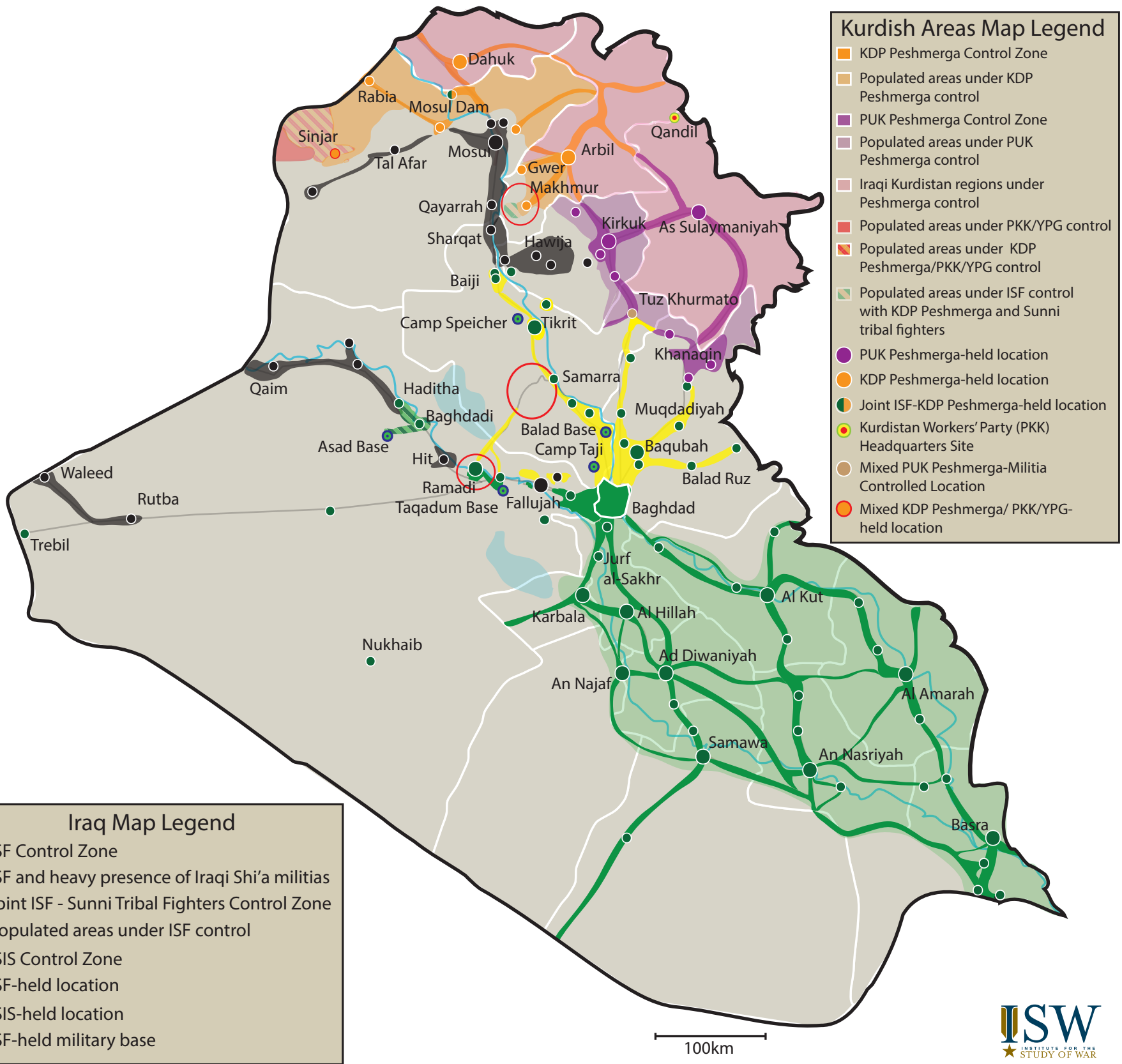


Iraq Control of Terrain Map: February 9, 2016



Content: Patrick Martin, Emily Anagnostos, Rachel Bessette, and ISW Iraq Team
 Graphics: Emily Anagnostos

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Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Sunni Arab tribal fighters backed by Coalition air support recaptured central Ramadi on January 9, the completion of a six-month operation. Iraqi Security Forces entered the city center on December 22, rapidly pushing ISIS eastward as tribal fighters deployed to hold recaptured terrain in the city's environs. The ISF announced on February 9 that it cleared ISIS from Ramadi's eastern suburbs and reopened the road between Baghdad and Ramadi, though Inherent Resolve spokesperson Colonel Steve Warren cautioned that the area may remain exposed to attacks and will need to be cleared of IEDs. Anbar Operations Command called for the provincial government to return to Ramadi on January 26, coinciding with the drawdown of the ISF from the Ramadi area. ISW is thus changing downtown Ramadi and its eastern environs from ISIS-held to ISF-held territory.

Peshmerga and Sunni Arab tribal fighters recaptured several villages west of Makhmur district. The U.S.-trained 1st Battalion of the 91st Brigade of the 16th Iraqi Army Division participated in operations with Peshmerga and tribal fighters from the Jubur, Lahib, and Sabawin tribes to recapture villages west of Makhmur. Up to 4,500 ISF members will reportedly deploy to the area, and the ISF are leading the operation. However, multiple reports indicate that Peshmerga and the ISF compose the forces in the area but do not mention tribal fighters, indicating that the role of tribal fighters in the operations may be limited to assist with holding territory after it has already been cleared. ISW is thus changing the area extending west of Makhmur towards Qayyarah to populated areas under ISF control with KDP Peshmerga and Sunni tribal fighters.

Iraqi Security Forces and Popular Mobilization continue to clash with ISIS between Samarra and Lake Thar Thar despite previous control over the areas west of Samarra. ISIS has repeatedly attacked Popular Mobilization and the ISF west of Samarra, particularly in Khat al-Layn and the Jazeera desert. ISW has changed the area from an ISF and militia control zone to contested territory.