

Iraq Situation Report: October 2 - 5, 2015

1 Turkish airstrikes continue against PKK. On October 4 and 5, Turkish airstrikes targeted Hafatin and Matina areas in northern Dohuk province as well as sites in the Qandil Mountains.



2 Iranian proxy militias welcome Russian airstrikes in Iraq. Spokespersons for Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq and Badr Organization denounced the U.S. "lack of seriousness" in fighting ISIS and welcomed Russian airstrikes.



3 ISF progress remains stalled around Ramadi. ISF recaptured the Olympic Stadium area west of Ramadi on October 4, an area that the ISF claimed it recaptured on July 13. Fighting also continued north of Ramadi in eastern Albu Faraj area and east of Ramadi. Between October 2 and October 5, 12 Coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS "near" Ramadi and Habaniya.



4 ISIS executes "70" anti-ISIS tribal members. The Albu Nimr tribal leader stated that ISIS kidnapped and executed civilian tribal members in the Thar Thar area north of Ramadi, and that the executed people had family connections with members of the ISF and Awakening.



5 ISIS maintains lethal capabilities in northern Baghdad. An SVBIED and an SVEST detonated on October 3 at a checkpoint while trying to enter Kadhimiya, a neighborhood housing a major Shi'a shrine in northern Baghdad, killing 24 people and wounding 63 others. ISF killed a third suicide attacker in the vicinity. On October 5, a VBIED exploded in Husseiniya area, north of Baghdad, killing five people and wounding 18.



6 Major demonstrations resume across Iraq. Popular demonstrations continued after a week-long hiatus on October 2 in Babil, Basra, Dhi Qar, Karbala, Maysan, Muthanna, Wasit, and Baghdad. Demonstrators in Diwaniya protested the appointment of the new Fadhila governor. The representative of the Shi'a religious authority called on the government to prosecute those responsible for financial corruption.

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|--|--------------------|--|-----------|--|-----------|--|------------------------------|
| | Major Cities | | SVEST | | ISF | | Unknown Gunmen |
| | Major Clash | | SVBIED | | Peshmerga | | Volunteers |
| | Airstrikes | | VBIED | | PKK | | Turkey |
| | Turkish Airstrikes | | Execution | | JRTN | | Iraqi Shi'a militias |
| | Demonstrations | | Coalition | | ISIS | | Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes |

7 Clashes between JRTN and ISIS in Hawija as ISIS tries to quell internal resistance. Clashes between ISIS and Jaish Rijal al-Tariqa al-Naqshbandiya (JRTN), an armed group affiliated with the former Ba'ath party, reportedly occurred on October 2 in al-Abbasiya sub-district, west of Hawija, killing 28 people. ISIS previously arrested JRTN members in the same area on September 16.



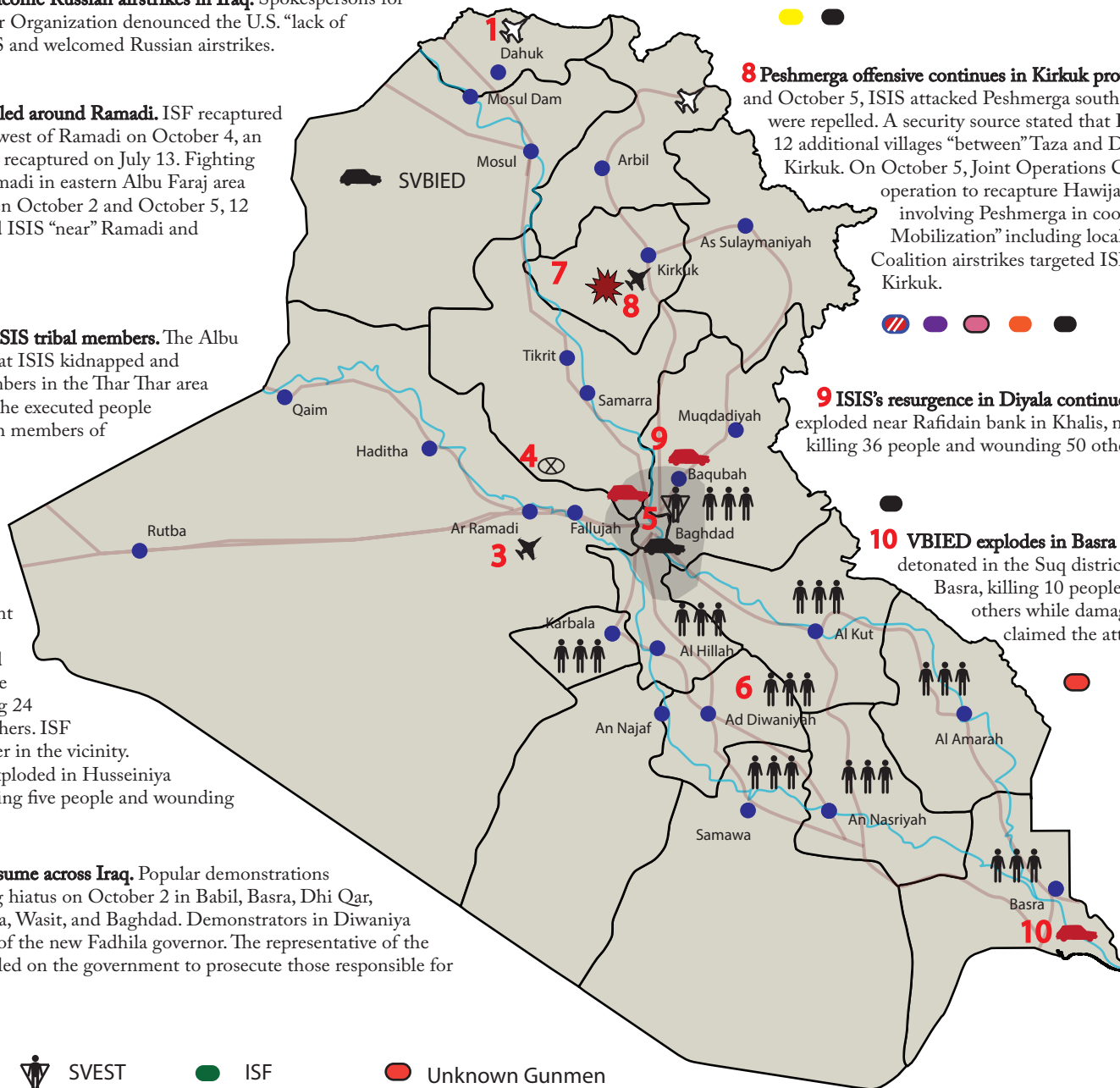
8 Peshmerga offensive continues in Kirkuk province. On October 2 and October 5, ISIS attacked Peshmerga south and west of Kirkuk but were repelled. A security source stated that Peshmerga recaptured 12 additional villages "between" Taza and Daquq districts, south of Kirkuk. On October 5, Joint Operations Command announced an operation to recapture Hawija and Shirqat districts involving Peshmerga in cooperation with "Popular Mobilization" including local fighters. Seven Coalition airstrikes targeted ISIS "near" Hawija and Kirkuk.



9 ISIS's resurgence in Diyala continues unabated. A VBIED exploded near Rafidain bank in Khalis, northwest of Baquba, killing 36 people and wounding 50 others.



10 VBIED explodes in Basra province. The VBIED detonated in the Suq district of Zubair, south of Basra, killing 10 people and wounding 25 others while damaging shops. ISIS claimed the attack.



Content: Patrick Martin and ISW Iraq Team
Graphics: Evan Sterling



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ISIS claimed a VBIED attack in a market area in Zubair, south of Basra, as part of its longstanding Wilayat Janub, which previously claimed attacks primarily in areas south of Baghdad, including Jurf al-Sakhar. Though VBIEDs are rare in Basra and the other southern provinces, though they have occurred several times since 2012, particularly during ISIS's 2012-2013 "Breaking the Walls" campaign. The VBIED on October 4 indicates that ISIS may be exploiting the security gaps in Basra province and the forward deployment of many of Basra's security elements in order to divert ISF attention to the province and also seed greater unrest. Basra has been contending with large popular demonstrations, tribal conflicts, and political violence. ISIS's capabilities in Basra remain limited, but its ability to deliver a VBIED so far south is alarming. It will be important to watch for how Iraqi Shi'a militias react to the security breach and whether or not it prompts the Basra provincial government to request the return of forward deployed ISF elements. Meanwhile, ISIS continued to demonstrate unabated lethal capabilities in Baghdad and the Baghdad Belts area, detonating three VBIEDs and an SVEST over a three-day period despite a heavy security presence in Baghdad. In addition, the Khalis VBIED attack demonstrates that operations by the security forces and the "Popular Mobilization" to eject ISIS from Diyala province have been unsuccessful.