



OIR IN BRIEF

The 21st quarterly report submitted by the Lead Inspector General for Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) summarizes the quarter's key events and oversight of the U.S. mission to defeat ISIS and train, advise, and assist local partners to improve regional stability.

COVID-19 Leads to Pauses and Suspensions of Campaign Activities

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- ISF suspends training in Iraq in March to prevent virus spread.
- Coalition **curtains** select OIR activities, including partner force training; some countries temporarily **pull forces out** of Iraq.
- Coalition **continues to assist** ISF units conducting counter-ISIS operations.
- SDF temporarily suspends **military operations, calls for** humanitarian ceasefire.
- ISIS calls on followers worldwide **to increase attack planning and operations** during the pandemic.

U.S.-Iran Tensions Escalate, Straining U.S.-Iraq Security Cooperation

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- CJTF-OIR **pauses anti-ISIS operations** in January to focus on force protection following an escalation of violent attacks by Iran and Iranian-backed militias.
- CJTF-OIR: Pause “probably sowed doubt” within ISF over **whether Coalition support would resume**.
- **Iranian-backed militias** fire rockets at Iraqi bases **killing** one British and two U.S. service members.
- **Iranian-aligned actors intensify** their political and military efforts to evict U.S. forces from Iraq.

Iraqi Political Turmoil Continues

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- Two prime minister **candidates fail to form a government** during the quarter; **third candidate**, Mustafa al Kadhimi, **forms government** after the end of the quarter.
- Anti-government **protests wane** as the COVID-19 pandemic spreads.
- **Iraqi economy struggles** further under falling oil prices.

Coalition Consolidates Bases in Iraq

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- Coalition Forces **transfer control** of four Iraqi **military bases** to the ISF as part of long-term plan.
- CJTF-OIR: Threats from malign actors and force protection needs **accelerate** timetable of transfers.
- **Transfer of fifth base** begins as quarter ends.

ISIS Sustains Low-Level Insurgency in Iraq and Syria

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- ISIS conducts primarily **small arms and IED attacks** in Iraq and Syria; ISIS attack numbers decreasing after spike to avenge leader's death.
- **In Iraq**, ISIS operates from mountains, deserts, ungoverned areas.
- **In Syria**, ISIS targets governing officials and security forces in Raqqah, Hasakah, and Dayr az Zawr provinces.

ISIS Fighters and Loyalists Pose Threat to OIR Mission

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- CJTF-OIR: ISIS fighters in detention and loyalists in IDP camps in Syria pose “**significant risk**” to mission to defeat ISIS.
- CJTF-OIR creates **coordination group** to address insecurity, radicalization in prisons and IDP camps.

Operations Against ISIS in Syria Continue in Crowded, Complex Environment

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- SDF, Coalition continue fighting ISIS, but tension with **Turkey divides** SDF attention and forces.
- CJTF-OIR faces **deconfliction challenges** in “crowded, complex operating environment.”

Humanitarian Operations in Iraq Impeded; Stabilization Funding in Syria Uncertain

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- Iraqi government's suspension of authorizations for relief organizations **delays life-saving assistance**, impedes humanitarian operations.
- **U.S. stabilization programming in Syria slows**; implementing partners face uncertainty due to U.S. funding freeze.

Oversight and Investigations

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- Lead IG and partner agencies complete **13 reports** related to OIR; **24** projects are ongoing, **19** planned.
- Lead IG and partner agencies complete **32 investigations**, coordinate on **120 more**.