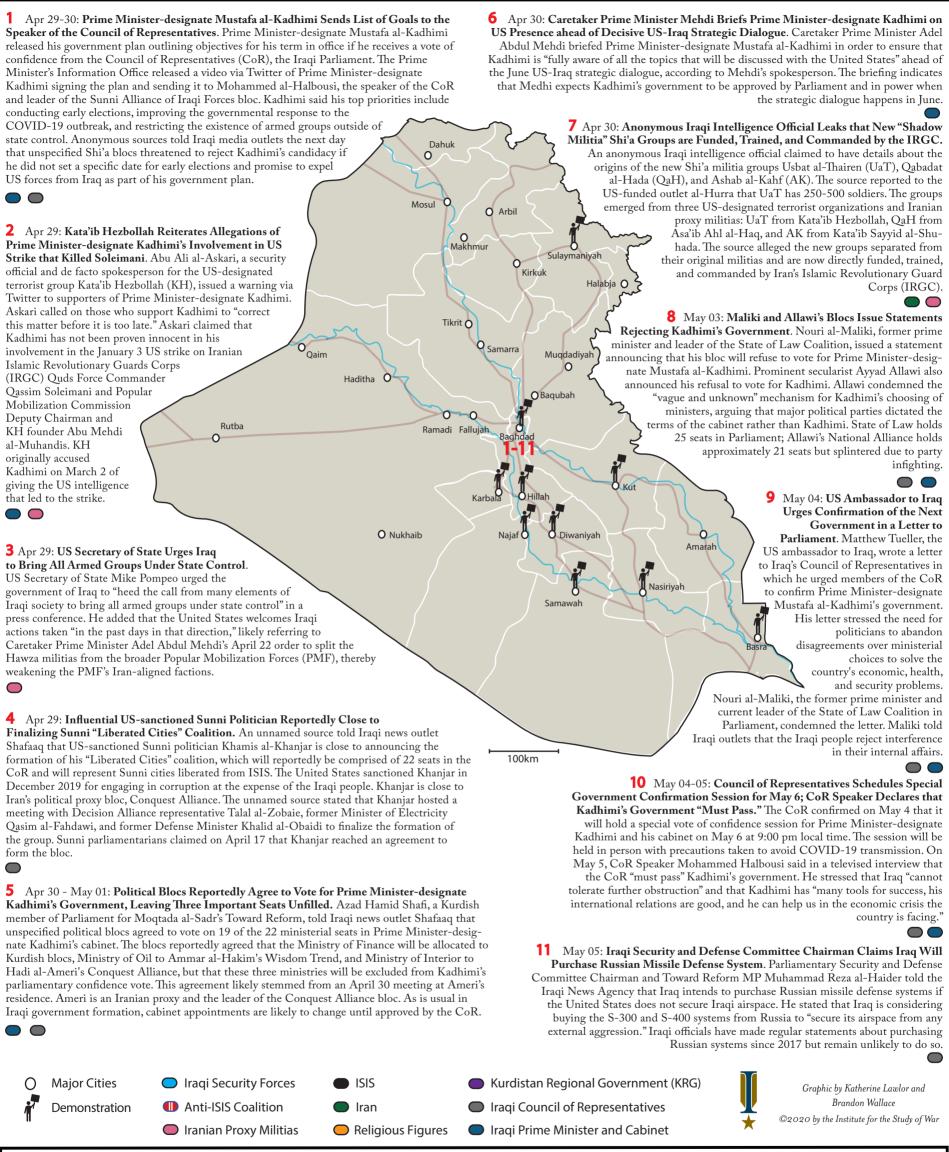


Iraq Situation Report: April 29 - May 5, 2020



Key Takeaway: Prime Minister-designate Mustafa al-Kadhimi's government formation process further splintered Iraq's already fractious political scene. Disagreements over cabinet appointments created new fractures within political blocs, calling into question whether individual members of parliament will vote along their usual party lines. Despite worsening political acrimony, Kadhimi maintains broad Sunni and Kurdish support in Parliament and will likely be able to satisfy enough Shi'a blocs to ascend to the office of prime minister with a partial cabinet. Because of their shared interest in Kadhimi's success, Iran and the US confined their competition to other lines of effort ahead of the June US-Iraq strategic dialogue, thereby creating enough space for Iraq's political elites to negotiate government formation. One day after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged Iraq to bring armed groups under state control, the US-funded outlet al-Hurra published a story indicating that recently formed militias in Iraq are under the direct control of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.

To learn more about the situation in Iraq and other international issues, see ISW's new podcast, Overwatch, available on Spotify, Sticher, iTunes, and all your favorite podcast apps.

