

Short-Term Stabilisation in Iraq Could Have Long-Term Costs

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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The Coalition security policy in Iraq has evolved in important ways since the major public diplomacy setback of the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal and the dual security challenges in the Fallujah-Ramadi area and the Shiite south during April and May. The actions taken by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and its military counterpart, Combined Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7), will shape the security environment as Iraq passes through a series of transitional steps -- from the handover to the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) on 30 June to the fully constitutional Iraqi government that is scheduled to take office on 31 December 2005.

In close co-operation with Iraqi mediators and local non-governmental security forces, Coalition military actions have improved the security environment in Falluja and reduced the threat from radical Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. However, in the long term these actions may make the task of re-unifying Iraq even harder by reinforcing the strength of local actors at the expense of weak central government in Baghdad.... ❖

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