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Iraqi National Alliance

The Iraqi National Alliance is the successor of the United Iraqi Alliance, which has dominated the government since the December 2005 elections. The major difference is that the Dawa Party is not part of the alliance, following the decision of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to form his own State of Law coalition rather than join the INA. Rumors of impending reconciliation between the two groupings nevertheless persist.

The INA includes the Islamic Supreme Council in Iraq (ISCI), the Badr organization, the Sadrist movement, the Virtue Party (Fadilah), and smaller Shi'i religious groups. It also has reached out to some well-known figures such as Ahmed Chalabi and his Iraqi National Congress and Ibrahim al-Jaafari, who served as prime minister in the 2005–2006 transitional government and is trying to transform himself into a secular leader. Attempts to include Sunni and Kurdish organizations have produced extremely limited results, with only one splinter group of the Awakening councils movement joining, in addition to an individual Sunni scholar and a Kurdish party rooted in the Shi'i Kurdish minority.

Most Significant Members

Party	Representation	Leader(s)
Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI)	Islamist Shi'i	Ammar al-Hakim
Badr Organization	Islamist Shi'i – Mostly Karbala and other southern areas	Hadi al-Amiri
Sadrist Trend	Islamist Shi'i – National, but especially poor southern areas	Moqtada al-Sadr
Islamic Virtue Party	Islamist Shi'i – Southern Iraq; mainly in Basra and Nasiriyah	Hashem al-Hashemi Mohammad Yaqubi – spiritual guide
Iraqi National Congress Al-Mu'tamar al-Watani al-Iraqi	Secular Shi'i	Ahmad al-Chalabi
National Reform Movement	Shi'i	Ibrahim al-Jaafari
Anbar Salvation Council	Sunni – Anbar	Hamid al-Hayes

Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI)



Leader Ammar al-Hakim, who succeeded his father, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, at his death in August 2009.

Date of Founding & Notable Moments The Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) was established in 1982 by Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim while in exile in Iran. In 2007, SCIRI changed its name to ISCI.

Seats in Parliament In the December 2005 elections, SCIRI ran as part of the United Iraqi Alliance, which grouped all major Shi'i parties and won 128/275 seats. Twenty-one of

those seats were won by the SCIRI. The United Iraqi Alliance broke apart in 2007.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 55/440

Notes Considered the most popular Shi'i political party, the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq is also the largest within the INA. Nevertheless, it has been weakened by the illness and eventual death of its leader Abdul Aziz al-Hakim and the fact that Ammar al-Hakim is still new and unproven in the job. SCIRI/ISCI has shown a preference for decentralized government and federalism in Iraq, going as far as suggesting at one point that the nine Shi'i provinces should consider uniting into a single large Shi'i region enjoying an autonomous status similar to Kurdistan. The stand on federalism is a major difference between ISCI and other members of the alliance, particularly the Sadrist movement, which favors a more centralized system.

Ammar al-Hakim has been attempting to broaden the Iraqi National Alliance to encompass all Shi'i religious organizations, including Dawa. Somewhat contradictorily, and in keeping with the new trend in Iraq, he has also sought to reach out to individuals and organizations representing other ethnic and confessional groups.

So far, attempts have mostly failed. First, Maliki has launched his own Rule of Law coalition. Second, Hakim has had little success in broadening the alliance beyond its Shi'i base.

Badr Organization



Leader Hadi al-Amiri

Date of Founding & Notable Moments 1982

Seats in Parliament In the December 2005 elections, the Badr Organization did not compete separately from SCIRI, and the two together gained twenty-one seats.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 55/440 as part of ISCI's list

Notes Previously called the Badr Brigades, the Badr Organization was the armed wing of SCIRI in the fight against Saddam Hussein. It changed its name in 2003, seeking to relaunch itself as a political organization. So far, the Badr Organization has not established a political identity and support base independent of ISCI's.

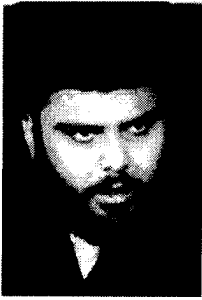
The Badr Organization claims to have turned from a militia into a party, but this claim is open to challenge. In 2008, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, then still allied with ISCI, recruited Badr members to fight alongside the army against Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army. Afterwards, thousands of Badr militiamen were supposedly incorporated into the security forces of the interior ministry, which was then controlled by ISCI. In the more optimistic interpretation, the incorporation of Badr Organization fighters into the interior ministry's forces has completed the transformation of the Badr Organization into a political party. The pessimistic interpretation contends that the incorporation has further politicized the security forces and increased the influence of ISCI on them.

Within the Iraqi National Alliance, the influence of Badr as a group separate from ISCI is unclear.

Sadrist Trend

Leader Moqtada al-Sadr

Date of Founding & Notable Moments The Sadrist Trend was established in 2003, after the ouster of Saddam Hussein. But the Sadr family had long been an important part of the Shi'i resistance to the Saddam regime as well as a leading family among religious scholars. Moqtada's father, Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, was assassinated on Saddam Hussein's orders in 1999. Since then, Moqtada has led an underground



movement that established control over parts of the South soon after the U.S. invasion. The Sadrist Trend has remained a mixture of political party, underground organization, and armed group.

Seats in Parliament In 2005, the Sadrist Trend ran as part of UIA, alongside ISCI and Dawa. The UIA won 128 seats in the 275 seat parliament. The Sadrist Trend won 30 of those seats, more than any other UIA member.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 41/440 seats

Notes The Sadrist Trend's participation in the INA list is uneasy at best, as was its participation in the UIA. Essentially, Sadr has joined the INA because he can neither successfully run alone nor join Maliki's State of Law coalition.

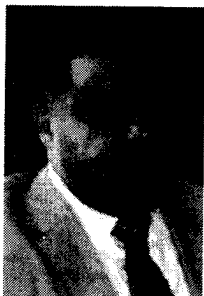
Moqtada al-Sadr is a controversial figure even for Iraq, where controversial figures abound. He is prone to taking extreme positions and is viewed as a threat even by former allies. He has used the support of his militia, the Mahdi army, to strengthen his position, but it is not always clear how much control he actually has over that army.

In March 2008, after an unsuccessful attempt to negotiate the disarming of the Mahdi army, Prime Minister al-Maliki unleashed the Iraqi military on it. Badr fighters also participated in the operation. In practice, Sadr lost Basra through the efforts of both Maliki and the ISCI's al-Hakim.

As a result, it is awkward for Sadr to join either ISCI or Maliki in an electoral alliance. In the end, the Sadrists have chosen to run under the INA umbrella, in spite of some significant differences between them and ISCI.

From a religious point of view, the Sadrists follow the guidance of Grand Ayatollah Kazim al-Hairi, while ISCI derives its legitimacy from Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani. Politically, the Sadrists call for the strengthening of the central government and centralization of power in Iraq (as does Maliki), while ISCI favors a federal system with a weaker center. In addition, the Sadrists have always been critical of ISCI, claiming that they do the bidding of the Iranians. (Sadr himself has close Iranian ties, and during the 2008 attack on the Mahdi Army, Iraqi security forces seized many weapons marked Made in Iran.) Sadrists also claim that the ISCI collaborates with the United States, while the Sadrists consider themselves to be independent and nationalist.

Islamic Virtue Party



Leader Hashem al-Hashemi (Secretary General) & Sheikh Mohammad al-Yaqubi (Spiritual Leader)

Date of Founding & Notable Moments 2003

Seats in Parliament Fadilah ran as part of the United Iraqi Alliance winning fifteen seats, but left it in 2007 to form an independent bloc in the parliament. The party left the UIA in 2007.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 6/440 seats

Notes Fadilah was launched as a political party in April 2003, building on an earlier call for a movement of spiritual renewal. At the time, it was seen as a splinter group of the Sadrist movement since its founding father was also a highly regarded scholar belonging to the al-Sadr family. From the beginning, Fadilah sought to establish its nationalist credentials by calling on the occupying forces to respect Iraqi demands for self-determination.

The Islamic Virtue Party, or Hezb al-Fadilah, ran in previous elections on a platform of decentralization, transparency, and anti-corruption. It had also been calling for more powers for Basra province. Fadilah left the UIA Shi'i-dominated alliance, claiming that decision making power was held in too few hands and that the alliance was far too sectarian. The party lost influence, as demonstrated during the January 2009 provincial elections, when it lost Basra, which was previously its main base of support.

Iraqi National Congress (INC)



Leader Ahmed al-Chalabi

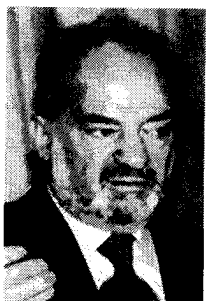
Date of Founding & Notable Moments Created in 1991 by the CIA to coordinate opposition forces in Iraq

Seats in Parliament None. Before the previous elections, the INC broke away from the UIA, forming its own coalition and gaining no seats.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections None.

Notes The Iraqi National Congress was created by the CIA under the George H. W. Bush administration to facilitate the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. The INC was funded and backed by the United States and Chalabi was part of the governing council created upon the toppling of the Baathist regime. Chalabi, who had aspirations for the post of prime minister, has been and remains quite unpopular among Iraqis. He is seen as a willing puppet of the U.S. administration with little legitimacy in Iraq, though he had taken it upon himself to be more critical of the occupying forces in the run-up to the 2005 elections. In 2005, the INC gained no seats in parliament, and is expected not to add much to the INA.

National Reform Movement



Leader Ibrahim al-Jaafari

Date of Founding & Notable Moments 2008

Seats in Parliament None. In 2005, Jaafari ran as a Dawa party candidate, as part of the United Iraqi Alliance, which won 128/275 seats.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 23/440

Notes As an Islamic Dawa Movement member since 1966, Ibrahim al-Jaafari rose through the party ranks to become one of its leading figures. He was forced to leave Iraq in 1980, spending the next two decades in Syria, Iran, and Great Britain. He returned to Iraq in 2003, becoming first spokesman for the Dawa Party and then one of two vice-presidents in the 2004–2005 interim government. In January 2005, after the United Iraqi Alliance's victory in Iraq's first elections, Jaafari became prime minister in the transitional government. His rise was facilitated by his ties not only to the Dawa party, but also to the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (now the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq), which he helped set up in the early 1980s in Iran.

During his tenure in office, Iraq experienced high levels of sectarian strife, the rise of sectarian militias and death squads in the streets and even some ministries, and an increase in corruption. Sunna and Kurds in particular believed that the government was complicit in the violence directed against them. As a result, after the December 2005 elections, under great pressure from representatives of the Sunna and the Kurds, Jaafari was replaced as prime minister by Nouri al-Maliki, another leader of the Islamic Dawa Movement.

Over the next two years, Jaafari disappeared from the public scene amid rumors of conflict within the Dawa

leadership. He made a political come back in 2008, announcing the formation of the National Reform Movement, a new political party that would fight sectarianism, sectarian quotas, and militias. The launch of the new party before the provincial elections was criticized by Dawa leaders as an attempt to divide and further weaken the party. In the event, in the provincial elections Dawa and the new State of Law coalition gained 126 seats and the National Reform Movement 23.

Since the elections, the National Reform Movement has had difficulty maintaining its cohesion. Prominent members broke away in Babil and Qadissiyah, and in the latter province they launched a new group, the Independent Reform Gathering, claiming that Jaafari and a small clique of his close associates led the party ignoring everybody else, and also that the organization was rife with financial corruption.

Anbar Salvation Council



Leader Hamid al-Hayes

Date of Founding & Notable Moments September 2006

Seats in Parliament None, at the time of the 2005 elections the founders of the movement were still cooperating with al-Qaeda.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 2/411

Notes One of the three groups to grow out of the Awakening councils in Anbar province, the Anbar Salvation Council is the first major Sunni organization to join the INA.

Al-Hayes' position is very close to that of Hatem al-Suleiman and his Anbar National Salvation Front, who joined the State of Law coalition. The two share a strong opposition to the Iraqi Islamic Party. The division between them appears to be mostly the result of a struggle for leadership and a different tactical decision about which alliance to join.

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