



## THE IRAQ WAR: BACKGROUND, INVASION, CURRENT RELEVANCE OF THE CONFLICT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW ANALYSIS

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### Iraq War Background

The Iraq War (2003) was a conflict started by the United States. The American giant, supported by an international coalition US, with the support of an international coalition, confronted the Iraqi regime, whose head of state was Saddam Hussein.

The conflict saw Iraq's leader fall, as a result of which the country became a state of insurgency, misery, violence, death and terrorism became the main inhabitants. But what was the background to this conflict of a warlike nature?<sup>1</sup>

It is worth noting that, although this issue has been the subject of controversy for many years, The United States could be singled out as the main promoter of this war. In fact, the United States argued

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<sup>1</sup> The Iraq War and International Humanitarian Law. Romualdo Bermejo García, Professor of International Public Law at the University of León

with certainty that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, while at the same time claiming destruction, while at the same time claiming that there were links between Saddam Hussein's political regime and the terrorist group Al Qaeda.

Regardless of weapons of mass destruction, some international scholars have pointed out that the conflict was motivated by economic interests, since there is an economic interests, as there is a possibility that the United States sought access to Iraq's oil reserves.<sup>2</sup>

However, to analyse the background to the Iraq War, it is necessary to look back at the end of the Gulf War (1991). At this time, Iraq was obliged to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction and submit to the control of the United Nations (UN) inspectors, while at the same time a no-fly zone was also being established.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, due to an economic blockade, Iraq's oil exports were banned. Eventually, this blockade was relaxed, and the sale of oil was allowed in order to obtain basic necessities such as food and medicine.

Under the umbrella of the UN, this programme was called "Oil for Food". Despite all this, the US government continued its trade embargo on Iraq and, in 1998, Britain and the US bombed the country because of Saddam Hussein's resistance to dismantle his arsenals.

### The invasion of Iraq

The Iraq War broke out on 20 March 2003. Warplanes and warships bombing operation began, followed by coalition troops intervening on the ground and completely defeating Iraqi formations.<sup>4</sup>

A month later, Iraqi resistance was defeated, and US troops took control of Baghdad. Finally, on 1 May of the same year, George W. Bush, the US president, announced the end of the fighting in Iraq. But Iraq was already deeply embroiled in chaos and the occupation of Iraq was tremendously convulsive.<sup>5</sup>

In fact, this invasion was far from the end of the Iraq War. In the meantime, Britain and the United States set up a provisional government in Iraq. Iraq's civilian administration was taken over by the Organisation for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid in Iraq, initially headed by former military officer Jay Garner, who was later replaced by Paul Bremer, who served as the civilian administrator of the West Asian country.<sup>6</sup>

In 2004, the occupation authorities transferred power to Iraq. While weapons of mass destruction remained unaccounted for, US troops continued their search for Saddam Hussein. Eventually, the Iraqi president was captured on 13 December 2003, tried, sentenced to death and executed in late 2006.

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<sup>2</sup> The Iraq Conflict I. Ministry of Defence. International and contemporary conflicts. Cesario Gutiérrez Espada and Enrique Silvela Díaz-Criado

<sup>3</sup> The Iraq War and International Humanitarian Law. Romualdo Bermejo García, Professor of International Public Law at the University of León

<sup>4</sup> The Iraq War and International Humanitarian Law. Romualdo Bermejo García, Professor of International Public Law at the University of León

<sup>5</sup> Iraq crisis and its implications for the Middle East. Haizam Amira Fernández.

<sup>6</sup> Ídem

But the fall of Saddam Hussein's government and regime did not end the violence in Iraq. Among the coalition troops, fighting broke out between the different ethnic groups, Shi'a and Sunni, and Iraq ended up being and Sunni, and Iraq became yet another victim of Al-Qaeda terrorism.<sup>7</sup>

Until 2010 the US maintained its military presence in Iraq. When it withdrew its troops, only a contingent remained in the country to train and advise the Iraqi army.

Current events and the relevance of the Iraq conflict on the international scene

The case of the invasion of Iraq has been one of the most outstanding moments on the international scene and one that has had the greatest relevance and repercussions international scene, and which has had the greatest relevance and repercussions at the global level.

In fact, the fear of war and the divisions between international powers continue to be the great fear of the geopolitical landscape. The United States and the United Kingdom have faced the impossibility of gaining UN backing to disarm Iraq.

The Iraq conflict, tension between the US and Europe, and differences with Russia and China have marked a turning point in international relations. We are facing the possibility of the emergence of a new world where the United States acts completely on its own, without any international backing, and that, therefore, the strength of the United Nations can be understood to be weakened.<sup>8</sup>

The United Nations and NATO can therefore be identified as the first victims of the Iraq War. In addition, the European Union suffered collateral damage. This is because in 2003 the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain began to question the Franco-Spanish hegemony.

From an economic point of view, the biggest impact was related to the consequences for oil prices and business and consumer confidence. The high oil prices reflected a loss of oil production in Venezuela, a low level of oil production in the country, and a low level of oil prices in the United States.<sup>9</sup>

The weakening of international institutions was another of the major consequences and repercussions of the Iraq War on the international landscape. If the strength of the United Nations sees a decline, the resolution of international conflicts is likely to be much more complicated. Indeed, relations between States might begin to be conducted bilaterally rather than multilaterally.

The post-Saddam Hussein US-controlled administration had to deal with Russian and French interests in Iraq, and French interests in Iraq, and efforts to maintain peace were also undermined from a bilateral rather than multilateral point of view. A reversal was made in the defence spending that followed the end of the Cold War and which had had a positive impact in terms of improving public finances.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, the Bush administration was characterised by the absence of a financial strategy to accompany military plans. Due to the twin US deficits, current account deficit and budget deficit, the dollar began to weaken.

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<sup>7</sup> The Iraq War and International Humanitarian Law. Romualdo Bermejo García, Professor of International Public Law at the University of León

<sup>8</sup> Iraq: Reflections on a war. Real Instituto Elcano.

<sup>9</sup> Economic Aspects of the Iraq War. Elcano Royal Institute

<sup>10</sup> Economic aspects of the Iraq conflict. The collapse of the Iraqi economy, the importance of oil and the of oil and the interests at stake. Pablo Secada.

So the Iraq conflict has been very relevant on the international scene, especially at the level of the United Nations, NGOs, the European Union and the US relationship, not only with the United States, but also with the European Union.<sup>11</sup>

#### International Law Analysis: United Nations Security Council Resolutions

According to the information contained in a Security Council press release in 2003 on the conflict in Iraq, the UN carried out the following the following actions:

- On 27 January 2003, the investigating team of inspectors appeared before the United Nations Security Council to explain that they had found no evidence that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, but also that it had not disarmed. Furthermore, it highlighted Iraq's lack of cooperation.
- On 5 February 2003, Colin Powell, the US Secretary of State, appeared before the fifteen members of the Security Council in order to defend, by presenting evidence, the fact that Iraq does indeed possess weapons of mass destruction.
- A few days later, on 12 February to be precise, a committee of experts stated that, over the last few years, Iraq had developed missiles with a longer range than permitted. Two days later, it was insisted that no weapons of mass destruction had been found. However, there were indications of increased Iraqi cooperation. Consequently, a request was made to reinforce the inspections with more troops.
- On 7 March 2003, Spain, the UK, and the US tabled a draft resolution giving Saddam Hussein an ultimatum. He had to decide whether to disarm by 17 March or face a new war. France did not accept.
- On 15 March 2003, France, Russia, and Germany called for a dialogue to set deadlines for Iraqi disarmament. However, Bush insisted that 17 March was the last day to vote on a second resolution. On that day, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan ordered the evacuation of all UN personnel in Iraq and suspended the oil-for-food programme.
- The United States then launched the war on 20 March. To do so, it launched attack on strategic targets in Baghdad. On the 28th of the same month, the UN Security.
- Council unanimously passed a resolution to restore the Oil-for-Food Programme, on which approximately 6 million Iraqis depended.
- On 9 April US forces put an end to Saddam Hussein's rule by penetrating the heart of Iraq, and on 22 May, the Security Council passed by fourteen votes a resolution ending thirteen years of sanctions on Iraq. For its part, Syria expressed its disagreement by leaving its seat empty.
- On 3 July 2003, the mandate of the United Nations Iraq Observation Mission (UNIKOM) was extended for a final period until 6 October 2003. On the same date, the demilitarised zone that had been established on the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border ceased to exist.

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<sup>11</sup> Idem

- On 14 August, the United Nations Security Council welcomed Iraq's new interim government and authorised the dispatch of an assistance mission to the country for twelve months.
  - Finally, on 16 October, the UN Security Council unanimously approved the resolution that the United States presented for the future of Irak, despite the reluctance of France, Germany, Russia and Syria.
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