

2.2.2 The Property Restitution Law

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The Property Restitution Law mandates the return of approximately 300 000 dunams (300 square kilometres) of land[507] confiscated during the Baath regime to their original owners ‘within two months’.[508] The law responds primarily to longstanding demands from the Kurdish community and other minorities, such as Turkmen, who were dispossessed under Saddam Hussein’s rule.[509] Although the law does not explicitly mention specific groups or regions, its implementation has focused largely on disputed areas like Kirkuk, a zone of particular concern for Kurdish claims.[510] This has triggered tensions, as ISF reportedly prevented Kurdish farmers from cultivating lands despite legal recognition of their property rights. The narrow application of the law has also sparked dissent among other communities, especially from central and southern Iraq, whose confiscated lands were not addressed, raising concerns about unequal restitution and potential for further intercommunal tensions.[511]

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  Kurdistan24, Iraq Enacts Landmark Property Restitution Law as Tensions Rise in Kirkuk, 18 February 2025, url

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  Rudaw, Iraq to begin implementing land return law ‘within two months:’ Minister, 31 March 2025, url

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  Amwaj, Parliamentary ‘horse-trading’ over divisive laws sparks backlash in Iraq, 29 January 2025, url;

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  Bas News, Iraqi Army Blocks Kurdish Farmers From Cultivating Land in Kirkuk, 16 February 2025, url;

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