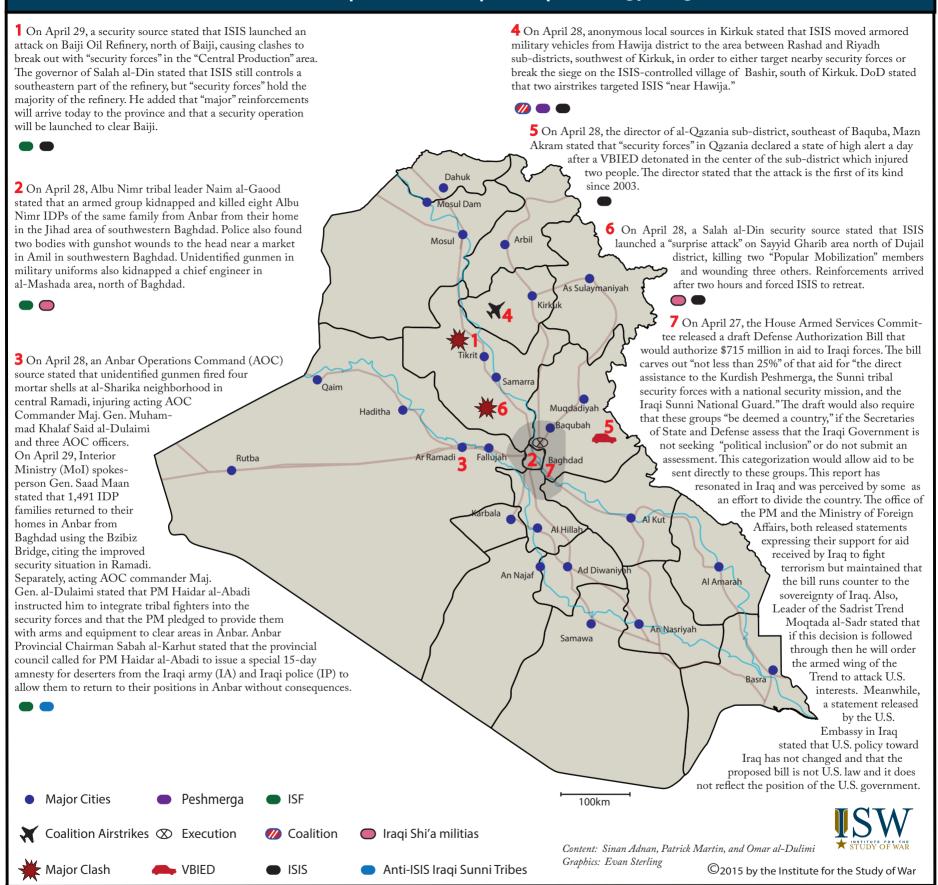
## Iraq Situation Report: April 28-29, 2015



A provision in the House Armed Services Committee draft Defense Authorization Bill has generated negative reactions in Iraq. Despite the fact that the draft is not U.S. law nor represents U.S. policy, anti-U.S. leaders in Iraq such as Moqtada al-Sadr have used it to attack the U.S. Others have used the provision stipulating that Iraqi Sunni and Kurdish forces be treated "as countries," allowing direct aid, to enforce their narrative that the U.S. has a malicious role in Iraq and claiming that the U.S. seeks to divide Iraq. Critics of the Prime Minister will likely use reporting about the draft bill to attack U.S.-Iraqi cooperation. Meanwhile, Moqtada al-Sadr's statement is in line with his nationalist rhetoric that pushes against both the U.S. and Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'a militias. Shortly before his statement regarding the bill, Sadr released a statement calling for the marginalization of the Iranian-backed militias and an expansion for the role of the "Popular Mobilization" into Anbar and Mosul. Sadr, while critical of cooperation with the U.S., will likely express support for the state as his political rivals increase their attacks on the Abadi government. Sadr will need to tread carefully, however, balancing his support for the state against his continued opposition to the U.S. role in Iraq.