were registered for repatriation. The Syrian government officially closed al-Hol on February 22.<sup>72</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that the closure of al-Hol and the departures of former al-Hol residents, particularly those with suspected ISIS affiliations, created an ongoing security concern and signified "broader regional security implications."<sup>73</sup>

The SDF withdrawal ended a 7-year effort to contain the ISIS threat in al-Hol and find an international solution for the tens of thousands of displaced persons confined in the camp.<sup>74</sup> In 2019, the small camp in the remote desert of northeastern Syria had swelled to more

than 70,000 residents following the U.S. and SDF forces' capture of the last ISIS-controlled territory in Syria.<sup>75</sup> Most of the residents were Iraqis and Syrians, while an estimated 10,000 were foreign nationals, many believed to be wives and families of ISIS fighters, who were held in a separate section of the camp. Through the following years, the foreigners' annex at al-Hol remained a security problem with ISIS ideologues continuing efforts to recruit, intimidate, and indoctrinate residents, particularly children. USCENTCOM warned that violence and recruitment persisted in al-Hol and the smaller Roj camp in northeastern Syria.<sup>76</sup> By the end of 2025, after significant Coalition efforts and repatriations by Iraqi and other countries of origin, 23,411 residents had remained in the al-Hol camp.<sup>77</sup>

As many as 20,000 residents had left al-Hol before the government moved the remaining residents and shuttered the camp.<sup>78</sup> State reported that the United States continued to advocate with countries of origin to repatriate their remaining nationals who were moved to other camps.<sup>79</sup>

Research and human rights organizations also raised concerns for ordinary civilians and victims who had been held at al-Hol under what they described as arbitrary detention, and who now faced reduced access to healthcare and increased risks of harm and abuse.<sup>80</sup> One major human rights organization reported that the chaotic and unplanned departures exposed women and children to serious risk, including trafficking, exploitation, and coercion or recruitment by armed groups. The organization also reported that at the Roj camp, residents said that Asayish forces were subjecting them to nightly raids and beatings, destruction of property, theft, verbal harassment, threats, extortions, and kidnappings for ransom.<sup>81</sup> State reported that it continued to fund one program in northeastern Syria that supports the protection and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups.<sup>82</sup>

As of March 31, the Roj camp remained under SDF control in coordination with the Syrian Interior Ministry, State reported. As of March 23, Roj hosted approximately 791 households (2,454 individuals), a slight increase from the previous quarter, when Roj hosted 746 households (2,324 individuals). Exact numbers for each nationality were not available, State said. The majority were third-country nationals, State reported.<sup>83</sup>

## Last Iraqi Repatriations from Northeast Syria Arrive at al-Amal

As of March 16, the al-Amal Rehabilitation Center held 6,100 individuals, near its maximum capacity of 6,500. On February 19, 55 households (193 individuals) arrived at al-Amal.<sup>84</sup> State reported its expectation that the population of al-Amal would be reduced by 75 percent by the end of 2026, although the ongoing U.S.-Israeli conflict with Iran has created programming delays due to safety concerns for staff and beneficiaries.<sup>85</sup> In total, more than 21,500 Iraqis have returned from the al-Hol and Roj camps since 2021, according to the UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency).<sup>86</sup>

During the quarter, the United States continued to support camp management and service provision at al-Amal. State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) funded al-Amal camp management, essential services provided by the International Organization for Migration, and water and sanitation services provided by UNICEF (the UN Children's Fund), largely continuing services from the prior quarter. State's Bureau of Near Eastern

**By the end of 2025, after significant Coalition efforts and repatriations by Iraqi and other countries of origin, 23,411 residents had remained in the al-Hol camp.**

According to State, the integration agreement enables continuation of the counter-ISIS campaign through the central government in Damascus.

Affairs continued to manage awards that originated at USAID to provide food provisions at al-Amal Center through the World Food Program. State's Bureau of Counterterrorism funded the International Organization for Migration to provide case management services and mapping.<sup>87</sup>

Other donor nations, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and Switzerland, provided funding support to residents of al-Amal. UN agencies also provided support for education, child protection, health and nutrition services, legal services, reintegration, shelter, camp coordination and management, mental health and psychosocial services.<sup>88</sup>

Residents at al-Amal suffer from overcrowding and gaps in basic services. However, satisfaction surveys demonstrate positive feedback regarding the International Organization for Migration's implementation of essential support. Key barriers to the return of displaced persons include lack of civil documentation (affecting more than 50 percent of returnees), movement restrictions, social stigma and community rejection, housing insecurity, income instability, and limited access to government compensation for destroyed homes.<sup>89</sup>

## SYRIAN GOVERNMENT

### SDF Accepts Terms on Integration, Key Questions Remain

By January 20, Syrian government forces had advanced across much of SDF-held territory in northeastern Syria and the SDF had retreated to two core Kurdish areas in the northeastern corner of Hasakah governorate and around the city of Kobani on the Turkish border.<sup>90</sup> Ambassador Barrack stated that the SDF's greatest opportunity lay in full integration into the Syrian state with equal rights for the Kurds.<sup>91</sup>

**Ceasefire and agreement to integrate:** The January 29 agreement laid out parameters for a gradual SDF integration into the Syrian government, including the transfer of civil and government institutions as well as border crossings and entry points. The deal permitted Syrian government forces to enter the cities of Hasakah and Qamishli, while allowing the SDF to retain four military brigades tasked with operating in Kurdish-majority areas, media reported.<sup>92</sup>

The agreement followed efforts by U.S. diplomatic and defense officials to mediate between the parties; facilitate the transfer of ISIS detainees from Syria to Iraq; and support confidence building measures.<sup>93</sup> On February 14, Secretary of State Marco Rubio held a meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani and former SDF Commander Mazloum Abdi at the Munich Security Conference, where he emphasized the importance of implementing the permanent ceasefire and integration agreement.<sup>94</sup> According to State, the integration agreement enables continuation of the counter-ISIS campaign through the central government in Damascus.<sup>95</sup> Ambassador Barrack praised the agreement, saying it provided "real protections for the Syrian Kurds."<sup>96</sup>

As of the end of the quarter, the ceasefire was holding and integration was proceeding, albeit slowly, State said.<sup>97</sup> According to media and research organization reporting, three SDF brigades integrated into the Syrian army in northeastern Syria, and a separate SDF unit in Kobani integrated into a division of the Syrian government affiliated with the

Aleppo governorate.<sup>98</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that SDF leaders received roles in the provincial administration as integration implementation continued.<sup>99</sup> The sides exchanged prisoners, and displaced persons returned to Kurdish areas.<sup>100</sup> CJTF-OIR said that both sides continued to coordinate on integration, but tensions remain.<sup>101</sup>

**Progress on integration:** For the SDF, while the deal meant the surrender of autonomy, it was the only viable choice as the United States signaled its intent to shift its partnership from the SDF to the government of President al-Shara'a in support of a unified Syrian military.<sup>102</sup> The deal also raised questions about the fate of the Kurdish communities in northeastern Syria. Syria is backed by Türkiye, which has long seen the SDF as an offshoot of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, that waged a violent insurgency in Türkiye. Türkiye had long supported militias in northern Syria that engaged in fighting the SDF.<sup>103</sup>

In late January, Syria's Interior Ministry ordered the immediate implementation of a new decree granting citizenship to Kurdish minorities, including those listed as stateless and those residing in Syria. Under the decree, Syria committed to safeguard the language and culture of Syrian Kurds, as well as the teaching of Kurdish language in the public and private schools in Kurdish majority areas, media reported.<sup>104</sup> In a symbolic gesture, President al-Shara'a invited a group of Kurdish community members to the presidential palace on the dual occasion of Eid al-Fitr and Nowruz in March.<sup>105</sup> On April 1, the Syrian government announced that Kurdish residents could start submitting their citizenship applications for the first time in Syrian history.<sup>106</sup>

At the same time, uncertainty remains about modalities for key aspects of integration. The UN Deputy Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria said that these issues include SDF integration into the Syrian army and police; the future role of the Kurdish Women's Protection Units, commonly known as the YPG; the incorporation of civil employees into state institutions; and the parameters of Kurdish-language education.<sup>107</sup> During the quarter, State said that it continued to facilitate Syrian-led processes and protections for all communities.<sup>108</sup> State-funded democracy, human rights, and governance programs supported survivor-centered justice, reconciliation, child rights, and other human rights protections.<sup>109</sup>

## U.S. Unable to Account for CTEF-provided Equipment to the SFA

The Syrian Free Army (SFA), which was a CJTF-OIR partner at the At Tanf Garrison in southeastern Syria for years, also integrated into the Syrian government. CJTF-OIR reported that equipment and weapons that it had provided to the SFA through the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) during years of counter-ISIS partnership, remained with the SFA as it integrated into the government.<sup>110</sup> CTEF supports the counter-ISIS mission by providing targeted assistance to vetted partners to enhance counter-ISIS capability and operations.<sup>111</sup> CJTF-OIR was not able to account for CTEF-supplied equipment transferred to the SFA, for several reasons:<sup>112</sup>

- There is no legal mechanism for the seizure of CTEF-supplied equipment because CTEF authorities do not provide for U.S. confiscation of previously transferred equipment.<sup>113</sup>

**For the SDF, while the deal meant the surrender of autonomy, it was the only viable choice as the U.S. signaled its intent to shift its partnership from the SDF to the government of President al-Shara'a in support of a unified Syrian military.**

**The DIA assessed that the Syrian government will almost certainly continue to struggle with command and control of its integrated military, especially as it attempts to absorb the new SDF brigades.**

- While a regular foreign military sales program has a formalized end-use monitoring agreement, the CTEF program does not establish a similar post-transfer tracking mechanism with a host nation.<sup>114</sup>
- The Syrian government was not party to the original CTEF vetting and transfer arrangements with the SFA, creating a gap in accountability as the SFA integrated into Syrian government structures.<sup>115</sup>

## Syrian Government Faces Counter-ISIS Test

The DIA reported that despite the influx of diverse and unvetted groups into the Syrian military, the government's January offensive was "a fairly unified operation."<sup>116</sup> However, the DIA assessed that the Syrian government will almost certainly continue to struggle with command and control of its integrated military, especially as it attempts to absorb the new SDF brigades.<sup>117</sup>

With the integration of the SDF and the departure of U.S. forces from Syria, the Syrian government is now positioned at the forefront of the counter-ISIS fight in the country. One Syria research analyst noted that the al-Shara'a government is still fragile as it asserts control over a complex environment fraught with ethnic and sectarian tensions. While Syria now has the backing of the United States, the ISIS challenge will be a test for the Syrian government during such a fragile transition.<sup>118</sup>

Another analyst assessed that building up the Syrian government's counter-ISIS functions previously performed by the SDF will take time. These functions include building human intelligence networks, particularly among the myriad tribes in Syria; building a guard force to take over detention facilities; and addressing the ISIS threat amid the competing priorities of rolling out services and civil and administrative institutions across the country.<sup>119</sup>

## Extremist Infiltration Hampers Counterterrorism Partnership with Syrian Government

Foreign fighters, including former extremist groups, participated in the Syrian government offensive.<sup>120</sup> The DIA reported that the inclusion of former extremists and lack of rigorous vetting have enabled malign actors to infiltrate the Syrian military. These groups undermine stability through abuses against minority groups or attacks on Coalition forces like the attack that killed two U.S. Soldiers and an American interpreter in Palmyra in December.<sup>121</sup>

The extent to which ISIS has infiltrated the Syrian military is unclear, though the OUSW(P) assesses it to be limited.<sup>122</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that during the civil war, many forces now in the Syrian military had ambiguous relationships with ISIS, complicating background assessments, while U.S. investigations and vetting are limited to information the Syrian government provides.<sup>123</sup> According to the OUSW(P), the jihadist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, formerly led by now-Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa, has since disavowed and targeted ISIS and al-Qaeda.<sup>124</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that U.S. forces face potential insider threats in any future coordination, training, or combined operations with the Syrian government. U.S. forces therefore must assume potential compromise of any information-sharing, which limits intelligence

cooperation that is essential for counterterrorism effectiveness. Infiltrated personnel could also steer operations away from ISIS targets. Additionally, infiltration undermines institutional integrity and will hamper the government’s ability to develop sustainable independent counterterrorism capabilities. CJTF-OIR said that ISIS elements within the government could also provide the group with early warning of operations, allowing ISIS fighters to evade targeted operations and posing risk to U.S. forces.<sup>125</sup>

State’s Bureau of Counterterrorism works through the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS to support the Syrian government’s counterterrorism capabilities and help ensure Syria cannot become a haven for terrorists.<sup>126</sup>

State reported that since taking control of Syria, President al-Shara’a has ceased all cooperation with Iran, Hezbollah, and other Iran-aligned militia groups that had been in effect during the regime of deposed dictator Bashar al-Assad, and disrupted many smuggling routes formerly used by Iran and its proxies. Syria took additional steps following the launch of OEF to fortify its borders and prevent Hezbollah and Iran-backed militias from re-entry into Syria, State said.<sup>127</sup>

## United States Continues Focused Diplomacy to Build Relationship with Syrian Government

State’s Syria Regional Platform, located in the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul and the U.S. Embassy in Amman, pursues U.S. policy priorities related to Syria.<sup>128</sup> State reported that the platform continued to support U.S. diplomatic efforts, including periodic in-person diplomatic engagements in Damascus.<sup>129</sup>

During the quarter, the United States continued to encourage Syria to increase responsibility for ensuring security and countering terrorism in the country, State said.<sup>130</sup> At a February 9 small group meeting of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Foreign Minister Assad al-Shaibani emphasized that Syria will work with Coalition members to confront and defeat ISIS and encouraged Coalition members to increase their counterterrorism, stabilization, and economic assistance to Syria, State reported.<sup>131</sup> Ambassador Barrack said that Syria’s participation in the meeting—its first as a member of the Coalition—marked “a new chapter in collective security.”<sup>132</sup>

Ambassador Barrack also met with Syrian and regional political leaders throughout the Middle East and Europe to discuss issues related to Syria-Israel security talks, de-escalation in Suwayda, and Gulf countries supporting stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Syria, State said.<sup>133</sup>

During the quarter, State continued to work with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to support the complete and verifiable destruction of any remnants of the Assad regime’s chemical weapons program. In March, the organization’s Technical Secretariat reported that there may be more than 100 additional locations that might be related to chemical weapons sites and activities in addition to the 26 declared locations.<sup>134</sup> On March 18, the United States participated in an event announcing the launch of the Syrian-led international Breath of Freedom Task force, which will coordinate efforts to support Syria’s chemical weapons destruction efforts, strengthen Syrian national capacities, and mobilize

**State reported that since taking control of Syria, President al-Shara’a has ceased all cooperation with Iran, Hezbollah, and other Iran-aligned militia groups that had been in effect during the regime of deposed dictator Bashar al-Assad, and disrupted many smuggling routes formerly used by Iran and its proxies.**

technical and operational support.<sup>135</sup> Other task force country participants include Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Qatar, and Türkiye.<sup>136</sup>

State said that it continued to assess options for future diplomatic presence in Syria, including the potential resumption of operations of the U.S. Embassy in Damascus.<sup>137</sup> Media reported that State informed Congress on February 10 of its “intent to implement a phased approach to potentially resume embassy operations in Syria.”<sup>138</sup> For FY 2027, State requested \$20 million for a phased resumption of State’s presence in Syria and an additional \$45.8 million to support security operations.<sup>139</sup>

On March 2, following the start of OEF, the U.S. Government called on U.S. citizens to leave Syria immediately, in addition to 12 other countries in the Middle East.<sup>140</sup> On March 3, the U.S. Embassy in Amman, where approximately half of the Syria Regional Platform staff work, conducted an ordered departure of non-emergency personnel and eligible family members.<sup>141</sup>

Table 4.

#### U.S. Diplomatic Engagement with Syria, January–March 2026

**January 6:** Trilateral meeting between the United States, Israel and Syria in Paris results in the establishment of a joint fusion mechanism for intelligence sharing, military deescalation, diplomatic engagement and commercial opportunities under the supervision of the United States.

**January 27:** President Donald J. Trump spoke with President al-Shara’a by phone. Al-Shara’a emphasized the need to unify efforts to prevent return of VEO groups, including ISIS.

**January 28:** U.S. facilitated a bilateral integration agreement between the Syrian government and the SDF.

**February 4:** Ambassador Barrack attends the signing of a memorandum of understanding between a U.S. energy company, the Syrian Petroleum Company, and a Qatari company developing Syria’s first offshore oil and gas field.

**February 9:** Ambassador Barrack co-chaired a Small Group Meeting of Defeat-ISIS Coalition in Saudi Arabia. Syria attends for the first time as a Coalition member.

**February 14:** Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosted a trilateral meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani and SDF Commander Mazloum Abdi at the Munich Security Conference to discuss integration.

**February 23:** Ambassador Barrack met with the Kurdistan Regional Government president, Masoud Barzani, to discuss developments in Syria.

**February 24-25:** U.S. and Syrian government representatives attend Silicon Valley forum, fostering stronger economic ties. Syria’s Minister for Communications and Information Technology signed an agreement between an American financial services company and the Syrian government.

**February 27:** United States facilitated the exchange of 25 detained Syrian government and 61 Druze fighters.

**February 27:** The United States supports the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee’s removal of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham from the UN sanctions list, ending the UN 1267-imposed assets freeze, travel ban, and arms embargo.

**March 11:** Syria opens an account with the U.S. Federal Reserve in New York for the first time since 2011. The U.S. Department of the Treasury says it is working with the Syrian government to integrate it into the global financial system

**March 18:** Ambassador Barrack chaired a UN Security Council briefing on Syria.

**Sources:** See endnotes on page 52.

**Ibrahim Olabi, Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations, briefs reporters after the Security Council meeting on the situation in Syria, on February 13, 2026. (UN photo)**



## U.S. Facilitates Syrian Security Cooperation with Neighbors

As the Syrian government continued to consolidate control across the country and develop its ability to counter terrorist threats, the United States continued diplomatic efforts to strengthen the Syrian government’s security relationships with other countries in the region.<sup>142</sup>

**Israel:** Ambassador Barrack continued to convene meetings between Syrian and Israeli leadership to broker a security arrangement between the two countries, State reported.<sup>143</sup> On January 6, the United States convened a trilateral meeting in Paris with Israeli and Syrian government officials that resulted in the establishment of a joint fusion mechanism for intelligence sharing, military deescalation, diplomatic engagement and commercial opportunities under the supervision of the United States.<sup>144</sup> According to State, the mechanism serves as a platform to address disputes promptly.<sup>145</sup>

However, distrust between Syria and Israel remained. During the quarter, Israel announced that it struck a Syrian government command center and weapons cache in southern Syria in the Suwayda governorate, where tensions remained high between the government and separatist Druze factions, who are supported by Israel.<sup>146</sup> Israel has conducted at least 160 strikes in Syria since fighting erupted between Druze factions and government forces in Suwayda in July 2025, seeking to protect the Druze minority from violence and to demilitarize southern Syria.<sup>147</sup> State reported that Syria, with support from the United States and Jordan, continued to uphold the ceasefire in Suwayda and support the September 2025 “Roadmap,” which includes a reconciliation process.<sup>148</sup> The United States provided aid funding to Christian, Druze, and Bedouin communities in the region.<sup>149</sup> However, a UN report released in late March reported that approximately 155,000 people remained displaced since the fighting, the governorate remained divided and clashes persisted, and political dialogue was stalled.<sup>150</sup>

**Jordan:** On March 12, representatives from Jordan and Syria discussed strengthening security and defense cooperation in Damascus. Both sides agreed to continue cooperation on counterterrorism, narcotics, and arms smuggling, State reported.<sup>151</sup> During the quarter, Jordan launched a pilot training program for more than 280 Syrian police cadets in Jordan. Further

training of up to 3,000 Syrian police personnel may continue, depending on funding support, State said.<sup>152</sup>

**Türkiye:** The DIA reported that Türkiye provided Syria with support and assistance during the January offensive against the SDF, while also continuing to provide technical and advisory training to the Syrian military. Türkiye has stated that it will withdraw its forces from Syria once the government establishes control along the border between the two countries. However, a senior Turkish official said in February that conditions did not yet support a Turkish troop withdrawal from Syria.<sup>153</sup> State reported that it continued to engage with Türkiye on Syria, including to support dialogue between the Syrian government and SDF on integration. Türkiye maintains a close, multi-faceted partnership with the Syrian government and Turkish officials said that they cooperate effectively with Syria on counterterrorism activities.<sup>154</sup> According to State, no Syria Working Group meetings took place during the quarter.<sup>155</sup>

## THE IRANIAN THREAT

### Militias Attack U.S. and Iraqi Bases Across Iraq

Iran and its proxies responded to Operation Epic Fury with retaliatory strikes against U.S. facilities and U.S. allies across the region.<sup>156</sup> (See Table 5.) In Iraq, Iran-aligned militias struck Coalition-affiliated targets with unmanned aircraft systems (UASs), rockets, and missiles.<sup>157</sup> These attacks also targeted hotels, oil industry infrastructure, U.S. diplomatic facilities, airports, and Iraqi military and intelligence facilities.<sup>158</sup> Large numbers of foreign civilians working in Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) fled.<sup>159</sup>

**Federal Iraq:** Most attacks against Coalition targets in federal Iraq were perpetrated by hardline Iran-aligned militias, including Kata'ib Hezbollah, Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada, and Harakat al-Nujaba.<sup>160</sup> Militias likely conducted the attacks under guidance from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.<sup>161</sup>

Table 5.

#### Estimated Iranian and Iran-aligned Militia Attacks, February 28–April 8

Country	Number of Reported Attacks
Iraq	Number of attacks not publicized
Syria	Number of attacks not publicized; limited in number, focusing on U.S. installations
Kuwait	1,221 systems (852 UAS, 369 missiles)
United Arab Emirates	2,819 systems (2,256 UAS, 563 missiles)
Saudi Arabia	680 systems (612 UAS, 68 missiles)
Qatar	267 systems (69 UAS, 196 missiles)
Jordan	291 systems (125 UAS, 166 missiles)
Bahrain	Intercepted (523 UAS, 194 missiles)

Source: Ahmad Sharawi, "Iran's War Against Regional States: UAE Bore the Brunt, Iraqi Kurdistan Still Under Fire," Foundation for Defense of Democracies, 4/18/2026.

On March 21, a drone struck the Iraqi National Intelligence Service headquarters, killing an Iraqi employee.<sup>162</sup> Two drones struck an Iraqi radar system located at the Umm Qasr naval base.<sup>163</sup> Drones also targeted Balad Air Base, where Iraq's F-16 fighter aircraft are located, and Camp Taji north of Baghdad.<sup>164</sup>

The sustained attacks against U.S.-affiliated targets mark a significant escalation from the 12-day war in June 2025, when militias in Iraq refrained from targeting U.S. forces, even after U.S. strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities. Analysts assessed that the militias' restraint was the result of Iranian direction and discouragement from the Iraqi government.<sup>165</sup> Militias in Iraq were given more autonomy to conduct attacks, according to media reports.<sup>166</sup>

The BDSC and the Embassy Baghdad Compound came under regular attack by one-way attack UAS after the start of OEF.<sup>167</sup> Videos were published in March of Iran-aligned militia drones penetrating U.S. air defenses at the BDSC and the embassy compound and targeting critical base infrastructure.<sup>168</sup> Media sources speculated that Iran-aligned militias were able to penetrate counter-UAS defenses at U.S. bases through the use of fiber-optic cable drones operated by kilometers-long cables making them immune to electronic jamming and radiofrequency detection.<sup>169</sup>

**Iraqi Kurdistan Region:** Iran and Iran-aligned militias targeted the U.S. base at Erbil Airfield with regular missile and drone attacks. Several other facilities in the IKR, including Kurdish government and security facilities, were also targeted.<sup>170</sup> A rocket attack on March 24 on a Peshmerga base killed 6 Peshmerga and wounded at least 30.<sup>171</sup> Drones targeted the residences of IKR President Nechirvan Barzani and the residence of former IKR President Masoud Barzani on March 28 and 29; the strikes were so extreme that even the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps issued a formal condemnation.<sup>172</sup>

Air defense systems operated by U.S. forces intercepted dozens of missile and drone attacks in the IKR, but only in the vicinity of U.S. facilities. Kurdish Peshmerga lack significant air defenses to cover the rest of the IKR, leaving their forces and energy infrastructure highly vulnerable to attacks.<sup>173</sup>

**Journalist abducted:** On March 31, suspected Kata'ib Hezbollah operatives abducted U.S. freelance journalist Shelly Kittleson in central Baghdad. According to a media report, Iraqi security officials and the FBI coordinated efforts to investigate the abduction and obtain Kittleson's safe release on April 7.<sup>174</sup> Kittleson's departure was delayed by several hours due to a drone attack on a convoy of U.S. diplomats and FBI agents.<sup>175</sup>

## U.S. Mission Iraq Conducts Emergency Ordered Departure

U.S. Mission Iraq personnel and facilities sustained more than 600 attacks.<sup>176</sup> State reported that Iran and Iran-aligned militias launched drone attacks on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, the U.S. Consulate General in Erbil, and the BDSC. In addition, pro-Iranian rioters clashed with Iraq Security Forces as they tried to enter the International Zone where the embassy is located.<sup>177</sup>

U.S. Mission Iraq implemented immediate measures to ensure the safety of over 2,500 Chief of Mission personnel in Iraq.<sup>178</sup> On March 2, U.S. Mission Iraq initiated steps to carry out the ordered departure of non-essential personnel from the embassy, consulate, and the BDSC.<sup>179</sup>

**U.S. Mission  
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from  
February 28  
to March 23.**

**The U.S. Government supported reimbursed relocation of contractors out of Iraq beginning February 5, reducing the number of contractors in Iraq from 2,200 to 450 mission critical personnel by February 28.**

At the time, Iraqi airports were closed, and terrorist threats restricted evacuation flights. On March 5, personnel from the consulate were evacuated, followed by the evacuation of more than 500 personnel from BDSC and the embassy on March 9.<sup>180</sup>

U.S. Mission Iraq requested USCENTCOM support for the relocations. In coordination with State, U.S. Mission Iraq, and supporting U.S. forces, USCENTCOM refined and implemented a standing plan for military-assisted departures. Commercial or contracted transportation was unavailable due to the deteriorating security conditions, so USCENTCOM provided military aircraft to facilitate the 2,820 departures over 11 days.<sup>181</sup> CJTF-OIR moved a command and control element to Baghdad with additional force protection and air defense assets to facilitate the departures. USCENTCOM also shifted defensive air assets, medical coverage, ground mobility, and logistics to support the operation.<sup>182</sup>

### **U.S. Challenged by Evacuation of Mission Critical Military Contractors and U.S. Citizens**

In anticipation of Operation Epic Fury, U.S. forces and interagency partners began planning in January to reduce the number of U.S. and third-country national contractors in Iraq supporting U.S. forces. The U.S. Military Group-Iraq (USMILGRP-I) and the Defense Attaché Office established a system for by-name daily accountability of contractors in Iraq and at Tower 22 in Jordan through contractor site leads. The U.S. Government supported the reimbursed relocation of DoW contractors out of Iraq beginning February 5, reducing the number of contractors in Iraq from 2,200 to 450 mission critical personnel by February 28.<sup>183</sup>

During the military-assisted departures from Iraq in March, space was provided to DoW contractors for additional relocations. An additional 47 U.S. citizens requesting evacuation were also offered evacuation on military flights. USMILGRP-I and the Defense Attaché Office coordinated with Iraqi authorities for two chartered flights to evacuate 60 contractors from Ali Flaih Air Base (formerly Balad) who were supporting Iraq's fleet of F-16s. 18 other U.S. citizens, including 4 children, were also evacuated from Iraq.<sup>184</sup>

Contractors supporting CJTF-OIR suffered six casualties in drone and missile attacks on U.S. bases. One contractor from Kenya was killed and two required higher-level medical care and were evacuated to their home countries.<sup>185</sup> Media reporting stated that some contractors in Erbil were relocated to local hotels with limited security and not offered the option to evacuate despite heavy attacks against Erbil Air Base. Media sources reported that the Iraqi government threatened to terminate one \$252 million contract for base support if its personnel evacuated. Contractors in Erbil reported that some management staff were evacuated, but this option was not provided to non-management staff.<sup>186</sup>

### **U.S. Strikes Iran-aligned Militias**

At a press briefing on March 19, U.S. Air Force General John Daniel Caine, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, confirmed that U.S. forces were conducting defensive strikes in Iraq against Iran-aligned militias that threatened U.S. personnel in Iraq.<sup>187</sup> USCENTCOM did not provide further details on how many strikes the United States conducted in Iraq against the militias or which militias were targeted by U.S. forces.<sup>188</sup>

Strikes attributed to the United States targeted militia locations across Iraq, including militia command and control facilities.<sup>189</sup> U.S. forces struck militia leadership and reportedly killed a senior Kata'ib Hezbollah commander.<sup>190</sup> Analysts noted that the United States reportedly targeted 16 different militia elements, but refrained from decapitation strikes against the highest level of militia commanders.<sup>191</sup>

## Iraq Claims Neutrality, Protests U.S. Strikes

Following the start of OEF, the Iraqi government publicly stated its intention to remain politically neutral. The Iraqi government condemned all sides of the conflict that used its airspace and territory for military operations. Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani claimed that both the United States and Israel repeatedly violated Iraqi airspace and that U.S. strikes on Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) positions caused casualties.<sup>192</sup>

The United States strongly criticized the caretaker government led by Prime Minister al-Sudani for failing to take action to prevent militia attacks against diplomatic facilities, energy infrastructure, and security institutions in Iraq.<sup>193</sup> The OUSW(P) stated that the Iraqi government “failed in its responsibility to protect U.S., Coalition, and allied personnel and facilities from over 500 attacks launched by Iran and its proxies.”<sup>194</sup> Similarly, State said that the Iraqi government has taken no discernible action to address Iraqi militia attacks against Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Bahrain.<sup>195</sup>

The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad’s Chargé d’Affaires, Joshua Harris, pressed Iraqi government officials to empower the Iraqi Security Forces to disrupt militia command structures, enforce arrest warrants for perpetrators of the attacks against U.S. facilities in Iraq and fully expel militias from Iraqi facilities, including those associated with the Iran-aligned PMF.<sup>196</sup> Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau summoned the Iraqi Ambassador to the United States on April 9 to strongly urge action by the Iraqi government and admonish Iraqi leaders for their failures to act.<sup>197</sup> The Deputy Secretary’s summons coincided with an April 8 attack on a convoy of U.S. diplomats and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents on the grounds of Baghdad International Airport as they were escorting an American journalist freed after a recent abduction.<sup>198</sup>

Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein acknowledged to State that these “armed factions” possess both military and parliamentary power and had expanded their attacks on Iraqi institutions.<sup>199</sup> The militias have retained a pervasive influence throughout Iraqi political and security structures with perceived impunity, even after attempting to assassinate the Prime Minister of Iraq in 2021.<sup>200</sup> In a March 3 statement, the militia Kata'ib Hezbollah threatened the Iraqi government directly if it attempted to constrain the group. Despite Prime Minister al-Sudani describing such groups as “outlaws” in the past, the Iraqi government has not taken action to disarm or delegitimize such groups.<sup>201</sup>

On March 24, Iraqi state media reported that Iraq’s National Security Council, chaired by Prime Minister al-Sudani, authorized Iraqi forces to retaliate after defensive strikes carried out by Coalition forces.<sup>202</sup> When Iraqi Army soldiers were killed along with Iran-aligned militia members at a joint base, Prime Minister al-Sudani summoned a senior U.S. embassy leader to deliver an official note of protest.<sup>203</sup>

**The OUSW(P) stated that the Iraqi government “failed in its responsibility to protect U.S., Coalition, and allied personnel and facilities from over 500 attacks launched by Iran and its proxies.”**

## SUPPORT TO PARTNER FORCES

At the start of the quarter, U.S. forces continued unilateral and partnered counter-ISIS missions. U.S. forces continued Operation Hawkeye Strike in January and February, a campaign of expanded strikes against ISIS targets in Syria. On January 16, USCENTCOM announced that it had killed an ISIS fighter linked to the December 13, 2025, attack that killed two U.S. Soldiers and an American interpreter near Tadmur.<sup>204</sup> USCENTCOM reported that, as of February 14, Operation Hawkeye Strike had resulted in the death or capture of more than 50 ISIS members and the destruction of over 100 ISIS infrastructure targets.<sup>205</sup> These efforts concluded with the initiation of Operation Epic Fury.<sup>206</sup>

During the quarter, the Syrian government continued to collaborate with U.S. forces to counter specific ISIS threats, State reported.<sup>207</sup> Syrian government forces continued unilateral operations against ISIS across the country that resulted in numerous arrests of cells plotting attacks. This included a broad operation to arrest ISIS leaders in the Dayr az Zawr area in March.<sup>208</sup>

### Funding

The Office of the Under Secretary of War (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer reported that of the approximately \$15.9 billion enacted for OIR in FY 2024, FY 2025, and FY 2026, \$10.3 billion had been obligated as of April 22, 2026.<sup>209</sup>

**Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF):** CTEF is the primary vehicle through which CJTF-OIR provided assistance to Syrian and Iraqi partner forces. (See Table 6.)

**Foreign Military Financing (FMF):** Congress appropriated \$1.35 billion for Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Iraq from FY 2020 through FY 2025. Of this amount, State said that it redirected \$109.6 million in FY 2025 appropriations to another country's FMF account. As of March 31, \$948.5 million (70 percent) of available funds had been spent.<sup>210</sup>

Table 6.

**CTEF Funding for Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, in \$ Millions, as of March 31, 2026**

	FY 2024/2025		FY 2025		FY 2026	
	Enacted	Obligated	Enacted	Obligated	Enacted	Obligated
<b>Iraq</b>	\$242.0	\$216.4	\$380.8	\$87.6	\$212.5	\$0.0
<b>Syria</b>	102.8	95.2	146.4	85.5	130.0	0.0
<b>Lebanon</b>	3.2	2.3	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$348.0</b>	<b>\$313.9</b>	<b>\$528.7</b>	<b>\$173.1</b>	<b>\$342.5</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>

Source: OUSW(C), response to DoW OIG request for information, 26.2 OIR 015, 4/28/2026.

**U.S. Airmen load GBU-31 munition systems onto an F-15E Strike Eagle in support of Operation Hawkeye Strike on January 10, 2026. (U.S. Air Force photo)**



## Coalition Advisory Mission in Iraq Transitions to Bilateral Partnership

During the quarter, CJTF-OIR concluded its advisory mission in federal Iraq. NATO Mission–Iraq also completed its retrograde, reducing Coalition advisory support to Iraq to its lowest level since the beginning of OIR in 2014.<sup>211</sup>

During the quarter, CJTF-OIR transitioned several of its responsibilities to USMILGRP-I, a team of U.S. military and U.S. Government civilians that support security cooperation activities from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad under Title 22 authorities administered by State. During the quarter, USMILGRP-I was in the process of drawing down from 71 personnel to 51.<sup>212</sup> It now handles coordination with the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service (CTS), but U.S. advisory support to that unit has largely concluded.<sup>213</sup>

During the quarter, CJTF-OIR transferred management of the U.S. coordination relationship with the Joint Operations Command-Iraq to USMILGRP-I. The Joint Operations Command-Iraq has served as the primary operational coordination mechanism with Iraqi forces during OIR, but a new bilateral format has begun to manage higher-level security coordination between the United States and Iraq.<sup>214</sup>

USMILGRP-I’s mobility is constrained by the non-permissive security environment in Iraq (still a designated Combat Zone). Routine movements for physical meetings with Iraqi counterparts require the coordination of a security detail escort through the embassy’s Regional Security Office, even within the International Zone in Baghdad.<sup>215</sup>

The CJTF-OIR Commander, the Chargé d’Affaires of the U.S. Mission Iraq, and the U.S. Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché meet biweekly with the Iraqi Chief of the General Staff, the Director of the Iraqi National Intelligence Service, and the Iraqi Interior Minister.<sup>216</sup> CJTF-OIR reported that while military-to-military engagements with Iraqi security leaders have been “robust,” progress on areas of higher-level cooperation has stalled due to the caretaker status of the current Iraqi government since the November 2025 elections.<sup>217</sup>

**CJTF-OIR temporarily suspended advisory support to the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs and Peshmerga due to urgent force protection issues and the Iranian threat.**

A major issue emerging from the transition between CJTF-OIR and USMILGRP-I has been the lack of clarity over responsibility for the protection of U.S. citizens working in Iraq, particularly U.S. Government employees and contractors. These responsibilities have been divided between the USCENTCOM and the U.S. embassy. USCENTCOM said that a review of U.S. citizen entries to Iraq is underway to rectify uncertainties about force protection responsibilities, but it has yet to be completed.<sup>218</sup>

### **U.S. Advisory Support to Kurdish Security Forces Paused Due to OEF**

CJTF-OIR temporarily suspended advisory support to the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs and Peshmerga due to urgent force protection issues and the Iranian threat. U.S. advisory units relocated away from high-threat areas to locations outside of Iraq, but U.S. forces plan to resume their advisory support at the conclusion of OEF as conditions permit.<sup>219</sup> The current memorandum of understanding for advisory support with the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs is due to expire in September.<sup>220</sup>

OEF also disrupted U.S. partnered counter-ISIS operations with the Kurdish Peshmerga, though CJTF-OIR coordinated with the Peshmerga throughout the quarter on air and missile defense and counter-Iran operations.<sup>221</sup> Counter-Iran operations in federal Iraq, including with the Peshmerga, were stymied by the influence of Iran-aligned PMF units in the JOC-I and Iraqi political leadership.<sup>222</sup>

CJTF-OIR reported that the KRG continued to struggle to sustain Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs operations independent of U.S. assistance, particularly in salaries, training, and readiness. With the establishment of two Area Commands with security authority over the Iraqi Kurdistan Region this year, CJTF-OIR anticipates moving its advisory role from the division level up to higher levels of command. The Kurdistan Regional Government is saddled with \$33 billion in debt and dependence on federal budget transfers from Baghdad, making continued resource shortages likely.<sup>223</sup>

### **U.S. Continues Support for Security Assistance Programs**

During the quarter, State, through its Non-Proliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs account, allocated an additional \$19 million in Iraq to maintain maximum pressure against ISIS and Iran-aligned militia groups. In addition, State's global threat reduction programs provided \$2.1 million to secure chemical and biological materials, dual-use equipment, technologies, expertise, and infrastructure. These efforts worked to counter threats from Iranian-aligned militia groups employing UAS against U.S. forces and regional partners.<sup>224</sup>

State also allocated \$2.3 million for security assistance to enhance Iraq's border security at Baghdad International Airport and various land crossings. State conventional weapons destruction programs continued operations obligating \$15 million to support the survey and clearance of U.S.-origin munitions in southern Iraq, address explosive remnants of war in northern Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, and mitigate explosive hazards in areas liberated from ISIS.<sup>225</sup>

### End-Use Monitoring

Defense articles and materiel provided to Iraq under the Arms Export Control Act are subject to end-use monitoring (EUM) to ensure compliance with the terms of the transfer agreement. Monitors from USMILGRP-I conduct EUM. “Routine” EUM is a requirement that occurs in conjunction with other security cooperation events during which the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, Counter Terrorism Service, and the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs account for thousands of defense articles in quarterly reports.<sup>226</sup>

“Enhanced” EUM is a requirement for annual, in-person accounting of enhanced-designated articles. In Iraq, night-vision devices and Stinger missiles comprise 95 percent of the nearly 5,900 enhanced-designated articles. When security conditions prevent monitors from traveling to conduct in-person accounting where the items are normally stored, Iraqi partners aggregate items at locations accessible to U.S. personnel. This allows the serial numbers of designated articles to be verified, ensuring compliance with regulations and applicable transfer agreements. Since their return from ordered departure in spring 2024 through the end of March 2026, U.S. personnel verified 5,534 defense articles during physical inspection visits, State said. However, since U.S. Mission Iraq returned to ordered departure status in March 2026, degraded security conditions and site access constraints have complicated EUM operations. Despite these challenges, USMILGRP-I has achieved 87 percent EUM compliance for the period from March 12 to April 1.<sup>227</sup>

### Leahy Law Certification

State reported that it was not aware of any instances during the reporting period in which U.S. assistance to the ISF violated the Leahy laws. The Leahy laws refer to two statutory provisions prohibiting certain U.S. assistance from being provided to a unit of a foreign security force if the U.S. Government has credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. State vets proposed recipients of such assistance to determine if there is credible information that they have committed a gross violation of human rights.<sup>228</sup>

## IRAQI GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY

According to State’s latest Integrated Country Strategy for Iraq, the United States seeks to foster stability and economic growth in Iraq, bolster democracy and governance, and ensure Iraq’s sovereignty and security.<sup>229</sup>

### Government Formation Deadlocked, Prime Minister Selection in Doubt

In January, the Iran-aligned Shia Coordination Framework, Iraqi parliament’s largest political bloc, nominated former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki as their candidate to be prime minister. President Trump responded on social media opposing al-Maliki as prime minister.<sup>230</sup> State said that the selection of al-Maliki as the next prime minister of Iraq would force the U.S. Government to reassess the U.S.-Iraq relationship. Further, al-Maliki’s selection would have a negative outcome for the Iraqi people.<sup>231</sup>

**Approximately 80 percent of Iraq's oil exports stopped due to Iran's threats to commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.**

Following a months-long failure to advance government formation, the Iraqi parliament elected former environment minister and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan stalwart Nizar Amedi as president on April 11, 5 months after the national parliamentary elections. Amedi secured 227 of 242 votes cast after defeating the Kurdistan Democratic Party candidate Minister of Foreign Affairs Fuad Hussein.<sup>232</sup> In late April, President Amedi designated Ali al-Zaidi, a businessman with no established political base, to be Iraq's prime minister and invited him to form a government.<sup>233</sup>

### **Iran War Prompts an Economic Crisis**

OEF led to a dramatic decrease in Iraq's oil and non-oil revenues, putting substantial fiscal strain on the government and forcing it to rely on reserves and prioritize spending to meet public obligations.<sup>234</sup>

Across federal Iraq and the IKR, oil and gas companies cut production and issued force majeure declarations due to heightened security risks, staff withdrawals, targeted attacks by Iran-aligned militias, and logistical constraints.<sup>235</sup> In the IKR, the closure of the Khor Mor gas field reduced gas supplies to power plants, temporarily affecting electricity generation in the IKR.<sup>236</sup> In addition, approximately 80 percent of Iraq's oil exports stopped due to Iran's threats to commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.<sup>237</sup>

Meanwhile, Iraq continued efforts to secure alternate export routes for its oil. U.S. Mission Iraq played a mediating role in helping Iraq's federal government and the KRG reach an agreement to transport at least 250,000 barrels per day of crude oil from the Kirkuk oil fields in federal Iraq via the Iraqi Kurdistan pipeline to connect to the Iraq-Türkiye pipeline to Türkiye's Ceyhan port. The KRG Ministry of Oil told State that oil started flowing on March 18.<sup>238</sup>

During the quarter, Iraq's Minister of Oil and Syria's Energy Minister discussed rehabilitating the pipeline connecting Kirkuk to the port of Baniyas, Syria on the Mediterranean.<sup>239</sup> In late March, Iraq's oil marketing company signed agreements with four traders to transport 650,000 metric tons (4.6 million barrels) of fuel oil per month to Syria by tanker truck. Media reported that on March 31 the first convoy of tanker trucks carrying Iraqi fuel oil entered Syria via the al-Waleed border crossing enroute to Syria's Baniyas port to be loaded on ships. This development marked the beginning of Iraqi overland export of petroleum products by tanker trucks through Syria, Türkiye, and Jordan in response to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.<sup>240</sup>

## **U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO SYRIA**

### **HUMANITARIAN SITUATION**

In 2026, 15.6 million people in Syria will require humanitarian assistance, including over 5.5 million internally displaced persons, according to the UN Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).<sup>241</sup> The outbreak of hostilities involving Iran, the integration of the SDF into the Syrian government, the closure of al-Hol camp, and continued Israeli incursions into southern Syria further complicated the humanitarian situation in Syria during the quarter.<sup>242</sup>

**Displaced persons and returnees:** During the quarter, the UNHCR declared the situation in the Middle East a “major humanitarian emergency,” requiring immediate response.<sup>243</sup> In 2025, more than 1.3 million Syrians returned from other countries, State said, citing the UNHCR and the Syrian government.<sup>244</sup> In addition, 5.5 million Syrians remained internally displaced.<sup>245</sup>

In January, escalating conflict between the Syrian government and the SDF in northeast Syria resulted in service disruptions, humanitarian access constraints, and the displacement of 147,000 people in Hasakah governorate and 134,000 people in Aleppo governorate. Conditions stabilized following the January 29 ceasefire, but conflict-induced humanitarian needs remained heightened as of late March, State reported.<sup>246</sup> Following the start of OEF, which involved Israeli attacks inside Lebanon, nearly 170,000 people entered Syria from Lebanon (most of them Syrians), as of March 30.<sup>247</sup> In southern Syria, State reported that the humanitarian situation remains “fragile” due to continuous local skirmishes and mortar and artillery fire, incurring civilian casualties and damage to critical infrastructure.<sup>248</sup>

In a move that reflects a strategic shift towards durable solutions for displacement, the Syrian government announced a “No Camps 2026” policy initiative to support transitioning internally displaced persons away from prolonged encampment towards more sustainable, dignified living arrangements.<sup>249</sup> The initiative will work to reduce long-term dependency by facilitating access to housing, basic services, and livelihood opportunities within host communities and areas of return, while supporting local absorption capacity.<sup>250</sup>

**Severe weather:** Heavy rainfall and winter conditions exacerbated needs, particularly for displaced people living in tents and non-winterized shelters.<sup>251</sup> In early February, the World Food Program activated emergency coordination in response to flooding in the Idlib governorate which affected 21 displaced person camps and an estimated 5,300 displaced persons. The World Food Program distributed ready-to-eat rations to all affected families, State reported.<sup>252</sup>

**Unexploded ordnance:** Severe, nationwide contamination from unexploded ordnance continued to impede agricultural production, humanitarian operations, and economic recovery this quarter.<sup>253</sup> Almost 700 people were killed and 1,193 injured by unexploded ordnance in Syria between December 2024 and February 2026. Thirty percent of those killed and 40 percent of those injured were children, UNICEF reported.<sup>254</sup>

## U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

As of March 31, the U.S. Government was the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to Syria, State reported, citing UN data.<sup>255</sup> During the quarter, State approved \$187 million in new humanitarian assistance for Syria.<sup>256</sup> Of this, \$33 million will go to an international organization to provide protection, emergency health, water, and sanitation assistance, and improve conditions for detainees; and an additional \$4 million, once obligated, will provide emergency bridge humanitarian assistance in priority areas including northeast Syria, predominantly Kurdish areas, and Suwayda for 2 months, State reported.<sup>257</sup>

According to State, U.S. contributions to UNICEF, UNHCR, and other humanitarian organizations help Syrian families meet basic needs and support reintegration of families to their home communities. However, Ambassador Barrack said that Syria now has a “chance”

**In January, escalating conflict between the Syrian government and the SDF in northeast Syria resulted in service disruptions, humanitarian access constraints, and the displacement of 147,000 people in Hasakah governorate and 134,000 people in Aleppo governorate.**

to end its dependence on foreign assistance, noting that the lifting of U.S. and international sanctions has unlocked more opportunities for the Syrian people.<sup>258</sup>

State reported that it managed 23 active humanitarian assistance programs supporting Syria during the quarter.<sup>259</sup> State also managed four active programs that provided stabilization assistance and 15 programs in support of democracy, human rights, and governance. The United States also supported efforts to survey and clear areas of explosive hazards in order to make critical infrastructure sites safe for use and paving the way for other stabilization priorities.<sup>260</sup> (See tables on pages 34–37.)

Several implementing staff members of U.S.-funded programs were abducted, detained, or reported missing during the reporting period, though all were subsequently accounted for. In separate incidents, additional staff members were affected by security events, including armed robbery.<sup>261</sup>

Following the July 2025 transition of USAID awards to State, the State Assistance Coordination award teams met with implementors to work through the transition for implementors.<sup>262</sup> As of late January, State reported one outstanding payment each to two awards, one in Iraq and one in Syria, due to changes in payment processes as of last year resulting from the transition of USAID awards to State.<sup>263</sup>

**New humanitarian assistance framework:** In late December 2025, State and OCHA agreed on a new framework for U.S. humanitarian assistance, accompanied by a \$2 billion contribution. The funding supports 18 priority countries, including Syria, through contributions to OCHA and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund.<sup>264</sup>



**U.S. Ambassador to Türkiye and Special Envoy to Syria Thomas J. Barrack chairs the UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East. (UN photo)**

During the quarter, as part of its \$2 billion contribution, State approved \$150 million for the OCHA-managed Syria Humanitarian Fund, which provides rapid, flexible financing to international and national non-governmental organizations and UN agencies in Syria to deliver lifesaving aid<sup>265</sup>

State reported that it will utilize OCHA-managed pooled funds instead of a system of hundreds of individual grants. Under the agreement, OCHA is required to strengthen accountability mechanisms to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse, and include protections from sexual exploitation and abuse. OCHA will also be required to create accountability and impact teams to ensure assistance reaches the population.<sup>266</sup>

**Syria Recovery Trust Fund:** During the quarter, State remained actively engaged on the Syria Recovery Trust Fund Steering Board and Management Committee on both strategic and operational decision making.<sup>267</sup> The fund works to promote the stabilization and recovery of northern Syria through its interventions in agriculture, food security, health, water, electricity, access to finance/livelihoods and waste management.<sup>268</sup>

**Food assistance:** State said that its support to the World Food Program in Syria was scheduled to end by March 31. Some of the funding State provided to the OCHA Syria Humanitarian Fund will likely go to the World Food Program for food and nutrition assistance, State said.<sup>269</sup>

As of the end of March 2026, UNHCR reported Iraq hosted more than 351,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, 88 percent of whom were Syrian.

## U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ

### HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

As of the end of March 2026, UNHCR reported Iraq hosted more than 351,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, 88 percent of whom were Syrian.<sup>270</sup> Most of these refugees live in the IKR and a quarter of those live in 9 refugee camps there.<sup>271</sup> 100,000 internally displaced people still live in 18 displaced persons camps because of housing or civil identification issues, according to the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Iraq.<sup>272</sup>

### U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

On July 1, 2025, five USAID-funded foreign assistance programs, totaling \$27 million, were transferred to State. At the end of the quarter, two of the programs had expired and two of the programs were extended and received additional funding to provide lifesaving food assistance, health, shelter, and protection activities. In addition to the 3 remaining programs transferred from USAID, State had 16 active foreign assistance programs and 15 democracy and human rights programs as of the end of the quarter.<sup>273</sup> (See tables on pages 38–40.)

U.S. assistance during the quarter included higher-education awards that promoted American-style education, support to U.S. companies looking to open and expand their business in Iraq, and programs focused on the finance sector and the economy designed to address regulatory and transparency issues in Iraq that hamstring U.S. businesses and favor Iran-aligned groups and China.<sup>274</sup>

Following the start of OEF, U.S. personnel located in Iraq have been temporarily evacuated, and locally employed staff are working remotely.<sup>275</sup> State reported that U.S. programs in Iraq continued to provide services to beneficiaries despite the conflict.<sup>276</sup>

U.S. Funding for the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund ended February 19, 2026, according to State.<sup>277</sup> The U.S. helped establish the fund in 2014 to help reintegrate families of former Islamic State militants in their countries of origin, and the fund began investing in Iraq in 2024.<sup>278</sup> After the U.S. withdrawal from fund, State reported that reintegration support for individuals leaving the al-Amal Center, which the fund supported through grants to 13 civil society organizations in Iraq, will no longer be funded by the United States.<sup>279</sup>

## Assistance Program Monitoring and Vetting in Iraq and Syria

State reported that third-party monitoring of humanitarian programs in Syria and Iraq resumed in November 2025.<sup>280</sup> The Middle East and North Africa Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Services (MENA MELS) program now monitors all State-managed humanitarian assistance projects in Syria and Iraq that were transferred from USAID on July 1, 2025, including awards in Iraq to the World Food Programme and the International Organization for Migration.<sup>281</sup>

As of January 2026, MENA MELS monitored three humanitarian assistance projects in Iraq, including in the food assistance, protection, shelter and settlements, and water, sanitation, and hygiene sectors. MENA MELS monitored six humanitarian projects in Syria, including food assistance and health programming, according to State.<sup>282</sup>

During the quarter, third-party monitoring staff in Syria conducted site visits at 40 locations across 13 assignments in 10 governorates, covering 7 implementing partners and 6 sectors.<sup>283</sup> The third-party monitoring contractor increased site visits during the quarter, and State received its first monitoring reports, providing independent, field-based insights into program implementation.<sup>284</sup> State used these findings to identify areas requiring follow-up and inform programmatic adjustments.<sup>285</sup> Approximately \$419,000 in equipment and commodities from Syria remained pending disposition at the end of the quarter.<sup>286</sup>

State managed a separate monitoring contract for the Iraq higher education awards within the stabilization portfolio and utilized third-party monitoring for monthly site visits to monitor and oversee high-risk awards.<sup>287</sup>

State said that the MENA MELS contract has two unpaid invoices dating prior to the USAID to State transition.<sup>288</sup> However, no interest penalties for late payments accrued during the quarter. According to State, there are payments for two invoices totaling \$2,501,000 for Iraq programs that are 30 days past due.<sup>289</sup> Payments owed by a U.S. Government agency more than 30 days past due accrue interest under the Prompt Payment Act.<sup>290</sup>

# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

### Classified Appendix to this Report

A classified appendix to this report provides additional information on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR), as noted in several sections of this report. The appendix will be delivered to relevant agencies and congressional committees.

## APPENDIX B

### About the Lead Inspector General

The Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (codified at 5 U.S.C. Sections 401-424), established in section 419 the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) framework for oversight of overseas contingency operations. The Lead IG agencies are the Offices of Inspector General (OIG) of the Department of War (DoW), the Department of State (State), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Section 419 requires the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency to appoint a Lead Inspector General from among the inspector generals of the Lead IG agencies upon the commencement or designation of a military operation that exceeds 60 days as an overseas contingency operation: or receipt of notification thereof.

Lead IG oversight of the operation “sunset” at the end of the first fiscal year after commencement or designation in which the total amount appropriated for the operation is less than \$100 million.

The Lead IG agencies collectively carry out Lead IG statutory responsibilities to:

- Submit to Congress on a quarterly basis a report on the contingency operation and to make that report available to the public.
- Develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight of the operation.
- Ensure independent and effective oversight of programs and operations of the U.S. Government in support of the operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations.

The Overseas Contingency Operations Joint Planning Group serves as a primary venue to coordinate audits, inspections, and evaluations of U.S. Government-funded activities supporting overseas contingency operations, including those relating to the Middle East.

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees, as well as contractors, to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and provide consolidated planning and reporting on the status of overseas contingency operations.

## APPENDIX C

# Methodology for Preparing this Lead IG Report

This report complies with section 419 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (codified at 5 U.S.C. sections 401-424), which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on each overseas contingency operation, and is consistent with the requirement that a biannual report be published by the Lead IG on the activities of the Inspectors General with respect to that overseas contingency operation. The Chair of the Council of the Inspectors General for Integrity and Efficiency designated the DoW IG as the Lead IG for OIR. The State IG is the Associate IG for the operation.

This report covers the period from January 1, 2026, through March 31, 2026. The three Lead IG agencies—DoW OIG, State OIG, and USAID OIG—and partner oversight agencies contributed the content of this report.

To fulfill the congressional mandate to report on OIR, the Lead IG agencies gather data and information from Federal agencies and open sources. The sources of information contained in this report are listed in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except in the case of audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations referenced in this report, the Lead IG agencies have not verified or audited the information collected through open-source research or from Federal agencies, and the information provided represents the view of the source cited in each instance.

### INFORMATION COLLECTION FROM AGENCIES AND OPEN SOURCES

Each quarter, the Lead IG agencies gather information from the DoW, State, USAID, and other Federal agencies about their programs and operations related to OIR. The Lead IG agencies use the information provided by their respective agencies for quarterly reporting and oversight planning.

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report may include the following:

- U.S. Government statements, news conferences, and reports
- Reports issued by international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and think tanks
- Media reports

The Lead IG agencies use open-source information to assess information obtained through their agency information collection process and provide additional detail about the operation.

### REPORT PRODUCTION

The DoW IG, as the Lead IG for this operation, is responsible for assembling and producing this report. The DoW, State, and USAID OIGs draft input to the sections of the report related to the activities of their agencies and then participate in editing the entire report. Once assembled, each OIG coordinates a two-phase review process of the report within its own agency. During the first review, the Lead IG agencies ask relevant offices within their agencies to comment, correct inaccuracies, and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG agencies incorporate agency comments, where appropriate, and send the report back to the agencies for a second review prior to publication. The final report reflects the editorial view of the DoW, State, and USAID OIGs as independent oversight agencies.

## APPENDIX D

# U.S. Assistance Programs in Syria and Iraq

Table 7.

### State Humanitarian Awards in Syria

Funds Obligated Period of Performance	Description
<b>\$13 million</b> September 2025–September 2026	Supports camp management, coordination, and essential services (food and water) in displaced persons camps in northeast Syria. Supports Syrian voluntary returns and reintegration from northeastern Syria.
<b>\$51.4 million</b> January 2025–September 2026	Provides lifesaving assistance to refugees and displaced families in Syria through provision of core relief items, emergency shelter, and protection activities. Facilitates voluntary refugee returns to Syria through shelter rehabilitation, transportation and cash assistance, and access to civil documentation.
<b>\$5 million</b> Flexible regional contribution of which \$5 million is for Syria October 2024–June 2026	Provides lifesaving health and nutrition support to children and women in Palestinian refugee camps in Syria.
<b>\$7.1 million</b> September 2025–September 2026	Provides essential services (water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) nutrition, health, and child protection), reintegration support in priority Syrian governorates, advocacy for member states to repatriate their nationals (children and caregivers), and family tracing and reunification of children.
<b>\$2.9 million*</b> September 2023–September 2026 *Paused due to al-Hol closure.	Provides child protection, education, and emergency mental health services in al-Hol camp to children, youth, and families.
<b>\$23.4 million</b> October 2025–May 2026	Provides lifesaving support in southern Syria with WASH, food, shelter, and health.
<b>\$33 million</b> January 2026–December 2026	Monitors detainees, facilitates family contact and health screenings, delivers emergency WASH and health assistance, and provides protection services to victims of armed conflict.
<b>\$150 million</b> February 2026–December 2026	Provides multi-sector humanitarian assistance across Syria through the OCHA-managed Syria Humanitarian Pooled Fund.
<b>\$4 million</b> January/February 2026	New funding approved and announced during the quarter will provide emergency bridge humanitarian assistance in priority areas including northeastern Syria and Suwayda.

Source: State, response to State OIG request for information, 4/6/2026; State, vetting comment, 5/11/2026.

Table 8.

**USAID Humanitarian Awards in Syria Transferred to State**

<b>Program Title Funds Obligated Period of Performance</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Lifesaving Interventions for Emergencies (LIFE)</b> <b>\$88.1 million</b> July 2023–September 2026	Humanitarian coordination, information management, and assessment; protection; WASH; shelter; food assistance; and agriculture in northern Syria.
<b>Supporting the food security of severely food insecure population in Syria</b> <b>\$153.6 million</b> December 2023–March 2026	Food assistance, humanitarian coordination, information management and assessments, and nutrition in Syria.
<b>Al-Amal</b> <b>\$64.0 million</b> July 2024–March 2026	Food assistance, multi-purpose cash assistance, nutrition, WASH; and economic recovery and market systems in northwestern Syria.
<b>Integrated Health, Nutrition and Protection Assistance in Northeast Syria</b> <b>\$30.2 million</b> April 2024 - March 2026	Lifesaving and specialized health, nutrition, and protection services for the most at risk, conflict-affected populations in Syria.
<b>Provision of holistic protection services to conflict-affected communities in Northern Syria</b> <b>\$12.4 million</b> October 2023–March 2026	Health, protection, and humanitarian coordination in northeastern Syria.
<b>Humanitarian Emergency Assistance, Recovery and Transition for vulnerable communities across northern Syria (HEARTS)</b> <b>\$41.9 million</b> July 2024–March 2026	Food, multipurpose cash assistance, protection, health, shelter and settlements, and humanitarian coordination, information management, and assessment in northeastern and northwestern Syria.
<b>Syria Shelter and Food Emergency Response Phase III (SAFER III)</b> <b>\$56.8 million</b> August 2023–March 2026	Humanitarian coordination, information management, and assessment; protection; water, sanitation, and hygiene; shelter; food assistance, and agriculture in northern Syria.
<b>Provision of Essential Basic Primary Healthcare to Vulnerable Conflict and Earthquake Affected Populations in Idlib and Aleppo</b> <b>\$6.9 million</b> October 2024 - February 2026	To increase the resilience of conflict and disaster affected people in northwest Syria through health services.

*(continued on next page)*

<b>Program Title</b> <b>Funds Obligated</b> <b>Period of Performance</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people in Syria</b> <b>\$27.2 million</b> September 2024–February 2026	WASH, nutrition, protection, and humanitarian coordination, information management, and assessments across Syria.
<b>Multi-Sector Emergency Response for Conflict-Affected Populations in Northeast Syria–Phase V</b> <b>\$28.5 million</b> September 2023–February 2026	Emergency multisector programming to support household needs, vulnerabilities, protection risks, coping strategies and capacities that will increase resilience to respond to shocks and save lives in Syria.
<b>Transformative Humanitarian Response for Integrated Well-being and Empowerment (THRIVE)</b> <b>\$6.2 million</b> June 2024–February 2026	WASH, food assistance, protection, health, and multi-purpose cash assistance in Syria.
<b>LIFELINE: Living Improvement for Emergency response, Life-saving Initiatives, and Necessities in Syria</b> <b>\$28 million</b> April 2024–February 2026	Health, multipurpose cash, nutrition, protection, shelter, and WASH assistance in northern Syria.
<b>Jasmine III</b> <b>\$8.3 million</b> March 2024–February 2026	Food assistance, economic recovery and market systems, nutrition, protection, WASH and humanitarian coordination, information management, and assessment.

Sources: State, response to State OIG request for information, 4/6/2026.



Table 9.

**State Stabilization Awards in Syria**

<b>Program Title</b> <b>Funds Obligated</b> <b>Period of Performance</b>	<b>Goals and Activity Highlights</b>
<b>Community Policing Program in Syria</b> <b>\$22.1 million, inclusive of foreign donor funding.</b> October 2023–September 2026	<b>Goal:</b> Security services in Syria are provided in a more effective manner that inclusively serves, and is supported by, communities. <b>Activities:</b> Support and training of Security Forces, task forces, and community engagement. Activities take place throughout northeastern Syria.
<b>Supporting Local Governance and Essential Services in Syria</b> <b>\$26.9 million, inclusive of foreign donor funding.</b> May 2023–December 2026	<b>Goal:</b> To build the capacity of local Syrian governance actors to better serve Syrian citizens by improving the quality of and access to essential services. <b>Activities:</b> Support essential services in Syria, including firefighting response efforts, water station solarization, and vehicle maintenance and shelter rehabilitations as well as developing regional and sectoral investor guides. Supporting al-Hol returns reintegration efforts for returnee and host communities by providing technical, logistical, and operational support to communities of return to guide reintegration efforts for returnee and host communities.
<b>Supporting Education in Syria</b> <b>\$25.1 million, inclusive of foreign donor funding.</b> November 2021–January 2026	<b>Goal:</b> Fund local education providers and support and training to students, caregivers, out-of-work youth, and community members in both formal and non-formal settings, using tailored psychosocial support and social-emotional learning curricula to address groups most at risk for ISIS recruitment. <b>Activities:</b> Vocational training, teacher training, social reintegration, strengthening access to formal education services, and remedial education in areas reintegrating al-Hol returnees and other areas in northeast Syria, including informal displaced persons camps.
<b>Promoting Accountability in Syria</b> <b>\$1.25 million</b> October 2023–February 2026	<b>Goal:</b> Support the investigation, capture and prosecution of former Assad regime fugitives, ISIS operatives, and other foreign terrorist organizations that pose a threat to U.S. security.

Sources: State, response to State OIG request for information, 4/6/2026.

Table 10.

**State PM/WRA Award in Syria**

<b>Program Title</b> <b>Funds Obligated</b> <b>Period of Performance</b>	<b>Goals and Activity Highlights</b>
<b>Mine Action in Northeast Syria</b> <b>\$22,545,000</b> April 1, 2023–May 31, 2027	<b>Goal:</b> Support economic recovery and stability by reducing the threat from explosive ordnance across northeast Syria. <b>Activities:</b> Survey and clear areas of explosive hazards, making critical infrastructure sites safe for use and paving the way for other stabilization priorities, while also delivering explosive ordnance risk education to affected communities.

Source: State, response to State OIG request for information, 4/6/2026.

Table 11.

**USAID Humanitarian Awards in Iraq Transferred to State**

<b>Program Title</b> <b>Funds Obligated to Date</b> <b>Period of Performance</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Returning with Hope</b> <b>\$5.0 million</b> February 2024–February 2026	Provides support for al-Hol camp returnees to Iraq.
<b>Unconditional food assistance through e-vouchers to returnees from Northeast Syria</b> <b>\$5.2 million increased to \$8.3 million</b> February 2024–June 30, 2026	Provides food assistance through unconditional cash-based transfers to Syrian refugees and through e-vouchers to Iraqi internally displaced persons at al-Amal Center.  Supports Iraqi government efforts to modernize the Public Distribution System (a food ration program) and strengthen social safety net.
<b>Providing Integrated Humanitarian Assistance to Displaced Population in Iraq–Phase II</b> <b>\$3.7 million increased to \$6.7 million</b> October 2024–September 2026	Provides case management; specialized and non-specialized mental health and psychosocial support; protection monitoring; critical shelter assistance; health system strengthening and emergency response enhancement.

Source: State, response to State OIG request for information, 4/6/2026.



Table 12.

**Active State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Awards in Iraq**

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Total Expected Cost</b>	<b>Obligated Total</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
<b>Restoring Life</b>	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	9/30/2021	11/30/2025
<b>School-based Civic Engagement for Reconciliation</b>	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	9/30/2022	6/30/2026
<b>Filling the Gap: Sustaining Accountability for International Crimes</b>	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2026
<b>Iraqi Changemakers</b>	\$1,780,000	\$1,780,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2026
<b>Empowering the C4RJ to Effectively Monitor and Support Efforts to Advance Transitional Justice in Iraq</b>	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000	10/1/2022	9/30/2026
<b>Restorative/Transitional Justice: Truth-Telling, Memorialization, and Reconciliation</b>	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2028
<b>Building Futures</b>	\$1,700,000	\$1,800,000	9/29/2023	9/30/2025
<b>You are the Voice</b>	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	9/30/2024	11/30/2026
<b>Supporting Land Management and Natural Resources Good Governance</b>	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2026
<b>You Are the Change</b>	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2026
<b>Justice for the Shabak</b>	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2026
<b>Protect</b>	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2026
<b>SAFA</b>	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	9/30/2024	9/30/2026
<b>Promoting Governmental and Civil Society Partnership in Human Rights</b>	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	9/30/2023	9/30/2026
<b>Advanced Local Approach in Service Provision for Survivors</b>	\$949,967	\$949,967	9/30/2024	6/30/2026

Source: State, response to State OIG request for information, 4/6/2026.

Table 13.

## State Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Awards in Iraq

Award Title	Total Expected Cost	Obligated Total	Start Date	End Date
Strengthening the Open Budget Process in Iraq	Transferred from A Bureau	\$250,000.00	11/1/2024	3/31/2026
She's Great	\$5,114,355.00	\$5,114,355.00		9/30/2028
U.S. Department of State NEA/Office of Assistance Coordination and Department of Commerce	\$4,200,000.00	\$2,418,402.90	9/30/2023	9/30/2026
Supporting American-Style Higher Ed	\$3,750,000.00	\$3,750,000.00	10/1/2023	9/30/2028
Strengthening American-Style Higher	\$2,550,000.00	\$2,550,000.00	10/1/2022	9/30/2027
Developing a New College of Education at AUIB	\$2,500,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	10/1/2022	9/30/2027
Advancing American-Style Education in Iraq Through the Center for the Advancement of Higher Education in Iraq and the Innovation Lab for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Engineering	\$2,100,000.00	\$2,100,000.00	10/1/2024	9/30/2026
Supporting American-Style Higher Education in Iraq	\$2,100,000.00	\$2,100,000.00	10/1/2024	9/30/2026
Promoting American-Style Higher Education at the Catholic University in Erbil: Investing in Women's Leadership and English Language Excellence	\$1,975,000.00	\$1,975,000.00	10/1/2023	9/30/2027
Strategic Pathways to Excellence in CUE's Accreditation and Social Inclusion Efforts	\$1,900,000.00	\$1,900,000.00	10/1/2024	9/30/2026
Strengthening Institutional Capacity	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000.00	10/1/2022	9/30/2026
Beyond Material Support: Promoting Accountability in Iraq	\$1,450,000.00	\$1,450,000.00	10/1/2021	9/30/2026
Transitional Justice and Rehabilitation Project	\$987,500.00	\$987,500.00	10/1/2023	3/31/2026
Collaborative Capacity Building to Educate Iraqi Youth for Careers in the Private Sector	\$800,000.00	\$800,000.00	10/1/2024	5/31/2026
Yezidi Strategic Litigation Initiative	\$800,000.00	\$800,000.00	10/1/2024	9/30/2026
Mitigating Armed Actor Corruption (MAAC)	\$493,160.32	\$493,160.32	9/27/2024	3/27/2026

Source: State, response to State OIG request for information, 4/6/2026; State, vetting comments, 5/11/2025.

## APPENDIX E

# Completed Oversight Projects

From January 1 to March 31, 2026, the Lead IG and partner agencies issued 1 completed report related to OIR.

### UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### ***Humanitarian Assistance: Actions Needed to Strengthen Inventory Management and Oversight at the Dubai Warehouse***

8-000-26-001-P; March 3, 2026

USAID OIG conducted this audit to determine the extent to which USAID followed Federal standards for managing its humanitarian assistance inventory and conducted oversight of warehouse and third-party inspection contracts at the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance facility in Dubai. The audit covered warehouse operations and activities from October 2022 through March 2025, a period during which the warehouse supported 17 regional crises, including humanitarian responses in Syria and Gaza.

USAID OIG found that USAID did not use quality inventory information to make decisions on humanitarian assistance supplies stored at the Dubai warehouse. Instead, the agency relied on various inventory management tools, some of which required extensive manual entries and verification. The audit identified a \$4 million discrepancy in total inventory value between tools. In addition, USAID did not use inventory information to make forecasting decisions about commodity levels at the warehouse, including what items to store and dispose of. Instead, the agency followed an unwritten process to make decisions based on past procurement levels and response needs. As a result, USAID OIG estimated that the agency incurred over \$900,000 in costs to store \$1.37 million worth of unused commodities from October 2022 through July 2024. The storage costs amounted to 67 percent of the value of the commodities. USAID OIG also found that USAID did not enforce certain oversight requirements outlined in the warehouse management and monitoring contracts. The agency did not enforce requirements for climate control, mechanical equipment maintenance, or inbound commodity inspections putting \$2.5 million worth of commodities at risk of spoiling or being inoperable. In addition, the agency did not ensure that the third-party inspection contractor met monitoring requirements related to pest and temperature control.

USAID OIG recommended that USAID or other government officials responsible for the administration and oversight of the Dubai warehouse update the warehouse contract to define temperature and humidity control, maintenance, and inspections requirements and revise the third-party inspection statement of work to clarify inspection requirements. Both recommendations are open and unresolved. USAID OIG also suggested that decision makers assess warehouse inventory information for accuracy and completeness, enhance procurement planning, and improve the management of certain nonfood items in the future.

## APPENDIX F

# Ongoing Oversight Projects

Table 14 lists the titles and objectives for Lead IG and partner agencies' ongoing oversight projects related to OIR.

Table 14.

### Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to OIR by Lead IG Agencies, as of March 31, 2026

#### DEPARTMENT OF WAR OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

***Audit of the DoW's Management of the Counter-Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) Program Resources for Detention Facilities and Displaced Persons Camps (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0044.000)***

To assess the effectiveness of the DoW's management of CTEF program resources for the improvement of security and humane conditions at detention facilities and displaced persons camps for Islamic State of Iraq and Syria detainees.

***Audit of the DoW's Oversight of Counter-Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Train and Equip Fund Equipment Designated for Iraq (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0093.000)***

To assess the effectiveness of the DoW's oversight of CTEF equipment designated for Iraq. To assess the effectiveness with which the DoW implemented the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan and whether the implementation was in accordance with the Secretary of War's guidance and directed timelines.

#### DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

***Audit of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration's Efforts to Mitigate Terrorist Financing Risks in the Near East (Project No. 25AUD004)***

To determine whether PRM monitored the design and operating effectiveness of mitigation measures for terrorist financing risks after the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel.

***Evaluation of Department of State Administration of Foreign Assistance Programs Transferred from the U.S. Agency for International Development (Project No. 25AUD049)***

To identify State resources for administering foreign assistance awards on behalf of USAID.

Table 15.

### Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to OIR by Lead IG Partner Agencies, as of March 31, 2026

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

***USCIS Priority-2 (P-2) Direct Access Program (DAP) for U.S. Affiliated Iraqis (Project No. 25-027-ISP-USCIS, ICE)***

To determine whether U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) have taken corrective actions on potentially improper refugee resettlement determinations under the Priority-2 (P-2) Direct Access Program (DAP) for U.S.-affiliated Iraqis, and USCIS has implemented controls to detect and prevent fraud in the program.

## APPENDIX G

# Planned Oversight Projects

Table 16 lists the titles and objectives for Lead IG and partner agencies' planned oversight projects related to OIR.

Table 16.

### Planned Oversight Projects Related to OIR by Lead IG Agencies, as of March 31, 2026

#### DEPARTMENT OF WAR OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Evaluation of the U.S. Central Command's Integration of Artificial Intelligence***

To determine the extent to which the U.S. Central Command's current Artificial Intelligence integration strategies are contributing to operational effectiveness across key functional areas, including intelligence analysis, logistics, and cybersecurity.

#### DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Audit of the Department of State's Counterterrorism Vetting***

To determine whether State designed its risk-management and counterterrorism vetting procedures to prevent terrorist organizations from benefiting from U.S. foreign assistance funds.

##### ***Evaluation of the Department of State's Administration of Its Continuing Foreign Assistance Programs***

To describe State's administration of foreign assistance programs and associated awards approved to continue following the reviews required by Executive orders.

##### ***Audit of the Department of State's Efforts to Combat Infectious Diseases in Selected Countries Through the Global Fund***

To determine whether U.S. contributions to the Global Fund are achieving intended results relating to combating HIV, TB, and malaria in selected countries.

##### ***Audit of the Department of State's Administration of Selected Foreign Assistance Funded Contracts***

To determine whether State is administering selected foreign assistance-funded contracts in accordance with Federal and State requirements and whether those contracts are achieving desired results.

##### ***Evaluation of the Department of State's Data Reliability of Foreign Assistance Awards***

To determine the extent to which integrated USAID and State financial and award data are reliable and sufficient for State bureaus to make informed decisions, and to identify potential opportunities for State to expand its oversight of assistance awards.

##### ***Evaluation of the Regional Bureaus' Administration of Foreign Assistance Programs***

To 1) determine how the regional bureaus are administering foreign assistance programs and 2) assess the implementation of foreign assistance budgeting, program design, award design, monitoring, and evaluation.

#### U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Review of Closeout Procedures for Terminated USAID Awards***

To assess USAID's efforts to close out terminated awards in accordance with Federal regulations and USAID policies and procedures.

## APPENDIX H

# Hotline and Investigations

### HOTLINE

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints specific to its agency. The hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; or abuse of authority.

During this quarter, the DoD OIG Hotline received 37 allegations and referred 23 cases related to OIR to Lead IG agencies and other investigative organizations. In some instances, a case may contain multiple subjects and allegations. State OIG received 46 allegations and referred 40, and USAID OIG received no allegations related to OIR. Most allegations during the reporting period related to personal misconduct, criminal allegations, procurement and contract administration and security.

### INVESTIGATIONS

The DoW OIG's criminal investigative component, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), maintained investigative personnel in Bahrain and Kuwait, where they worked on cases related to OIR. Following their departure from the region as a result of Operation Epic Fury, DCIS agents worked on OIR-related cases from offices in Europe and the United States. State OIG and USAID OIG investigators worked on cases related to OIR from Washington, D.C., El Salvador, Germany, Israel, South Africa, and Thailand.

During this quarter, investigative branches of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies ended with 23 open investigations, while 2 investigations were closed during the quarter. One referral was made to the Department of Justice during the quarter.

The Lead IG agencies and their partners coordinate investigative activities, deconflict potential or common targets, and interact for logistical and legal support. The investigative partner agencies consist of representatives from DCIS, State OIG, USAID OIG, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



## ACRONYMS

Acronym	
ATG	At Tanf Garrison
BDSC	Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center
CJTF-OIR	Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve
CTEF	Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund
CTS	Iraqi Counterterrorism Service
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DoW	Department of War
EAB	Erbil Air Base
EDSC	Erbil Diplomatic Support Center
EUM	end-use monitoring
FMF	foreign military financing
IKR	Iraqi Kurdistan Region
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
JOC-I	Joint Operations Command-Iraq
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
LOE	Line of Effort
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General
MENA MELS	Middle East and North Africa Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Services
MoPA	Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Acronym	
NLZ	Northern Landing Zone (Syria)
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OEF	Operation Epic Fury
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
OUSW(P)	Office of the Under Secretary of War for Policy
PBS	Patrol Base Shaddadi (Syria)
PMF	Popular Mobilization Forces
PRM	Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State)
RLZ	Rumaylan Landing Zone (Syria)
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
SFA	Syrian Free Army
State	Department of State
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency
UNICEF	UN Children’s Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USCENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
USMILGRP-I	U.S. Military Group-Iraq
WASH	water, sanitation, and hygiene



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