

The Resurgence of Al-Qaeda in Iraq

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Michael Knights is the Jill and Jay Bernstein Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute and cofounder of the Militia Spotlight platform, which offers in-depth analysis of developments related to Iran-backed militias.



Articles & Testimony

Washington Institute fellow Michael Knights addressed a joint hearing of the House Subcommittee on Terrorism, Non-Proliferation and Trade and the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa. The following is an excerpt from his prepared remarks; download the PDF to read more, or [watch video of the full hearing \(http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/hearing/joint-subcommittee-hearing-resurgence-al-qaeda-iraq\)](http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/hearing/joint-subcommittee-hearing-resurgence-al-qaeda-iraq).

Like others I was disheartened to watch Al-Qaeda in Iraq grow from 2003-2006 and relieved to see it crash and burn in 2006-2009. I was saddened but not surprised to watch it rebound strongly from 2010 onwards. Indeed, since the autumn of 2010 I have been telling all who would listen that the group was poised to make a comeback.

Since 2004 I have worked in all the Iraqi provinces and most of the country's hundred districts, including some of those where Al-Qaeda is strongest. I have worked alongside the Iraqi security forces, the U.S. military and the reconstruction community as they battled Al-Qaeda. It is my firm belief that Al-Qaeda's resurgence was both predictable and preventable.

Just as firmly, I believe that the counter-terrorism situation in Iraq is still recoverable. We defeated Al-Qaeda in Iraq just five years ago, comprehensively dismantling their networks and propaganda campaigns. In the coming years the United States can help Iraq to do it again... ❖

House Committee on Foreign Affairs

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