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## Transcript Q&A

# Iraq Ten Years On: Iraq 2013: Achievements and Challenges

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**Jeremy Greenstock:**

You've got three quite distinct perspectives – a lot of worries about Iraq, but there is need for time. Iraqis are determined to get somewhere in the future, and most of them are staying with it, even if a lot of the middle class families have left and are looking at their interests in the country with a lot of equivocation. There are of course a huge number of problems to be solved but things seem to move forward in ways which Dr Safa has described and Dominic has shown has produced some improvement over the 10 years we've looked at.

I'm going to open it up in a minute but I just want to pursue one or two thoughts with each of you. The provincial elections have been delayed – can you say a bit more about how you see the run-up to the national elections in 2014? It's important for the world outside and for businesses and governments wanting to do business with Iraq that the democratic timetable is stuck to. Indeed, it's also important that elections should have consequences, that elections matter. What's the feeling inside Baghdad about the run-up to the elections? Are people beginning to place themselves for that? Can you say a bit more about that particular timetable?

**Safa al-Sheikh Hussein:**

If you go to Baghdad right now, you can see that the election campaigns have started. You see pictures, you see slogans on the streets. There are the security precautions and security plans there. The government was going to do the elections on the specific time, but I think the protests in three of the provinces – and especially in Anbar – people are worried if elections can be done there. This comes from Anbar itself, not from the central government.

So I think the government and the political parties understand and appreciate the importance of elections and that they go on time, but the elections need to be fair. The violence has to be taken in-between. [*sic*]

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

Thank you. Feisal, you were pretty pessimistic in your assessment. There's no doubt there's a huge amount to pick on in Iraq that is not going right. But do you see the Sunni community as giving up on their place in a united Iraq? Has a line been crossed now? How great is the despair in the Sunni community, or do you think there's a way back here?

**Feisal Istrabadi:**

I don't think I was pessimistic. I would say I was realistic in my assessment. That's in the eye of the beholder, but maybe it's appropriate that I'm sort of on one side here.

Clearly the 2003 intervention was a shock, although I don't quite buy into the notion of some about the sort of historic Sunni dominance in Iraq. But I'll leave all that aside.

What I would say is this. In a truly democratic Iraq, the Shia of Iraq will of course dominate because of their sheer numbers. What I did not see in 2003–04 was any sense of what I call, for lack of a better word, a magnanimity on the part of the leadership of the Shia religious parties. While we were writing the transitional administrative law (TAL), the interim constitution of Iraq, in 2003 and 2004, you could literally see the Iraqi national identity, which had been historically strong I think – you could literally see it evanesce. It was palpable. By the way, my view is that could happen anywhere, it's not just in Iraq. It could happen certainly in the United States – I don't know as much about Britain. You have a referendum in Scotland, so who knows.

What I have not seen 10 years on is any reaching out on the part of the leadership of the Shia religious parties toward the Sunni community. This really ought to be a worrisome thing. You know Ghassan Attiyah used to say that the Kurds of Iraq, having no friends in the region, were able to destabilize the country for eight decades. What can the Sunni of Iraq do with support throughout the region? It's a matter of survival for the Shia religious parties, it seems to me, to reach out. It's not even magnanimity, it's a matter of basic survival to reach out and try to create a sense of national cohesion.

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

Dominic, you ended by saying Iraq has dropped down the league table of crises in the Middle East because others have taken over. But Iraq is still going to be affected by the region. Could you speculate a little bit about the possible effects of the crises that are either there or potential on either side of Iraq, in Syria and Iran? Is it best for Iraq that it drops out of sight, if we are concentrating on other problems? Iran could get a lot worse. Or is Iraq inevitably going to be affected by what's happening in its neighbourhood?

### **Dominic Asquith:**

The latter. It can't drop out of sight. It will be, I'm sure, brought in by those in its neighbourhood, to either the east or to the west. The problems are likely to get worse in the course of this year so it's going to be affected by both. You can be pretty confident it will be affected in the sense that the problems inherent in Iraq will become more difficult as a result of what's happening on either side.

At heart, I suspect, what's going to get accentuated even more is the sectarian challenge. I find politics in Iraq really concerning. If it is true that were the provincial elections to have gone ahead there were areas where the Shia parties would not have put forward candidates because there was a nugatory, wholly insignificant Shia population there, ten years on, that is not national politics. It was excusable in the context of Libya, for the first elections in 45 years or whatever, that there should be in fact only one national party virtually, in the sense that it put forward candidates for every constituency. I find that way that politics has developed in Iraq deeply concerning and it's going to get more concerning as a result of the pressures from either side.

### **Question 1:**

I would like to make one thing absolutely clear, and I hope my Iraqi colleague would agree with me. Over the years, i.e., since 1921 up to 2003, ordinary Iraqis did not have a quarrel with each other on ethnic bases. We never quarrelled. We lived, we intermarried. Our quarrel was always with a ruler, whether it was the monarchy, whether it was during the three different republics that we had since 1963 onwards. In other words, we did not view each other – in an office, in a club, when getting married, when we travelled – as 'I am Sunni and you are a Shia'. This was not the case because our rulers distributed their punishment very justly among all Iraqis rather than picking one out.

This sectarian strife started after 2003. I'm not going to go to the cause and effect of this but I want to come back to the session you're chairing at present. My first question is to Dr Safa, because I think he's in a very important position and I hope that the prime minister does listen to your advice, sir. Do you ever advise him when you see something wrong going in the country? Because each decision taken by the office of the prime minister affects the security in the country.

Recently Dr [Hussain] Shahrstani – and correct me if I'm wrong, because this was the report I got – he claimed that at the Ministry of Interior, for example,

there are 125 director-generals: 5 Kurds, 5 Sunnis, and 115 members of the Dawa Party. If this is not an imbalance, I don't know what is. The prime minister, not liking Mr [Falah] Shanshal, the head of de-Ba'athification of parliament, he changes him. Now he cannot interfere in the parliamentary procedures. I can go ahead and give you a number of examples of what is happening and why there is this kind of strife.

Like Professor Istrabadi said, you have to be magnanimous when you hold power. The sooner we realize that our basic needs – Shia, Sunni, Kurds or whatever we are, we live in this country – our basic needs are the same. Unless the government we elect caters for our basic needs, those communities who think they are hurt, they are going to rebel.

### **Jeremy Greenstock:**

Okay, let's take your fundamental question to Dr Safa. You're on the record, but what kind of discussions happen inside the prime minister's circle about how to mend some of these problems that are increasingly coming out in sectarian terms?

### **Safa al-Sheikh Hussein:**

I would say that there are different mechanisms for decision-making in Iraq. For example, on the security sector where I work, the National Security Council is the forum for higher security policy decisions. For lower-level decisions, it can go through different channels. But I think what the gentleman has expressed here, if you will allow me just a minute, I think many times we oversimplify things when we describe what is happening there. Blaming Dawa or Maliki or Shia or Sunni is simple, but it doesn't give us a clue of what is happening; it doesn't give us the drivers that motivate what is going on in Iraq.

In Iraq there is a principle, an engineering principle, which says if you have a system and if you inject a force or impulse into the system, the response will be determined by the nature of the system itself. Our system is combined of a tribal system, we have very deep traditions, we have family relations, we have... type of political system. So when the democratic process comes, it changes something but it needs time to go deep into the society and change the traditions of the society.

You mentioned that there were no problems in ethnic or sectarian before 2003 and it began in 2003. Sorry, but I don't agree on that. I think you are

right on the social level. At the social level we don't have problems with each other. We have some intermarriages in mixed areas. But you know the majority of provinces, like Anbar, like Maysan, like Basra, they are not mixed places. It is majority of Sunni, a vast majority of Shia. But we have discrimination in the senior positions and the sensitive positions. For example, I worked in the military industry in the 1990s. There were 60 director-generals – two of them were Shia, and those two Shia were very senior in the Ba'ath Party in order to be there. If you worked with the intelligence services, you could rarely see Shia.

So this was there, under the surface. When democratization came – I mentioned in my presentation the syndrome of democratization. When political parties come, it is hard to convince people to elect them but it is easy to provoke their fears of the others and rally people on sectarian or ethnic ways. This has happened in many countries. It has happened in Yugoslavia, it has happened in Czechoslovakia and it happens in Iraq, and I think it will happen in some other Arab countries. We can't help it. What we can do is work to strengthen the Iraqi national identity, but this will take time. The political parties are part of the society – they have all the problems of the society with them.

### **Question 2:**

I've got just a brief intervention. Looking back at the civil unrest that took place in the western part of Iraq – in Anbar, Salah ad-Din and Mosul – we all saw how the various Sunni politicians kind of went into competition to claim control over these platforms. That's on the one hand. On the other hand, it's been going for some time that we saw the Iraqi Shia and members of the ruling parties always kind of working in competition, like who's the next compromise candidate to replace Maliki, while Maliki always maintained a stance that 'I'm the legitimate ruler of Iraq, or the executive of the ruling party, hence my presence' and so on.

I think the challenge that's happening, it's not Sunni-Shia over the next few years – it's Sunni-Sunni and Shia-Shia. There is a problem between the Shias themselves and the Sunnis themselves. Without having all these differences settled within these communities, it would be quite difficult to create some kind of cohesion between the Sunni and Shia at large.

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

Do you think that's true?

**Feisal Istrabadi:**

I do – and again, there wasn't time to speak in shades. The Biden-Gelb plan failed to take into account that there are Kurdish–Kurdish tensions, Shia–Shia tensions, Sunni–Sunni tensions. What is the sort of *saatr 'ala al-haal* holding us together is Baghdad. If Baghdad falls apart, it is I think a war of all against all. That's the nightmare scenario.

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

[inaudible]

**Dominic Asquith:**

Yes, but I'm not sure it's one or the other, it's just yes – and also, there is that as well. Because quite often you would find a particular sectarian community, although it was riven with its own internal friction and competition, would coalesce against an external threat to it. So although the Shia community would debate endlessly who would be their agreed candidate for prime minister, and it would expose the internal discord in the community, as soon as it came under threat it would coalesce behind a candidate.

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

I feel a general point needs to be made here, to both the first two questions put. When there is liberation of a system, when there is greater freedom, when things open up, people's attitudes change. They get the opportunity to focus more on their own identity. Out of a single rigid system – and you're seeing this across the Middle East, and the Arab Spring is not just a regional phenomenon, it's a global phenomenon. Where there is more freedom, people get more intense about their identities and begin to reinterpret their identities because the context has changed.

I think against the question put on time, or the remarks given on the time needed: it takes time for a new democratic system to evolve the institutions and the attitudes that take account of the new identities, both within sectarian groups and between them. Iraq in its history has been vociferous for a very

long time between its tribes, as the British found in the early part of the 20th century, as well as between its sects and religions, and its individuals.

There must be time for this to leach out and come through, and for mainstreams to be formed. We're going to see it in Egypt, we're going to see it in Tunisia and Libya; we're going to see it across the Middle East. Iraq is not going to be different in this way.

### **Feisal Istrabadi:**

I think in principle, that's fine, but you have to also look at the leaderships. You're letting the leaderships off too easily when you say, 'oh well, these things happen'. The leaderships in Iraq, the leaders of the political parties in Iraq, did what leaderships do: they led, and they led their constituents in a particular direction. The direction they deliberately led their constituents in was in a sectarian direction. That was a deliberate policy. You can see it. You can see it in the way that the parties ran in 2005. You can see the way they ran very quickly in 2010, when the results of the elections were inconclusive.

So it's true that there may be these forces that naturally tend to act when a system all of a sudden changes. But the question has to be: what are the leaderships doing to contain these? If the position in Baghdad among the senior leadership is a complacent one of, 'oh well, there were these genocides in the former Yugoslavia and that's just the way life goes' – I mean, this is something that we have to resist, and that a well-thought-out political elite should have anticipated and should have striven against, not encouraged.

### **Jeremy Greenstock:**

Indeed, the quota system started under the CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority) very early on.

### **Question 3:**

I just wanted to point out one thing. Now again we are just talking about – shortening Iraq to Sunni, Shia, Kurds. But in fact, we Turkmen, we are the third-largest ethnicity in Iraq as well. I'm just giving you a point of view of Turkmen. We live in what they call the mixed area, which is from Tal Afar to Mandali. This area has been recognized as a disputed area. This area, we are seeing this – we have two governments, a Kurdish government and we



have the Iraqi central government. But they have disagreement on this area, which is mainly dominated by Turkmen.

When they have conflict, it's only Turkmen who are suffering all the bombings, all the assassinations, all the atrocities that are happening in this area. So without solving these issues, since 2003 until now, Turkmen have been subjected to assassination, kidnapping; our lands have been taken away. All the bombings, like in Taza and Amerli, in Tuz Khormato, which is a huge number of Turkmen just losing their lives in this area.

The officials in Iraq, in the central government and Kurdish officials, they admit that they can't provide security for this area because they have disagreement between two governments. So is there any real solution for this area? Turkmen are suffering ethnic cleansing. Thank you.

#### **Question 4:**

In my opinion, one of the most important challenges that faces Iraq now is to preserve unity with the presence of our neighbours' interference, including Turkey. Does the Turkish government interference in Iraqi internal politics and pressure against the Iraqi government, and the change of its strategy against Kurdistan and the western territories and in general Iraqi unity, related to the sectarian reasons or oil interests, or regional interests, to follow up the project or dreams founded by former president Turgut Özal in 1991 and Süleyman Demirel in 1997, to divide Iraq into three states?

#### **Jeremy Greenstock:**

Thank you. Dr Safa, do you want to take up the point about – the Turkmen are a very distinctive minority. Is there care taken in Baghdad to protect minorities?

#### **Safa al-Sheikh Hussein:**

There are problems with Turkmen but also in other disputed areas where other minorities are, like the Christians, Assyrians, Shabak and the Yazidis and so on. The problem of security is in most of the areas of Iraq, but as a minority they are more sensitive to attacks and so on. This is one point.

The second point which the lady brought is the confrontation and the tensions between the KRG (Kurdistan Regional Government) and the federal government. Recently there was a suggestion from the prime minister to

establish local security forces from within these communities, as a part of the national security forces, to protect themselves – because they are more aware there. But there are some political problems. I think a real solution comes only when the issue of the disputed areas is resolved.

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

Feisal, we took care right at the start with the TAL to get minority rights into the constitutional principles we were trying to bring forward. That was carried through to the main 2005 constitution. What's the problem? Is the problem in implementation? Or did we not make those rights strong enough?

**Feisal Istrabadi:**

The lady is quite right. We have been talking about Arabs and Kurds basically. Iraq actually is a country of 27 separate ethnic and confessional minorities – it's not just the three. You are quite right to remind us of that.

What I think the central problem in this regard has been – it's not whether we articulated minority rights or not, although I think that is a problem. What we actually failed to do was to articulate a shared vision of the state of Iraq post-2003. There is today, 10 years on, not a shared vision of the state of Iraq. Although you hear people talk about Iraqi nationalism, we have even sort of changed what that means. I would argue, and I think we will hear from Dr [Fanar] Haddad later today, there is a sort of Shia vision of the state, there's a Sunni vision of the state, there's a Kurdish vision, there may be a Turkmen vision and maybe other visions. But we don't have a shared vision, and I think that's why we are where we are.

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

There was a question about Turkish intervention or interference in Iraq. We're getting into regional and international aspects later in the programme, but Turkey is an extremely important neighbour. Dominic, do you have a comment on that? Is the support of neighbours actually essential for the internal processes of Iraq?

**Dominic Asquith:**

Well, the intervention of neighbours can certainly muck it up. The support of neighbours, just as the support of the international community, is going to be important to help Iraq through the next period.

I'm inhibited – I can't speak for what the Turkish government's motivations are, but I would suspect there are four pretty obvious ones. Yes, definitely, related to the Kurdish community. Secondly, quite evidently to anybody who's been up there, the commercial possibilities and opportunities. But thirdly, and you saw it very noticeably in 2005 and 2006, the concern Turkey has when there is chaos to the south. You saw it in the way that it was prepared to deal with the Kurdish political leadership in Kurdistan. There are times, certainly it seemed to be so in 2005–06, when it looked on the Kurdish region as its sort of buffer against chaos and insecurity further south. Fourthly, it has quite understandable aspirations to be an international player. It wants to play a role in managing the area.

**Feisal Istrabadi:**

Can I just add to that very quickly? And that is, the tussle between Turkey and Iran. I think as Turkey perceives Baghdad moving toward closer relations with Tehran, this has driven Ankara and Irbil closer together. I think that's a huge part of this puzzle.

**Dominic Asquith:**

Though the degree to which that is important depends on the relationship that exists between Ankara and Tehran, which is fluid. So sometimes it was closer than it is now.

**Safa al-Sheikh Hussein:**

I think in the beginning, just after 2003, you remember, the relations with Turkey were growing very well. At that time many Iraqis saw Turkey as a model for a new government and new development, because of their respect to Islamic values, their model of democracy, their improving economy. Even as government relations, there was a strategic agreement which ended as about 50 agreements of cooperation.

The point of change came when the Arab Spring began. I think the opportunity which was given to Turkey to expand its role beyond their

economic tools – in the beginning it was using the economy but then it found another opportunity, especially in Syria. This began to change the strategy.

The point about Iran and Turkey – historically Iraq is a battleground between Iran and Turkey. They both see Iraq as a sphere of influence to the region. This drove Turkey and shifted policy to some way which is interpreted in Iraq as a sectarian policy. I think it is very damaging to the relations of Iraq and Turkey. The shape of Turkey is changing now in the minds of the Iraqi population.

### **Question 5:**

The comments of Ambassador Istrabadi – your realism – I would like to add a little bit more realism: the achievements of the Iraqi government in succeeding in a negotiated, peaceful exit of the foreign troops from Iraq; the holding of the Arab [League] summit, which hasn't been done for decades in Baghdad; the improved economic prosperity of the ordinary person. In the time of Saddam the average wage was \$10, now it's near \$1,000. The improvement of the oil sector, and there are major projects going on. But still, I agree, there is a lot more that needs to be done.

In terms of the really important issue of the Shia and their relationship with other sectors, the Shia leaders – all leaders, whether it be Dawa leadership, the Supreme Council or the Sadrists – all of them acknowledge one of their main cornerstones is inclusion. There is no question, no doubt of the willingness of the Shias to join and share power with Kurds and Sunnis. The problem has been to find suitable and serious political partners who take the benefit of Iraq seriously, not partners who have one foot in the political process and one foot in terrorist elements. The question of Tariq al-Hashemi – it's a legal issue. There have been proofs against him.

The plan of the prime minister to form the State of Law Coalition was that – it was precisely to break out of the sectarian element and to form a movement that is broadly based with Sunnis and with Kurds. There were many Sunni leaders who were willing to join but they were threatened by the extremists at the last minute and had to withdraw. So the Shias have always been and will always be for sharing of power.

You notice there has been a major shift now. The view of the prime minister and the Shia politicians is to hold a majority government not based on sectarianism but based on a principle: to benefit Iraq and asking all leaders

from other communities to join them in forming that. It was that that got the budget through very recently, through parliament.

### **Question 6:**

To Dr Istrabadi – you talked very eloquently about Sunni alienation and the record of these various elections and how they felt cut out. Of course there was the other coalition, not the one that the last speaker just mentioned – there was the Iraqiyya coalition which was more multi-confessional and multi-ethnic and multi-sectarian than the one that you're talking about which is now in charge of the country.

Can you give us your assessment over the next two years, just looking ahead to the next two years: what will the Sunnis do? You talked about 'what would you do if you were a sheikh in Anbar?' But what's the answer? Do you think there will be more and more a resort to violence? We've already had three months of protests in the streets. Will those continue? Will they move to Baghdad and not just remain in Ramadi? Will there be more of a resort to violence? Will there be a chance for Iraqiyya to have another go or is it now too late for a multi-sectarian party or cross-sectarian party to ever win an election, over the next two to five years?

### **Feisal Istrabadi:**

Let me link these two together, because I think that they do in fact relate to one another. You talk about achievements. In 10 years in Baghdad, where one-quarter of Iraq's population lives, we have not opened one new school. We have not opened one new hospital. We have not paved one new road. We have not completed a single infrastructure project in Baghdad, where one-quarter of the population lives. In any Western democracy, any government that had this record – and the Dawa Party has been in power in Iraq since 2005 – no government with this sort of record would even have the audacity to stand for re-election.

You talk about the economics, the oil sector. We continue to flare our gas – we've just signed a contract to import gas from Iran. We are always ranked in the top five per cent, or the bottom five per cent if you like, by Transparency International as among the most corrupt countries in the world. We compete with Afghanistan for the honours.

So you can talk about getting the American troops out of Iraq – that was fine. But I'm talking about real achievements that matter to people on the ground.

We have the highest unemployment rate in the Middle East. If you count under-employment and – I've forgotten what it's called, people who have jobs but don't actually do anything – it's something like 50 per cent. What's it called? Ghost workers, thank you. We have doubled the public sector jobs in Iraq between 2005 and 2010 –

**Jeremy Greenstock:**

Professor, what about the question? In two years' time, where do you see the Sunni community in all this?

**Feisal Istrabadi:**

Again, speaking in just – you are using the word Sunni as a shorthand, I think. It's difficult.

I think the success of the surge – and I can't speak for what happened here, but in the United States the wrong lesson was learned. In the United States the common wisdom is that what succeeded was the extra 20,000 troops, but that actually, I don't think is true. What [General David] Petraeus did succeed in doing in the surge was to create an environment where – again, I'll use the term – the Sunni of Iraq were caused to buy into the political process in Iraq. Promises were made that they would be reincorporated into the security forces, that they would start getting government jobs, that this was not an opportunity for the Shia to have tit-for-tat for what had occurred in the previous regime in Iraq.

The prime minister never bought into this political bargain that Petraeus tried to bargain for. So if I'm right about that, that what caused the success of the so-called surge was this political deal which was never consummated, then I think what you are looking at is one of two possibilities.

One is either a return to violence – and this can occur in several ways, one of which is that if you are an Anbari sheikh and somebody's coming across to do violence, maybe you don't necessarily support them but perhaps you look the other way. That's a real danger, that the Sunnis will simply say: we're out of this, this isn't working for us.

The other is that you get a kind of a delegitimization of the state. For a time about a year ago, there was open talk about central Iraq sort of confederating with Syria. If the Syrian regime falls and you have a Muslim Brotherhood regime in Damascus or whatever, those options are on the table.

I should say one word about Tariq al-Hashemi. It's true, there is a judicial procedure. However, the judges relied on confessions of his bodyguards and it should be noted, sir, that one of his bodyguards died during the investigation. This really has to be put into perspective.

### **Jeremy Greenstock:**

Coming back to the question about Sunnis, doesn't the prime minister have to think about how he can present himself as representing governance for all Iraqis, and how to keep the Sunnis on board?

### **Safa al-Sheikh Hussein:**

Most of the problems and tensions and conflicts are based on the fight for power. I usually describe the problem like we have a football game with 28 players and the rules of the game are not yet developed, so we have problems, how to play the game.

Dr Feisal talked about sharing power – I think everybody agrees on sharing, but they disagree about the amount of sharing. How to do this? I think if we observe the last years I would see some positive changes on the political scene. For example, in 2006 and 2007 the political parties were strictly Sunni, Shia and Kurds. What we noticed after 2010, within the Iraqiyya bloc, which was mainly Sunni with some secular Shia, they were splitting into different Sunni parties. We saw also within Tahaluf al-Watani al-Iraqi, we saw different positions and signs of split between Shia parties. Also within the Kurds' *Tageer* movement was some separation of the Kurdish blocs.

If this process continues, then we will have many Sunni parties, many Shia parties, many Kurd parties – there is an opportunity for a government of majority which includes all and does not alienate any sect or any ethnicity. This is the hope of Iraq. Otherwise, we have to do a government of national unity in which all the parties come, so the parliament can do its role. Because all of them as opposition – we don't have real opposition, we don't have monitoring as we do now, because all the parliament's parties are within the government.

### **Jeremy Greenstock:**

But you're still talking about splitting rather than coming together. That's the worry. Dominic, any final comments?

### **Dominic Asquith:**

I don't like national unity governments – they don't work, because they always break up. But I think the answer to the question is – the key question: is it too late for a multi-sectarian party? No. It's not too late. I think what you'll get first is a multi-sectarian coalition, but of individual, rather more sectarian components.

I think it will happen because it goes back to something you said earlier, Jeremy – I think there is a natural development, an inevitable development in the sort of post-Arab Spring, where identity politics will develop into a shared vision of what society people want. In time, identity politics will demonstrate that it is antagonistic and does not create the sort of society that most people want to live in. So I think you will move in that direction.

### **Safa al-Sheikh Hussein:**

You asked about the future. I think there are two concepts under discussion for the future. First, giving more power to the provinces, so they can develop on their own. The second issue is within what we talked about, the share of different communities, of the Sunnis and Kurds in the federal government.

People look to the constitution and in the constitution there is an article saying that each community should be reflected in the security forces and senior positions. Now the political parties interpret this literally. In 2007, the same issue was risen in the parliament and the people were talking, the Sunnis, that they were alienated in their security ministries. So there was a reform committee. This committee comes from Sunni, Shia, Kurds, in a committee. They do a revision to the senior positions and do some adjustments, give a chance to the ministers to do some adjustments. This idea has been under discussion lately to address one of the problems of the Sunni community.

### **Jeremy Greenstock**

Thank you. We'll get into the institutional questions in the next session. My apologies to those I didn't have time to call, and I apologize for overrunning. You heard not just some fairly distinctive views in this session but some ideas of what Iraq needs to build on in the future, which I hope you'll take forward in the rest of the day. Can we please show the panel your appreciation.