



April 2009

US Embassy in Iraq

MIDDLE EAST ISSUES

SELECTED WEBSITES AND ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

No recommendation is made in respect of non-U.S. Government web sites listed



New Doha Summit: Arab Summit to Discuss Regional Issues March 30, 2009.

The Middle East Partnership Initiative

Background Notes. U.S. Dept. of State. Most Recent: Bahrain / Iran / Iraq

Israel / Jordan / Lebanon / Oman / Kuwait / Qatar / Saudi Arabia / Syria / UAE

World Factbook CIA, 2009: Bahrain / Iran / Iraq / Israel / Jordan / Lebanon

Kuwait / Oman / Qatar / Saudi Arabia / Syria / UAE

A Guide to Talking With Insurgents by Daniel Byman, *Brookings*, April 2009.

Mapping Peace Between Syria and Israel by Frederic C. Hof. *USIP*, March'09.

Iran and the Future of Afghanistan Backgrounder by Greg Bruno. *CFR*, March 27, 2009.

Implications for U.S. of the Saudi-Iranian Struggle for Influence in the Middle East - March 17'09. Note: 158p.

Lebanon's Role in the Middle East in *The Middle East Times*, March 9, 2009.

Study on Possible Israeli Strike on Iran's Nuclear Development Facilities by Abdullah Toukan. *CSIS*, March 6'09.

Saudi-Iranian Relations Since the Fall of Saddam: Rivalry, Cooperation, and Implications for U.S. Policy *RAND*, March'09. Note: 158p. Summary 17p.

Engaging with Muslim Communities Around the World Hearing, *U.S. Senate Comm. Foreign Rels.* Feb. 26'09.

Assessing Motives in Tehran Briefing by Frank Procida. *CFR*, February 23, 2009.

A Preview: Challenges in the Middle East Briefing with James Zogby, president, *Arab American Institute*, at the Foreign Press Center, *U.S. Dept of State*, February 4, 2009.

Opinion Briefing: U.S. Image in Middle East/North Africa *Gallup*, January 27, 2009.

Europe, the United States, and Middle Eastern Democracy: Repairing the Breach by Tamara Cofman Wittes & Richard Youngs. *Saban Center for Middle East Policy, Brookings*, January'09.

Saudi Arabia and the Future of Afghanistan by Greg Bruno. *CFR*, December 11, 2008.

Obama's Middle East Policy: What the Arab World Expects by Amr Hamzawy & Farah Choucair. *CEIP*, Dec. 8'08.

After Iraq: Future Military Posture in the Middle East by Bradley Bowman in *WQ*, Spring, 2008.

United States - United Arab Emirates Joint Statement, November 17, 2008.

Restoring the Balance: A Middle East Strategy for the Next President by Richard N. Haass & Martin S. Indyk. *Brookings*, 2008. Note: 288p. - see also Executive summaries of individual chapters.

The Gulf Security Dialogue and Related Arms Sale Proposals *CRS*, October 8, 2008.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq *GAO*, October 1, 2008.

The Situation in Iraq and Afghanistan Hearing, *U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services*, September 23, 2008. (witnesses - U.S. Sec. of Defense R. Gates & Vice-Chair Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. James Cartwright USMC).

The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism by Daniel Byman, *Brookings*, May 2008.

Fighting on Two Fronts: Secular Parties in the Arab World by Marina Ottoway & Amr Hamzawy. *CEIP*, May'07.



CRS Reports: Middle East – Recent Updates

- [Iran: U.S. Concerns and Policy Responses](#) March 13, 2009.
- [Israeli-Arab Negotiations: Background, Conflicts, and U.S. Policy](#) March 9, 2009.
- [Iraq: Politics, Elections, and Benchmarks](#) February 26, 2009.
- [Bahrain: Reform, Security, and U.S. Policy](#) February 24, 2009.
- [U.S. Foreign Aid to the Palestinians](#) February 20, 2009.
- [Israel and Hamas: Conflict in Gaza \(2008-2009\)](#) February 19, 2009.
- [Iraqi Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons: A Deepening Humanitarian Crisis?](#) February 13'09.
- [Iran's Activities and Influence in Iraq](#) February 13, 2009.
- [Saudi Arabia: Current Issues and U.S. Relations](#) February 9, 2009.
- [Iraq: Map Sources](#) February 6, 2009.
- [Iraq: Post-Saddam Governance and Security](#) February 5, 2009.
- [The Iran Sanctions Act \(ISA\)](#) February 2, 2009.
- [U.S. Foreign Aid to the Palestinians](#) January 30, 2009.
- [Iraq's Debt Relief: Procedure and Implications for International Debt Relief](#) January 26'09.
- [Yemen: Background and U.S. Relations](#) / [Lebanon: Background and U.S. Relations](#) January 21, 2009.
- [Iran's Economic Conditions: U.S. Policy Issues](#) January 15, 2009.
- [Israel and the Palestinians: Prospects for a Two-State Solution](#) December 10, 2008.
- [The United Arab Emirates \(UAE\): Issues for U.S. Policy](#) December 8, 2008.
- [Kuwait: Security, Reform, and U.S. Policy](#) December 6, 2008.
- [Iran's Nuclear Program: Tehran's Compliance with International Obligations](#) December 4, 2008.
- [Oman: Reform, Security, and U.S. Policy](#) December 4, 2008.
- [Iraq: Regional Perspectives and U.S. Policy](#) December 1, 2008.
- [Iran: Ethnic and Religious Minorities](#) November 25, 2008.
- [Iran's Nuclear Program: Status](#) November 20, 2008.
- [Iraq: Reconstruction Assistance](#) November 14, 2008.
- [Operation Iraqi Freedom: Strategies, Approaches, Results & Issues for Congress](#) October 28, 2008.
- [Jordan: U.S. Relations and Bilateral Issues](#) October 17, 2008.
- [The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq](#) September 25, 2008.
- [Israel: Background and Relations with the United States](#) September 8, 2008.
- [Turkey: Update on Crisis of Identity and Power](#) September 2, 2008.
- [Turkey: Selected Foreign Policy Issues and U.S. Views](#) August 29, 2008.
- [Iraqi Civilian Deaths Estimates](#) August 27, 2008.
- [Arab League Boycott of Israel](#) August 27, 2008.
- [Al Qaeda in Iraq: Assessment and Outside Links](#) August 15, 2008.
- [Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations](#) August 12, 2008.
- [U.S. Forces in Iraq](#) July 24, 2008.
- [Iran: Profile of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad](#) July 9, 2008.
- [Syria: Background and U.S. Relations](#) May 1, 2008.
- [Iraq: Foreign Contributions to Stabilization and Reconstruction](#) December 26, 2007.
- [Post-War Iraq: Foreign Contributions to Training, Peacekeeping and Reconstruction](#) Sept. 25'07.
- [Lebanon](#) November 23, 2007.



[America.gov – Middle East](#)

March 2009

[Obama Seeks Renewed U.S.-Iran Relations](#)

In a special video message to the people of Iran, President Obama calls for a “new day” in relations between Washington and Tehran and a future rooted in honest engagement and mutual respect. The March 20 message comes at the beginning of Nowruz, the traditional Persian new year holiday.



25 March 2009 **[United States Committed to Free, Democratic Lebanon](#)** Renewed engagement with Syria will not supplant America's unwavering support for a free, democratic Lebanon, says a top U.S. diplomat. Such support is a key component to lasting peace and security in the Middle East, adds acting Assistant Secretary of State Jeffrey Feltman.

09 March 2009 **[US Envoys Meet with Syrian Officials](#)** Representatives of the United States and Syria held comprehensive and constructive talks in Damascus, Syria, and found considerable common ground on an array of issues, a senior U.S. diplomat says.

04 March 2009 **[Time Is of the Essence for Palestinian State, Says Clinton](#)** America strongly supports the creation of a future Palestinian state, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says, pledging to work for peace by engaging a new Israeli government on halting settlement expansion and easing border restrictions.

02 March 2009 **[United States Pledges \\$900 Million for Palestinians](#)** Saying time is of the essence, the United States pledged \$900 million in humanitarian aid for the Palestinians at an international conference in Egypt.

* **[Fact Sheet: U.S. Assistance to the Palestinians](#)**

February 2009

27 February 2009 **[Clinton Leaves for Middle East, Europe for Extended Talks](#)** Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is beginning a series of official visits to the Middle East and to Europe aimed at restarting Mideast peace talks and boosting trans-Atlantic relations. Clinton begins the trip March 2 at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh at a donors conference for Gaza.

09 February 2009 **[Biden Says Finding Lasting Mideast Peace Requires Collaboration](#)** Vice President Biden says it will take close collaboration among Arab and European partners and the United States to find a resolution to the vexing challenges of creating a lasting Middle East peace.

03 February 2009 **[Special Envoy Mitchell to Return to Middle East This Month](#)** Middle East special envoy George Mitchell is beginning what will become high-level engagement by the United States in trying to end the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, says Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

02 February 2009 **[Gaza Truce Remains Fragile, Say US Officials](#)** As President Obama's Middle East envoy completes his first round of regional consultations, continued violence in the Gaza Strip threatens international peacemaking efforts, says State Department acting spokesman Robert Wood.

January 2009

30 January 2009 **[Statement on US Humanitarian Support to Palestinians](#)** *Fact Sheet*

29 January 2009 **[US Envoy Expresses Concern for Loss of Palestinian Lives](#)** The United States is concerned about the loss of Palestinian lives and the pressing humanitarian needs in the Gaza Strip in the aftermath of a 22-day conflict between Israeli and Hamas forces, U.S. Middle East special envoy George Mitchell says.

29 January 2009 **[Statement by Middle East Peace Envoy George Mitchell in Ramallah](#)** Envoy urges sustainable, durable cease-fire to achieve two-state solution.

28 January 2009 **[Middle East Envoy Calls for Strengthened Gaza Cease-Fire](#)** A lasting Gaza cease-fire must be based on an end to arms smuggling to Hamas and a reopening of blockaded borders, says George Mitchell, U.S. special envoy for Middle East peace.

27 January 2009 **[Obama Pledges New American Partnership in Middle East](#)** President Obama says that the United States “offers a hand of friendship” to the Middle East and broader Muslim world and wants a new relationship firmly rooted in mutual respect and mutual interests. “What you’ll see is someone who is listening.”

26 January 2009 **[President Obama's Interview with Hisham Melhem of Al Arabiya](#)**

26 January 2009 **[President Sends Special Envoy Mitchell to Middle East](#)** One of the key missions of Middle East special envoy George Mitchell's trip to the region will be to consolidate the cease-fire after the three-week-old Gaza conflict, a State Department spokesman says, and to ensure progress toward Middle East peace.

22 January 2009 **[Obama Pledges “Active Engagement” on Middle East Peace](#)** President Obama has reached out to Middle East leaders to emphasize that progress toward peace in the region will be among his administration's top foreign policy priorities. “He used this

opportunity on his first day in office to communicate his commitment to active engagement in pursuit of Arab-Israeli peace from the beginning of his term," said White House spokesman Robert Gibbs.

22 January 2009 **Obama Names Special Envoys for Middle East, Afghanistan-Pakistan** President Obama joined Secretary of State Hillary Clinton January 22 to announce former Senator George Mitchell as his special envoy to the Middle East peace process and Ambassador Richard Holbrooke as his special representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan — moves that underscore the new administration's commitment to renewing America's leadership through reinvigorated diplomacy.

2008

22 October 2008 **Rice Discusses Changes Across the Middle East**

21 October 2008 **Secretary Rice's Interview with Lukman Ahmed on BBC Arabic TV** Rice discusses Palestinian-Israeli peace process, Afghanistan and Iraq.

16 October 2008 **Secretary Rice's Interview with Hisham Melhem on Al Arabiya** Rice updates on current situations in Middle East.

See Also:

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: 2008: Near East *Bureau of Democracy, Dept. of State*, March 5'09.

Country Reports on Terrorism: 2007 Office of Coordinator for Counterterrorism. *Dept. of State*, April 30, 2008.

International Religious Freedom Report 2008 - Near East *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, Dept. of State*, September 19, 2008.

American Muslims and the Threat of Homegrown Terrorism by Eben Kaplan. *CFR*, 8 May 2007.

Sharing the Dragon's Teeth: Terrorist Groups and the Exchange of New Technology *RAND*, 138p.

Terrorist Ideology Open hearing before the *U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, June 12, 2007.

Public Opinion - Israeli-Palestinian Conflict *USIP*, June, 2007.

Democracy Dialogues "A global conversation about democracy" – *America.gov*

Middle East Peace Process: Creating a More Stable World

Arab American Institute

International Crisis Group – Middle East

Iraq War Veterans Association

Internat. Online Defense Magazine - Operation Iraqi Freedom

Muslim Public Affairs Council

Carnegie Endowment for Peace – Middle East

Henry L. Stimson Center – Middle East

RAND – International Affairs

Council on American-Islamic Relations: To enhance the understanding of Islam...

Washington Quarterly - Middle East: **Israeli-Palestinian Relations / Iran / Iraq / Syria / Turkey / Rest of the Region**

Foreign Affairs: Middle East

USIP – Special Reports

Council on Foreign Relations: Middle East

CRF: Middle East Program

New America Foundation

American Enterprise Institute: Middle East

Saban Center for Middle East Policy

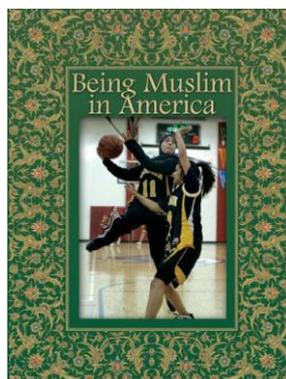
CRS Reports: A Compilation

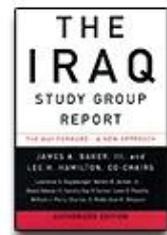
The Middle East Times

Arab Reform Bulletin *CEIP*, 2009.

Being Muslim in America

Photo Gallery





Iraq

The Iraq Study Group Report The bipartisan Iraq Study Group is co-chaired by James A. Baker III, the former secretary of treasury and state who now serves as honorary chairman of the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, and former congressman Lee H. Hamilton, director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Other members are: Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Vernon E. Jordan Jr., Edwin Meese III, Sandra Day O'Connor, Leon E. Panetta, William J. Perry, Charles S. Robb, and Alan K. Simpson. CSIS, 2006.

Iraqi Security and “Hearts and Minds”: Selected Results of the ABC News Poll by Anthony H. Cordesman, CSIS, March 19, 2009.

A Costly Exit from Iraq by Greg Bruno. *Council on Foreign Relations*, March 6, 2009.

The Iraq War: Progress in the Fighting and Security by Anthony H. Cordesman. CSIS, February 18, 2009. 148p.

Summary: “How Soon is Safe? Iraqi Force Development and Conditions-based U.S. Withdrawals”

Iraq, its Neighbors, and the Obama Administration: Syrian and Saudi Perspectives A joint report by the *U.S. Institute of Peace* and the *Stimson Center*, February 9, 2009.

Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience Report by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, February 2, 2009. Note: 378p.

Responsibly Ending the War in Iraq – *The White House*, February 27, 2009.

Iraq’s Political Landscape Backgrounder by Greg Bruno. *CFR*, February 5, 2009.

U.S. Hails Iraqi Ratification of Security Pact *America.gov* December 5, 2008.

Evaluating Iraq’s Provincial Reconstruction Teams While Drawdown Looms by Rusty Barber & Sam Parker. *USIP*, December 2008.

Renewing the United Nations Mandate for Iraq: Plans and Prospects Hearing before the *U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs*, November 19, 2008. Go to **transcripts** and scroll down.

Reconciliation Strategies in Iraq Report by David A. Steele. *USIP*, September 2008. **Summary**

The Future of the U.S. Military Presence in Iraq by Julie Montgomery. *USIP*, September 2008.

“Choosing War: The Decision to Invade Iraq and Its Aftermath” by Joseph J. Collins. *NDU*, April, 2008.

Why Iraqis Cannot Agree on an Oil Law by Lionel Beehner. *CFR*, February 22, 2008.

The Flight From Iraq by Nir Rosen, *New America Foundation*, May 13, 2007.

Hagel Urges Shift in Iraq Policy, End to Partisanship Interview. *CFR*, May 8, 2007.

Iraqi Perceptions of the War: Public Opinion by City and Region by Anthony Cordesman. CSIS, May 2, 2007.

Iraq, the Gulf, Afghanistan: The Way Ahead by Anthony Cordesman. CSIS, 1 May, 2007.

The Iraqi Kurdish Question by Lionel Beehner. *CFR*, April 23, 2007.

Iraq and the Kurds: Resolving the Kirkuk Crisis *International Crisis Group*, April 19, 2007.

The U.S. Navy Beyond Iraq: Sea Power for a New Era Remarks (with Q&A) by Admiral Michael G. Mullen, Chief of Naval Operations, U.S. Navy, at the *Brookings Institution*, April 3, 2007.

Syria's Relations with Iraq by Mona Yacoubian. *USIP*, April, 2007.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq *USIP*, March 2007. 12p.

Four Years Later: Arab Opinion Troubled by Consequences of Iraq War Highlights of *Zogby International / Arab American Institute* poll conducted in February and March 2007.

Iran

- [Poor Policy, Not Sanctions, Weaken Iran's Economy](#) Interview with Djavad Salehi-Isfahani. *CFR*, March 26, 2009.
- [The Iran Sanctions Enabling Act of 2009](#) Hearing before a *subcommittee of the U.S. House Committee on Financial Services*, March 12, 2009.
- [Iran Is Unlikely to Give Up Its Nuclear Enrichment Program](#) Interview with Leslie Gelb. *CFR*, March 16, 2009.
- [Study on a Possible Strike on Iran's Nuclear Development Facilities](#) by Abdullah Toukan. *CSIS*, March 16, 2009.
- [Obama Hones Iran Strategy](#) by Leonard Spector on *YaleGlobal*, 16 March, 2009.
- [U.S. Strategy Regarding Iran](#) Hearing, *U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations*, March 5'09.
- [Iranian Political and Nuclear Realities and U.S. Policy Options](#) Hearing before the *U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations*, March 3, 2009.
- [Pathway to Co-Existence: A New U.S. Policy Toward Iran](#) by Ray Takeyh. *Brookings*, December 2008.
- [Iran](#) Annotated bibliography by *Muir S. Fairchild Research Information Center*, November 2008.
- [Analyzing Iran's Domestic Political Landscape](#) by Kurt Campbell. *USIP*, May, 2008.
- [Statement on U.S. Security Council Resolution 1747](#) *Dept. of State*, March 24, 2007[re Iran's nuclear program].
- [Is Iran Facing an Economic Crisis?](#) Briefing by Kelly Campbell. *USIP*, May 2007.
- [Syria's Alliance with Iran](#) by Mona Yakoubian, *USIP*, May 2007.
- [Iran's Hostile Policies in Iraq](#) Backgrounder by James Phillips. *Heritage*, April 30, 2007.
- [Who Rules Ahmedinejad's Iran?](#) Briefing by Hesham Sallam et al. *USIP*, April, 2007.
- ## Gaza / Palestine / Israel
- [Reconstructing Gaza: Lessons from Lebanon](#) by Alistair Harris. *USIP*, March 2009. [Summary](#)
- [The Gordian Knot of Gaza](#) by Tamara Cofman Wittes on *YaleGlobal*, 6 March, 2009.
- [Remarks by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas](#) in Ramallah, West Bank, March 4, 2009.
- [Intervention at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza](#) Address by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, March 2, 2009.
- [United States Assistance to the Palestinians](#) *U.S. Dept of State*, March 2, 2009.
- [United States Humanitarian Support for Palestinians](#) *U.S. Dept of State*, January 30, 2009.
- [Confronting or Engaging Iran: Foreign Policy Challenges and Opportunities Facing the New Administration](#) *USIP*, 2008.
- [Movement and Access Restrictions in the West Bank: Uncertainty and Inefficiency in the Palestinian Economy](#) *World Bank Technical Team, The World Bank*, May 9, 2007.
- [International Reaction to the Palestinian Unity Government](#) *CRS report*, May 9, 2007.
- [Restarting Israeli-Syrian Negotiations](#) Middle East Report No. 63, *International Crisis Group*, April 10, 2007.
- [From Rejection to Acceptance: Israeli National Security Thinking & Palestinian Statehood](#) by S. Brom, Feb.'07.



The U.S. Department of State assumes no responsibility for the content and availability of the resources listed above.

All Internet links were active at **March 30, 2009**.
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