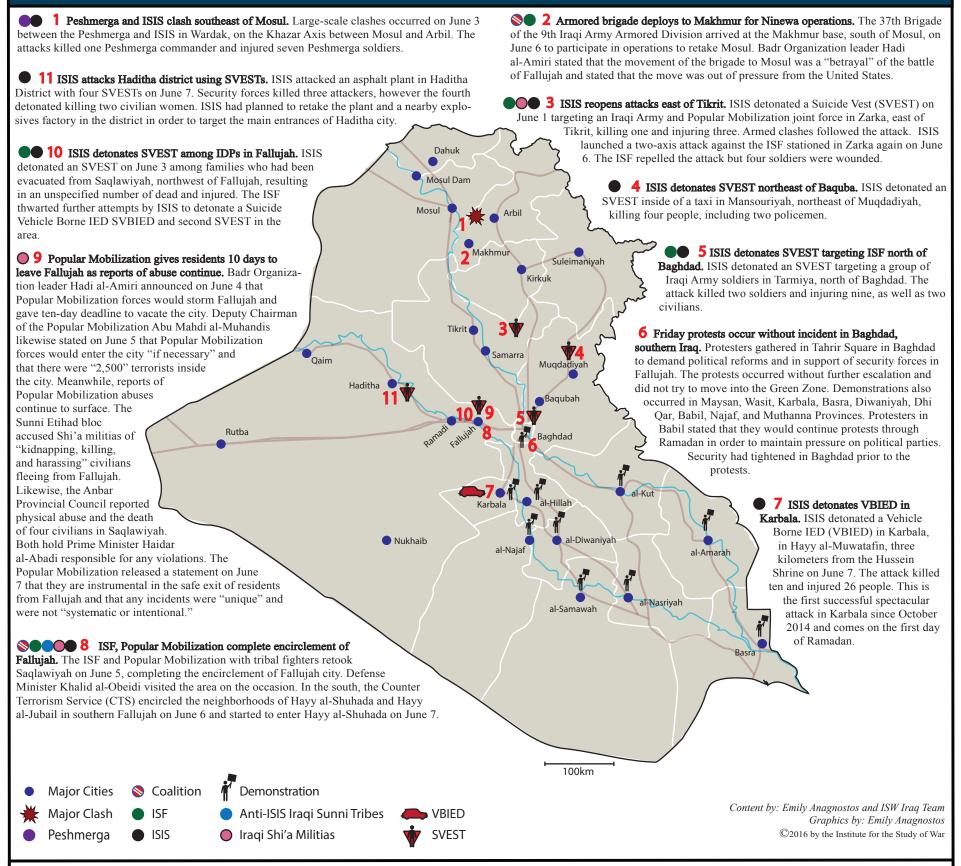


## Iraq Situation Report: June 1 - 7, 2016



The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Popular Mobilization completed the encirclement of Fallujah on June 5, retaking Saqlawiyah on Fallujah's western axis. The ISF's Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) encircled neighborhoods in southern Fallujah city on June 6 and entered city limits in Hayy al-Shuhada on June 7. Despite this progress, the Popular Mobilization has grown increasingly dissatisfied with the pace of the operations in Fallujah. Badr Organization leader Hadi al-Amiri called the recent deployment of an Iraqi Army armored brigade to Mosul a "betrayal" of Fallujah. Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH) spokesman Jawad al-Talabawi stated on June 1 that the pace of operation had reached a "standstill," and he demanded that Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi resume operations. PM Abadi had reportedly slowed operations into Fallujah city out of humanitarian concerns on June 1, as an estimated 50,000 residents still remain in the city limits. Popular Mobilization militias may try to force the acceleration of the campaign and enter the city themselves, as has likely been their ambition all along. Popular Mobilization leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis stated on June 5 that militias would enter the city "if necessary," following Amiri's statement on June 4 that they would enter once all families were evacuated from the city. Amiri gave Fallujah residents a ten-day deadline to leave. This threat comes amidst additional claims of abuses by the Popular Mobilization on Sunni residents fleeing the area, including Saqlawiyah. The Popular Mobilization denied claims of purposeful violations, stating that any incidents were "unique" and not "systematic or intentional." ISIS spectacular attacks against Shi'a targets will also increase the chances that the Popular Mobilization will enter the city, as militias have historically reacted to ISIS attacks with attacks of their own on Sunni populations. ISIS detonated a Vehicle Borne-IED (VBIED) in Karbala on June 7, the first successful spectacular attack in Karbala since October 2014. The Karbala attack may propel the militias to enter the city limits before their ten-day deadline or to commit additional abuses against Sunni residents.