

1 Russia uses northern Iraqi airspace to carry out strikes in Syria, despite lack of official request. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi stated on August 16 that Iraq had granted Russia use of its airspace to carry out air strikes in Syria from a base in northwest Iran, although he denied that Russia had ever made a formal request to use the airspace. A Russian Duma member later claimed that Russia had received permission. PM Abadi limited Russian use of its airspace to a corridor along the Turkish-Iraq border and to avoid flying over cities. Coalition Spokesman Col. Chris Garver stated on August 16 that Russia had notified the U.S.-led Coalition as per the Memorandum of Understanding of their use of the airspace, adding that the strikes did not interfere with operations in Iraq or Syria. Iran and Russia announced the suspension of its use of the air base on August 22.

9 ISIS attacks Border Guard positions in western Anbar and Jordanian border. ISIS detonated an SVBIED at a Border Guards battalion headquarters in al-Sakar at 170 Kilo, west of Ramadi, on August 16, then attacked the position with direct fire. The Border Guards repelled the attack, which wounded four guards. ISIS also shelled a Border Guard headquarters between the Trebil Iraqi-Jordanian border crossing and Rutba in western Anbar on August 16, killing nine guards and two civilians

8 Sunni parties fracture over possible dismissal of Defense Minister. Sunni political parties have announced conflicting reports over their intentions of whether or not to dismiss Sunni Defense Minister Khalid al-Obeidi in a vote of no-confidence on August 23. The Arabiya Party stated on August 19 that there is a general trend to dismiss Obeidi, while Obeidi's party, Mutahidun, stated that the Council of Representatives (CoR) will vote in favor of Obeidi. Obeidi's survival may increasingly depend on the support of non-Sunni parties. As such, Mutahidun leader Osama al-Nujaifi reportedly met with Kurdish and Shi'a parties, particularly the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI), to broker a political deal in support of Obeidi.

7 SVEST targets Popular Mobilization south of Baghdad. An attacker wearing an SVEST detonated in Yusufiya, south of Baghdad, on August 19, killing two people and injuring eight others. The attacker targeted a gathering of Popular Mobilization members. ISIS has not yet claimed the attack.

2 Iranian proxy militias call for joint operations room for Ninewa operations, calling militia participation "a foregone conclusion." Secretary General of Harakat al-Nujaba Akram al-Kaabi and Secretary General of the Badr Organization Hadi al-Amiri met on August 17 in Baghdad to discuss the formation of a new joint operations room for Mosul operations. Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) leader Qais al-Khazali stated separately on August 17 that militia participation in Mosul is both "necessary and a foregone conclusion."

3 Lt. Gen. Townsend assumes command of Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq. Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend took command of Operation Inherent Resolve on August 21, replacing Lt. Gen. Sean MacFarland. Lt. Gen. Townsend pledged to speed up the campaign against ISIS and retake Raqqa and Mosul "on my watch." Meanwhile, CENTCOM commander Gen. Joseph Votel, who attended the change-in-command ceremony in Baghdad, later met with PM Abadi on August 21 to discuss the preparations for Mosul.

4 ISIS detonates SVEST in Kirkuk, as ISF thwart second attack carried out by child. An ISIS attacker detonated a Suicide Vest (SVEST) outside a mosque in al-Wasti, southwest Kirkuk City, on August 21, injuring four people. The same day, Kirkuk police arrested a 12-to-15-year-old boy before he could detonate an SVEST in al-Tasa'in in western Kirkuk

5 ISF clash with ISIS during attack on headquarters north of Baghdad. The Iraqi Army (IA) repelled an ISIS attack late in the evening of August 16 on a military headquarters in al-Mashhada, north of Baghdad, which reportedly included five SVEST attackers. Soldiers clashed with the attackers, killing three, while one fled. The fifth detonated his SVEST without casualty. The clashes killed three soldiers and injured five others.

6 VBIED detonates at checkpoint north of Baghdad. The Ministry of Interior reported that a Vehicle-Borne IED (VBIED) detonated at a checkpoint in Bawb al-Sham, north of Baghdad, on August 18, killing one policeman and wounding five people. ISIS has not yet claimed the attack.



- Major Cities
- Iraqi Shi'a Militias
- Coalition
- ISF
- ISIS
- Demonstration
- VBIED
- SVEST
- Major Clash

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Iraqi Defense Minister Khalid al-Obeidi faces an upcoming vote of no-confidence in the Council of Representatives (CoR) following accusations of corruption from the Reform Front, the opposition bloc driven by former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. The possibility of his dismissal has fractured the cohesion of the Sunni political blocs, risking the long-term success of efforts to reconcile and reintegrate Iraqi Sunnis with Baghdad. Obeidi may need to rely on support from non-Sunni blocs in order to survive the vote, currently scheduled for August 23. Osama al-Nujaifi - the leader of the Mutahidun Bloc that includes Obeidi - has reportedly met with Kurdish and Iraqi Shi'a parties, particularly the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI), in order to broker a political deal to support the embattled minister. It remains unclear if the Reform Front's effort to remove Obeidi has the support of the 165 CoR members required to dismiss a minister. This political crisis nonetheless comes at an inopportune time as the Coalition and the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) set conditions to retake Mosul. Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend assumed command of Operation Inherent Resolve on August 21 and vowed to retake Mosul during his one-year term. The successful removal of Obeidi and the likely follow-up changes to senior leadership in the ISF would complicate this timeframe.