

Iraq Situation Report: October 18-19, 2014

1 On October 19, U.S. aircraft conducted five airstrikes east of Fallujah, destroying two command posts, two vehicles, and a large ISIS ground unit. At the request of the Iraqi government, U.S. aircraft also destroyed an ISIS-built earthen berm southwest of Fallujah near the Fallujah Dam which limited water supplies downstream and redirected water from the Euphrates into the Abu Ghraib canal system, flooding Shia neighborhoods in east Fallujah. Meanwhile, a SVBIED detonated at a military headquarters south of Amiriyat al-Fallujah, killing the commander of the Iraqi Army (IA) Eighth Brigade Brig. Gen. Qais al-Turki as well as two of his aides. A member of the Anbar Provincial Council reported that Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) cleared their supply lines in the Thar Thar region, north of Fallujah, and opened safe resupply routes to units in Garma, Amiriyat al-Fallujah, and Khalidiyya.



2 On October 19, al-Jazeera and Badia Operations Command (JBOC) soldiers supported by Iraqi Police and tribal fighters repelled an ISIS attack on the al-Baghdadi sub-district, between Hit and Haditha near the Al-Asad Airbase, killing 30 ISIS militants and destroying several vehicles.



3 On October 18, Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police, and tribal fighters moved to clear several areas in and around Ramadi, including the al-Huz and al-Tameem neighborhoods, 20th Street, Jazeera Abu Ali al-Jassim, and Jazeera Ramadi. The operation reportedly killed 19 ISIS militants and destroyed seven vehicles. Meanwhile, IA Aviation shelled four ISIS 'nests' in Abu Risha, al-Tameem, Abu Diab, and the area known as 5 Kilometers, killing a large number of ISIS fighters and destroying several weapons caches. On October 19, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) reportedly cleared the al-Bakr neighborhood and Route 60 area in Ramadi and began advancing towards the al-Qassim Bridge east of the city.



4 On October 18, a joint force of Federal Police (FP), CTS units, and Iraqi Army (IA) Rapid Reaction Brigade soldiers cleared several areas along the road between Baiji and Tikrit, including Albu Taama, al-Maaskarat, and al-Riyashiyah. IA engineering units reportedly neutralized more than 50 IEDs along the highway, while a sheikh of the al-Jubour tribe announced that 400 tribal fighters joined the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to support their operations. On October 19, a SVBIED detonated near an ISF gathering in Mahzam, killing four police officers and wounding seven others including Salah ad-Din police chief Maj. Gen. Hamad Nams.



5 On October 18, U.S. aircraft conducted five airstrikes south and west of Baiji, destroying an armed vehicle, two heavy weapon emplacements, a building, two guard shacks, and two ISIS ground units. Iraqi Army (IA) Aviation also conducted an airstrike on al-Siniyah village, west of Baiji, killing six ISIS militants. At least one airstrike reportedly struck a civilian home in al-Butama, south of Baiji, killing 18 civilians and wounding four others. On October 19, three additional U.S. airstrikes south and north of Baiji destroyed two checkpoints, an armored truck, and a large ISIS ground unit.



6 On October 19, an SVBIED detonated near an Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) gathering in Tarmiyah, north of Baghdad, killing four Iraqi Army (IA) soldiers and wounding 13 others. ISIS militants also attacked several checkpoints manned by Iraqi Shi'a militia members in the Popular Mobilization Units on the highway between Samarra and Balad, killing two volunteers and wounding seven others before "international coalition" aircraft forced them to withdraw.



7 On October 17, a VBIED detonated in the Karrada neighborhood of central Baghdad, killing five civilians and wounding 16 others. On October 19, an attacker wearing a SVEST detonated inside of the Abbas al-Adli Husseineya in the Harthiya neighborhood of central Baghdad, near the Green Zone, killing 17 people and wounding 28 others.



8 On October 18, Iraqi Police supported by Iraqi Army Aviation and Popular Mobilization Units which include Iraqi Shi'a militias conducted a clearing operation in al-Tayyah village, north of Muqdadiah, killing 30 ISIS militants and destroying several ISIS 'nests'. On October 19, ISIS militants used IEDs to destroy four homes belonging to tribal Sahwa (Awakening) members in the nearby village of Shirwain.

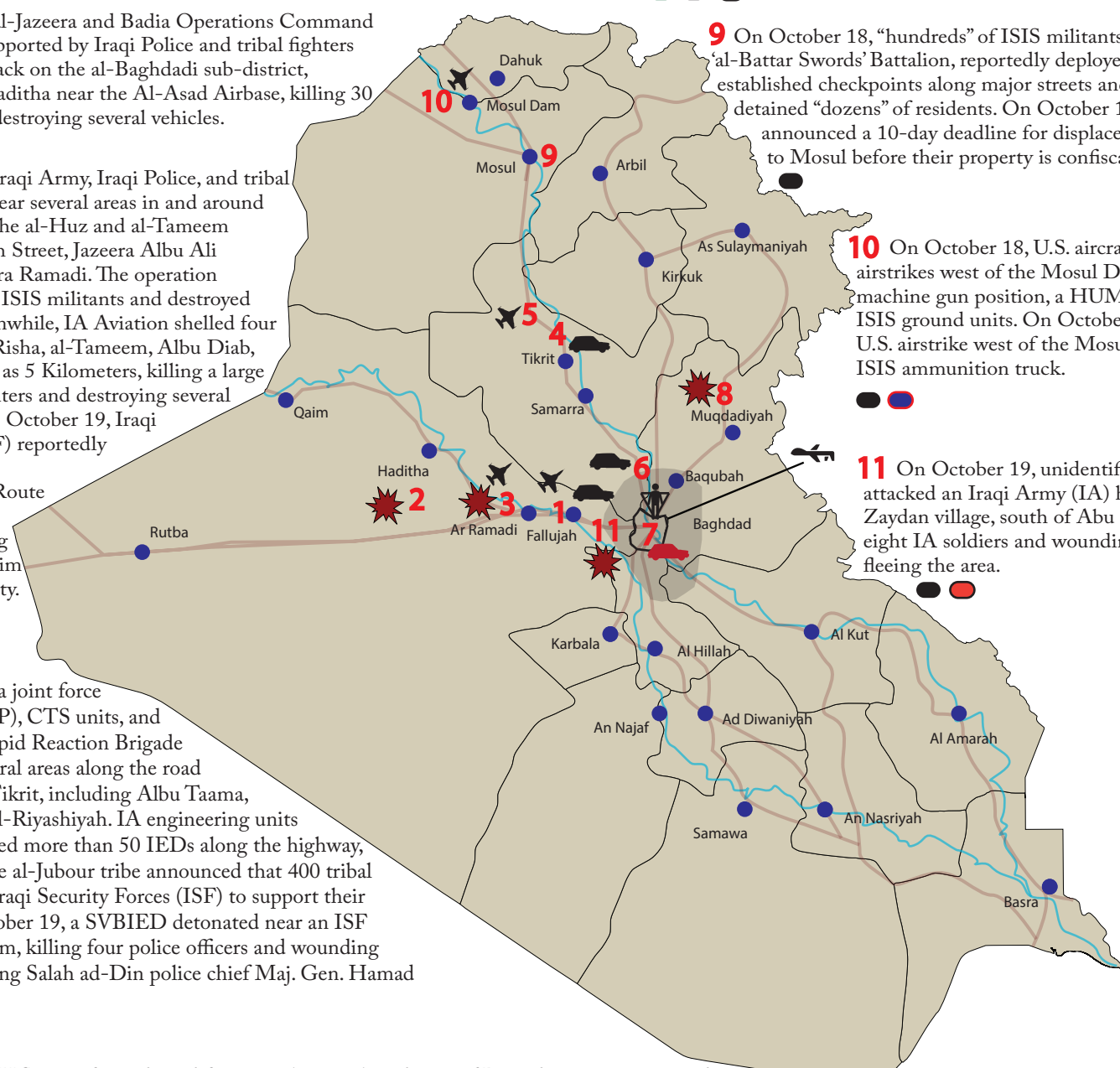


9 On October 18, "hundreds" of ISIS militants, including the elite 'al-Battar Swords' Battalion, reportedly deployed across Mosul, established checkpoints along major streets and intersections, and detained "dozens" of residents. On October 19, ISIS reportedly announced a 10-day deadline for displaced residents to return to Mosul before their property is confiscated.

10 On October 18, U.S. aircraft conducted five airstrikes west of the Mosul Dam and destroyed a machine gun position, a HUMVV, and three small ISIS ground units. On October 19, an additional U.S. airstrike west of the Mosul Dam destroyed an ISIS ammunition truck.



11 On October 19, unidentified gunmen attacked an Iraqi Army (IA) headquarters in Zaydan village, south of Abu Ghraib, killing eight IA soldiers and wounding 14 others before fleeing the area.



- Major Cities
- Major Clash
- SVBIED
- VBIED
- SVEST
- Airstrikes
- ISF
- ISIS
- Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes
- USA
- Unknown Gunmen
- Iraqi Shi'a militias



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On October 18, the Iraqi Council of Representatives approved Sunni parliamentarian Khalid al-Obeidi as Minister of Defense and Badr Organization member Mohammed Salim al-Ghabban as Minister of the Interior, marking a critical benchmark for Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi's new government. Negotiations over the security ministries had been stalled for over a month due to foreign and domestic objections to the potential nomination of Badr Organization head Hadi al-Amiri, a Shia militia commander and close Iranian ally, for Minister of the Interior. Meanwhile, the anti-ISIS offensive north of Tikrit continued to gather momentum as ISF units advanced along the highway towards Baiji, clearing several villages despite heavy clashes with ISIS fighters and large concentrations of IEDs. The ISF operation is benefitting from a significant amount of IA Aviation and international coalition air support, which has degraded ISIS defensive lines surrounding Baiji. The heightened ISIS presence in Mosul is likely a reaction to recent ISF successes further down the Tigris and may signal the start of an ISIS counter-mobilization. In Anbar, the ISF have focused on consolidating their remaining positions in the province and hardening their resupply lines to prevent ISIS from successfully encircling and overrunning isolated units as had been done in Saqlawiyah and Hit. Al-Baghdadi sub-district controls the only road leading to Al-Asad Airbase and will likely be the scene of additional intense clashes between the ISF and ISIS in the future. In the Greater Baghdad area, high-profile ISIS operations near Balad and Abu Ghraib, as well as a symbolic SVEST detonation inside of a Shia religious center near the Green Zone, are likely calculated to divert ISF and Iraqi Shia militia attention towards the capital and weaken ISF operations in Salah ad-Din and Anbar provinces.