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b) Assessment of indiscriminate violence per governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

The map below summarises and illustrates the assessment of indiscriminate violence per governorate in Iraq.

Figure 4. Level of indiscriminate violence in Iraq (based on information up to 31 July 2024).

map visualization

Mere presence

High level of indiscriminate violence

Indiscriminate violence not at a high level

No real risk

Mere presence

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Areas where the degree of indiscriminate violence reaches such an exceptionally high level that substantial grounds are shown for believing that a civilian, returned to the relevant area, would, **solely on account of their presence there**, face a real risk of being subject to the serious threat referred to in Article 15(c) QD/QR.

Accordingly, additional individual elements are not required in order to substantiate subsidiary protection needs under Article 15(c) QD/QR.

No such areas have been identified in Iraq.

High level of indiscriminate violence

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Areas where 'mere presence' would not be sufficient to establish a real risk of serious harm under Article 15(c) QD/QR, but where, **indiscriminate violence reaches a high level**.

Accordingly, **a lower level of individual elements** is required to show substantial grounds for believing that a civilian, returned to the area, would face a real risk of serious harm in the meaning of Article 15(c) QD/QR.

The areas assessed as belonging to this category as well as the main elements leading to this assessment are highlighted below.

Amedi district (Dohuk governorate)

The Türkiye-PKK conflict has significantly affected the northern border areas of Iraq. Airstrikes have been widely used by Turkish forces while IED attacks have been used also by the PKK. Civilians have been caught in the crossfire.

More specifically, Amedi can be considered the most violent district in Iraq. The vast majority of the significantly increasing security incidents recorded in Dohuk governorate (average of 62 incidents per week in the governorate) have taken place in Amedi district. The PKK has also carried out attacks against Peshmerga by means of rocket fire, armed assault, and a roadside IED in Amedi. The number of civilian casualties has decreased in Dohuk governorate (1 casualty per 100 000 inhabitants for the whole governorate) compared to previous years. Nevertheless, the conflict has led to the depopulation of entire villages in Mount Metin area in autumn 2023 and in Deraluk in early 2024. Civilian displacements in Amedi district continued in summer 2024 as a result of the conflict between Türkiye and the PKK.

Based on the number of incidents concentrated in the district of Amedi as well as the nature of violence (airstrikes, IEDs) and the reported displacement of entire villages it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Amedi district reaches a high level. It is noted that the situation in this district is deteriorating and may lead to a different assessment based on most recent COI.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.8 and 2.9; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

Indiscriminate violence not at a high level

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Areas where indiscriminate violence is taking place, however **not at a high level**.

Accordingly, **a higher level of individual elements** is required in order to show substantial grounds for believing that a civilian, returned to the area, would face a real risk of serious harm in the meaning of Article 15(c) QD/QR.

The areas assessed as belonging to this category as well as the main elements leading to this assessment are highlighted below.

☐ Anbar governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

The presence of pre-existing and new armed actors remained significant. As the US have continued to have a military presence in the Ain Al-Asad Airbase and carried out airstrikes, an increase in attacks targeting US forces has been reported in the governorate since October 2023, especially by groups belonging to the Islamic Resistance in Iraq. Moreover, ISIL maintained a sizeable presence in the governorate and continued to carry out asymmetric attacks and a number of operations targeting ISIL were carried out by the ISF. The number of security incidents in the governorate has remained relatively stable (1.8 incidents per week) and the recorded casualties have decreased compared to previous years (less than 1 casualty per 100 000 inhabitants).

Despite the long-standing presence of several armed actors, as well as the continuation of conflicts with relatively stable patterns in recent years, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Anbar governorate is not at a high level.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.6; COI Update 2024, 2.2, 2.5]

☐ Baghdad governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Several armed actors were active in the governorate and involved in different long-standing conflicts. The number of security incidents (5.6 incidents per week) remained relatively stable compared to the previous years, while the number of civilian casualties has decreased (less than 1 casualty per 100 000 inhabitants). Tensions between Iran-backed militias and US forces escalated since October 2023. Iran-backed militias conducted attacks, using drones, IEDs, and rockets mainly against US personnel and allied forces. US launched airstrikes targeting Iran-backed militias military assets. South of Baghdad has been affected in this context. ISIL also carried out asymmetric attacks against ISF, consisting in IEDs, small-arms ambushes or assassinations. Tarmiya district (North Baghdad) and northern Baghdad Belts have been particularly affected by ISIL's presence and ISF counter-terrorism operations. Internal PMF disputes were also reported. Security incidents were recorded in all districts of the governorate, with the highest number being documented in Al Adhamiya, Al Thawra and Al Risafa districts. The International Zone Area of Central Baghdad and Baghdad International Airport are relatively more stable areas compared to the rest of the city. During the reporting period, UNAMI did not record any civilian casualties in Baghdad governorate while UCDP recorded 3 civilian deaths therein.

Despite the multifaceted and long-standing conflicts characterizing the area, resulting in a significant number of, often targeted, security incidents, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Baghdad governorate is not at a high level.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.3; COI Update 2024, 2.2, 2.5]

☐ Diyala governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Diyala governorate is characterised by the presence of several armed actors and of different conflicts, resulting in a tense security situation. In particular, territorial

disputes, killings between Shiite groups in the context of rival militias, ISIL periodic asymmetric attacks and ISF anti-terrorism operations, including airstrikes, persist in the territory. Nevertheless, the number of security incidents (1.5 incidents per week) has decreased compared to the previous years as well as the number of civilian casualties (2 casualties per 100 000 inhabitants), some of them resulting from targeted violence. A very high degree of destruction and damages to houses and very limited government reconstruction efforts were also reported.

Despite the continuation of the long-standing conflicts in this governorate and considering the decrease of security incidents and civilian casualties, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Diyala governorate is not at a high level.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.4; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

☐ Erbil governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Throughout the reference period, Turkish forces conducted ground and air attacks against PKK targets in the governorate. Although the security incidents recorded in Erbil (18.4 per week) are on the rise, the vast majority of them took place in Rawanduz district. The number of civilian casualties in the governorate has remained relatively similar to previous years (2 civilian casualties per 100 000 inhabitants). Turkish forces and the PKK were involved in the majority of events coded as battles and explosions/remote violence.

Despite the increase of security incidents and considering that the governorate generally has been under the stable control of the KDP, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Erbil is not at a high level. It is noted that, at the time of writing, the indiscriminate violence primarily affects the district of Rawanduz. This should be taken into account when assessing the protection needs of applicants from the governorate of Erbil.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.9; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

☐ Kirkuk governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Several armed actors are active in Kirkuk governorate. While the ISF and PMF Shia militias maintained their presence in these territories, ISIL also sustained a 'low-grade insurgency'. The group's attacks were asymmetrical in nature, as it conducted most operations using light weaponry and explosives (simple IEDs, targeted assassinations, small-arms ambushes). Kirkuk has witnessed a decrease in the number of both security incidents compared to previous years (1.6 per week) and in the number of recorded civilian casualties (1 casualty per 100 000 inhabitants); however, violence has persisted and is multifaceted, with several conflicts existing in the area for many years.

Despite the continuation of the long-standing conflicts in this governorate and considering the decrease of security incidents and civilian casualties, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Kirkuk governorate is not at a high level.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.5; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

☐ Ninewa governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Ninewa's security situation has remained affected by several conflicts. Several of the governorate's territories belong to the northern Iraqi areas whose status is disputed between the KRG and the Iraqi central government. While ISIL sustained a 'low-grade insurgency' in the disputed territories, ISF carried out anti-terrorism operations and Turkish airstrikes targeting Kurdish *Asayish* and PKK-linked groups continued. The number of security incidents was comparable to previous years (4.6 per week) while the number of civilian casualties has decreased (1 casualty per 100 000 inhabitants). Security incidents were recorded in all governorate districts, with the large majority being documented in Aqra district, followed by Mosul and Sinjar. Reconstruction efforts have only started in Ninewa, and areas of the governorate are still cluster-munition contaminated.

Despite the long-standing territorial disputes and other persistent conflicts characterizing the area, often resulting in targeted attacks, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Ninewa governorate is not at a high level.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.6; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

☐ Salah-al-din governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Salah al-din governorate is under the control of the Iraqi Army. The governorate witnessed a concentration of ISIL operations as the group sustained a 'low-grade insurgency'. ISF and PMF Shia militias are present in the territory as well. The recorded number of both security incidents (1.2 per week) and civilian casualties (1 casualty per 100 000 inhabitants) has decreased in the governorate compared to previous years. ISF and affiliated armed groups and ISIL were involved in the majority of events coded as battles and explosions/remote violence, while unidentified armed groups were mainly involved in incidents coded as violence against civilians.

Despite the continuation of the long-standing conflicts in this governorate and considering the decrease of security incidents and civilian casualties, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence in Salah al-din governorate is not at a high level.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.7; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

No real risk

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Areas where, **in general, there is no real risk** for a civilian to be personally affected within the meaning of Article 15(c) QD/QR.

This may be because the criteria for an armed conflict within the meaning of this provision are not met, because no indiscriminate violence is taking place, or because the level of indiscriminate violence is so low, that in general there would be no real risk for a civilian to be affected by it.

The areas assessed as belonging to this category as well as the main elements leading to this assessment are highlighted below.

☐ Dohuk governorate (except Amedi district)

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Türkiye has continued military operations in northern Iraq, conducting airstrikes against the PKK in Dohuk governorate. Turkish forces have also built new military bases in the governorate. Nevertheless, in the reporting period almost all security incidents occurred in the governorate were recorded in Amedi district (see above).

In light of the low number of security incidents in the governorate, apart from Amedi district, as well as the generally stable control of the KDP, it can be concluded that in Dohuk governorate there is no real risk for a civilian to be personally affected by indiscriminate violence. It is noted though that the situation in the northern parts of the governorate remains volatile due to the extension Türkiye's military operation

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.8; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

☐ Babil, Basrah, Kerbala, Missan, Muthanna, Najaf, Qadissiya, Dhi-Qar and Wassit governorates

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

The southern governorates of Iraq have generally been characterised by relative stability in the latest years. The most represented armed actors in these areas are the Iraqi Army, the police, PMF and, in some cases, armed political parties including the Sadrist Movement's Saraya Al-Salam and various tribes. Recent security trends include periodic tribal clashes (often driven by water shortages), hostilities between Shia groups and militias and some attacks carried out by unidentified perpetrators against civilians of certain profiles or against their properties. Further, attacks on Iraqi-

contracted convoys transporting supplies for the international coalition against ISIL occurred in Muthanna and Qadissiya. The number of security incidents (average of 0.9 incidents per week for all southern governorates) is lower than in other governorates in central and northern Iraq and the number of civilian casualties also remains low (less than 1 casualty per 100 000 inhabitants). Criminality though remains an issue.

In light of the relative stability of the area, as well as the low number of security incidents and civilian fatalities, it can be concluded that in the southern governorates of Iraq there is no real risk for a civilian to be personally affected by indiscriminate violence.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15, 2.16, 2.17, 2.18; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

☐ Sulaymaniyah governorate

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: November 2024

Sulaymaniyah is controlled by the PUK which also controls the governorate's Peshmerga and security forces, while maintaining its own police forces, *Asayish* forces and intelligence services. There was a reported presence of the PKK in the governorate and a very limited presence of ISIL in the KRI. The main security trends in the area include operations carried out by Turkish forces against PKK targets and anti-ISIL operations. With an average number of 2.1 security incidents per week, mostly targeting Turkish forces and PKK targets, the number of civilian casualties is less than 1 per 100 000 inhabitants.

In light of the generally stable control exercised by PUK as well as the low impact of the sporadic security incidents on the civilians, it can be concluded that in Sulaymaniyah governorate there is no real risk for a civilian to be personally affected by indiscriminate violence.

[COI references: Security 2024, 2.10; COI Update 2024, 2.5]

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