

## The Role of the Ukraine War in Changing the Equation in the Middle East

### Importance of Iraq in American Strategy

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**USPA NEWS** - Since the outbreak of the war between Russia and Ukraine, international politics has undergone major shifts that have affected geopolitical balances, including in the Middle East. This war is not merely a confrontation between Russia and Ukraine; it has reshaped international alliances, especially in Europe and the Middle East, and in particular has triggered a reevaluation of the map of Iraq due to the demands of the coming phase. These shifting alliances have also impacted the trajectory previously planned for certain countries in the region.

The train that passed through Damascus may soon stop in Baghdad.

These alliances have led to a redirection of American priorities in the region, as the U.S. realized that the preoccupation of previous American and European governments with the Ukraine war resulted in reduced attention to the Middle East. This created a greater opportunity for Iran to strengthen its influence in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen.

However, American pressure on Russia in Ukraine might lead Moscow to scale back its support for Iran, especially after Damascus managed to shake off the influence of Iranian militias in Syria. This may reduce the strength of Tehran-backed militias in Iraq.

Due to the danger posed by Iranian expansion in the region, the United States is increasingly convinced that it must play a larger role in supporting the stability of Iraq as a barrier against Iranian influence.

#### Iraq as a Strategic Bridge for the U.S. Toward Asia

The U.S. understands that Iraq is not merely a battlefield between regional powers, but rather a potential cornerstone in its future strategy—particularly with respect to Asia and its rivalry with China and Russia. Iraq represents a strategic passageway toward Pakistan, a Muslim nuclear state that borders both China and Russia. Pakistan plays a key role in regional balances, especially amid its tense relations with India and its growing alliance with China.

A strong and stable Iraq could serve as an advanced American base to access Pakistan, enabling Washington to strengthen its influence in South Asia and monitor Chinese activities there.

Moreover, the U.S. could open a new southern front against Russia, surrounding it from the west through Ukraine and from the south through Pakistan (in the event of full American containment).

A strong American presence in Iraq—close to Pakistan—would allow the U.S. to increase pressure on Russia from the south, posing a strategic threat to Moscow, particularly in light of its conflict with NATO in Ukraine.

Thus, a strong and stable Iraqi ally could weaken Russia's ability to support its allies in the Middle East, shifting the balance of power in favor of the U.S. and its partners. Iraq would also become a key part of the American strategy to contain growing Chinese influence in both the Middle East and South Asia.

China has been expanding its influence in the region through the "Belt and Road Initiative," and if the U.S. succeeds in strengthening its ties with Iraq, it would secure a powerful foothold to counter China's expansion.

#### The Importance of Iraq in the Near Future

- If the U.S. succeeds in supporting a strong and independent Iraqi government, this will give it an invaluable strategic anchor.
- This would enhance American alliances in the region, create a new balance to limit Iranian influence, and undermine the plans of China and Russia in both the Middle East and South Asia.
- A strong and stable Iraq could become a central pillar in U.S. strategy—not just in the Middle East, but also in the global

confrontation between the West on one side, and Russia and China on the other.

As the Ukraine war continues to reshape the international landscape, Iraq remains a critical element in the future of geopolitical balances—whether in confronting Iran, or in preparing for the strategic competition with China and Russia.

Iraq remains a key strategic point that the United States must wisely exploit to secure its influence in the region and globally.

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