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State of Law Coalition

The State of Law coalition is the embodiment of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's strategy of recasting himself as a secular, nationalist leader representing all of Iraq, rather than a Shi'i leader rooted in a religious organization. The strategy paid off for Maliki in the 2009 provincial elections, but at the national level, the prospects for the alliance remain uncertain. While Maliki has enticed some individuals and relatively small ethnic and religious organizations into joining the alliance, he has not attracted major personalities and groups to give the coalition a truly non-sectarian character. As a result, the coalition appears lopsided and dominated by Maliki himself.

State of Law has not attracted any of the most significant Shi'i organizations, other than Dawa itself and some splinter groups. Nor has it attracted any Kurdish parties, other than the small United Independent Iraqi Bloc, which represents Shi'i Kurds, a small minority.

The coalition has, however, attracted some Sunni organizations, including the Anbar Salvation National Front of Sheikh Ali Hatem al-Suleiman, one of the three groups into which the Awakening Councils split, and the Independent Arab Bloc of Abd Mutlaq al-Jabbouri, previously part of Tawafuq, plus a smattering of smaller groups. However, the coalition has not attracted core Sunni organizations.

The coalition has also attracted secular elements, including a variety of socialist and Arab nationalist groupings, but none of the major exponents of secularism in post-Saddam Iraq. Most of Maliki's allies appear to be politicians who have influence and popularity at the local or provincial level, rather than nationally.

The fate of the State of Law coalition thus depends heavily on Maliki's own name and the power of the incumbent leader to attract voters, and on the capacity of local and provincial leaders to deliver tangible benefits to their constituents.

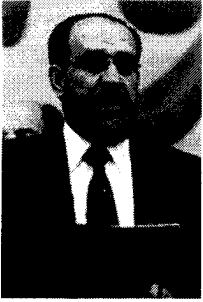
Most Significant Members

Party	Representation	Leader(s)
Islamic Dawa Movement	Moderate Islamist Shi'i	Nouri al-Maliki
Anbar Salvation National Front	Sunni—Tribal—Anbar	Sheikh Ali Hatem al-Suleiman
Independent Arab Movement	Sunni—Previously part of Tawafuk	Abd Mutlaq al-Jabbouri
United Independent Iraqi Bloc	Feyli Kurds	Thaer al-Feyli
The Independent Iraqi Kafaat Gathering	Independent—Secular Shi'i	Ali al-Dabbagh (current government spokesman)
The Gathering—Al-Tajamo	Secular Shi'i—Previous Iraqi List members	Mahdi al-Hafez Safiyah Suheil

Islamic Dawa Movement

Leader Nouri al-Maliki

Date of Founding & Notable Moments Founded in October 1957 by Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-



Sadr as a religious force in opposition to growing Arab nationalism and the secularization of the Iraqi state.

Seats in Parliament Ran as part of United Iraqi Alliance (UIA), which won 128/275 seats. Thirteen of those seats were won by the Islamic Dawa Movement. After the Virtue Party left the alliance, UIA was left with 115 seats.

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 126/440

Notes While the Islamic Dawa Movement was born as a religious movement amid the increasing secularization of Iraqi society, its members began attacking government targets in the 1960s and 1970s. Upon the arrest of party spiritual leader Baqir al-Sadr in 1979 (the year of Iran's Islamic revolution), Dawa became much more violent, carrying out military operations against Iraqi officials. This led Saddam Hussein's regime to launch a series of brutal crackdowns on Dawa's leadership and base members, driving many surviving Dawa members to Iran where, as the Iran–Iraq war progressed, they became closer with the Islamic Republic and enjoyed its protection and backing. The Baathist regime executed al-Sadr in 1980.

After the end of the Iran–Iraq war, many Dawa members left Iran and sought refuge in Arab and Western countries. In exile, Dawa's influence on the Shi'i street in Iraq lessened. Dawa's leaders spent the next two decades maneuvering among Shi'i communities outside Iraq, attempting to abandon and isolate members who were loyal to Iran or sought to emulate it.

Upon the toppling of the Baathist regime, Shi'a returned to representative parties. Dawa had little power, owing to the clout of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and the Sadrist Trend, both of which had the backing of influential marjas. A struggle between the two parties led to the selection of Ibrahim al-Jaafari and then Nouri el-Maliki of Dawa as compromise prime ministers (though Jaafari has since left Dawa and started his own party, the National Reform Movement.) Since 2007, both SCIRI (now ISCI) and the Sadrists have accepted Maliki, whom they view as too weak to threaten them or their bases of support. As part of the Shi'i ISCI-led United Iraqi Alliance, Maliki went on to stabilize Iraq and significantly increase security, which garnered him a great deal of support on the Iraqi street. He gained even more influence in projecting himself as a nationalist non-sectarian (though still a religious Shi'i) figure who could heal Iraq's divisions, strengthen the central government, defeat al-Qaeda with the Awakening Councils, and fight al-Sadr's Mahdi militia. Maliki's image of a strong statesman allowed his allies—after the breakdown of the UIA alliance—to make a strong showing in the January 2009 provincial elections.

In the past few months, Maliki and the Dawa party have claimed to stand at the ever-elusive intersection of secularism and religiosity, maintaining Dawa's Islamist Shi'i identity while demonstrating that they can represent the best interests of Iraq as a whole. As such, Dawa has gone from being the weak Shi'i party with little support or influence to having sufficient strength—in the eyes of its leaders, at least—to divorce itself from every other political heavyweight in Iraq and run on its own list in a coalition with individual local and provincial leaders and smaller parties. While Dawa presents this move away from the Iraqi National Alliance and ISCI as a step toward a post-sectarian Iraq, Maliki seems to overshadow all his allies, regardless of sect. His former allies in the INA claim that negotiations with him broke down because he insisted on receiving 55 percent of the alliance's seats in the next parliament.

Iraqis are skeptical that Maliki and his coalition will be able to pull off a win in the national elections in January, though many are hopeful. Several significant figures, including Sheikh Ahmad Abu Risha of the Awakening Councils, have dropped out of the alliance in the past two months, making it difficult to form a winning coalition. Many of those who leave Maliki's tent (or refuse to enter it) have faulted him for the

breakdown of negotiations, with some claiming that he aims to concentrate the decision making and power of the coalition in Dawa's hands rather than provide proportional distribution of power and seats won in parliament.

Anbar Salvation National Front



Leader Sheikh Ali Hatem al-Suleiman, Prince of Dulaim

Date of Founding & Notable Moments 2008

Seats in Parliament None

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 2/440 (did not run, but backed the Anbar Salvation Council of Sheikh Hamid al-Heyes)

Notes Sheikh Ali Hatem al-Suleiman, the head of the General Council of Iraqi Tribal Sheikhs, was initially a leader of the Awakening Movement, helping unite tribes in Anbar province to defeat al-Qaeda. But by 2008, the Awakening Councils had split into three parts. Sheikh Hatem formed the Anbar Salvation National Front, and Sheikh Hamid al-Heyes formed the Anbar Salvation Council, breaking away from Ahmad Abu Risha and his Anbar Awakening Council because of Abu Risha's ties with the Islamist-oriented and IIP-affiliated Independent Gathering.

In the provincial elections of 2009, the Anbar Salvation National Front did not present candidates, but backed those of the Anbar Salvation Council. In the run-up to the 2010 elections, however, Hatem has chosen to join Prime Minister Maliki's coalition, due to his belief that it does indeed represent a cross-sectarian alliance. Sheikh al-Heyes and the Anbar Salvation Council chose instead to join the predominantly Shi'i Iraqi National Alliance. When rumors began circulating that the State of Law Coalition and the Iraqi National Alliance were discussing a merger, Sheikh Hatem announced that he would break with the alliance if the deal took place.

Nevertheless, Sheikh Hatem is playing a complicated political game. He has declared that he only entered politics to preserve the influence of his tribe, but in other statements he has accepted the institutions of the state, and even gone so far as to argue that tribal sheikhs in Anbar should not hold positions of power, so that rule of law can prevail.

Independent Arab Movement

Leader Abed Mutlaq al-Jabbouri

Date of Founding & Notable Moments 2009

Seats in Parliament 44/275 as part of the Iraqi Accord Front

Seats in 2009 Provincial Elections 32/440 as part of the Iraqi Accord Front

Notes Abed Mutlaq al-Jabbouri is the former president of the Iraqi Arab Gathering, an umbrella group that included the Independent Arab Movement, and a main force in the Iraqi Accord Front. In 2005, Jabbouri was selected as deputy prime minister to Dawa's Ibrahim Jaafari. A respected member of the Sunni community, his presence is important for the State of Law coalition.

In 2008 and 2009, the Iraqi Accord Front coalition broke down after the Iraqi Arab Gathering, the Iraqi National Dialogue Council and the Iraqi Arab Gathering, and members of the IIP withdrew. This caused the Iraqi Arab Gathering to splinter. Jabbouri and two other representatives of the Gathering decided to form the Independent Arab Movement and to join Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's State of Law coalition. The rest of the Gathering, under the leadership of Omar al-Jabbouri, has yet to decide which alliance to join.

Since joining the State of Law coalition, Jabbouri has established himself as an independent player advocating an important role for the Sunna. He has warned Maliki that if the State of Law coalition merges with the Shi'i-centric Iraqi National Alliance, he and other Sunni members will abandon the coalition. Jabbouri has also campaigned to allow former Baathists to be included in candidate lists, while the State of Law coalition wants them excluded.

Jabbouri has been particularly outspoken concerning the fate of Kirkuk, arguing that the use of the 2009 voter rolls in the upcoming elections there was an injustice to Arabs and Turkmen, and boycotting the vote on the new election law. He went even further, calling on the Arabs and Turkmen in the city to boycott the 2010 parliamentary elections altogether.

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