THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE IRAQI STATE

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(Signature)..............................................................................................................................
Abstract

The Iraqi Kurds have stood firmly at the forefront of many changes and challenges in the Middle East and Iraq since 1991, taking the opportunity to stand firm and to become a semi-autonomous entity with an establish regional government. Events after 2003 offered a second historical opportunity to determine their present and future position on the Iraqi political map as a major partner constructing the new Iraqi State and developing their region. The thesis aims to address and challenge the claim that the Kurds have become more integrationist than secessionist since the collapse of Saddam Hussein’s regime.

Through a descriptive and analytical narrative of the evolution of the KRG’s situation and the Kurds’ assertion of their national demands towards Iraq. The study identifies four major dimensions of KRG policy towards Iraq. These include the need to address chronic problems and political disputes through commitment to the new Iraqi Constitution; to apply federal system and maintain democratic principles guaranteeing the rights of all ethnic and religious minorities, through full implementation of Article 140; to resolve the legitimacy of KRG’s international and regional oil contracts through real power sharing between regional governments and the federal government; address the dilemma of the rights and duties of the Kurdish forces (Peshmerga) vis-a-vis the Iraqi army. As national forces protecting the Kurdish region, the Peshmerga also fought Saddam Hussein’s regime participated with US troops in its downfall and joined in fighting terrorism elsewhere in Iraq.

Iraqi factions and parties need genuine political will to overcome tribal and religious differences. Strengthening the current political consensus and implementing a constitution to prevent violations by factions or political groups will help to secure Iraq as a unified state, and to prevent regional interventions of the sort that have so far led to insecurity and destabilisation.
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