

1 ISF retake Qayyarah Airfield West, link up with ISF forces on eastern Tigris bank. The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) retook the Qayyarah Airfield West, south of Mosul, on July 9 after forces stormed the airbase earlier the same day. The force included units from the 9th Armored Iraqi Army (IA) Division, the Coalition-trained 92nd Brigade of the 15th IA Division, and the Counter Terrorism Service (CTS), with Coalition air support. The force retook the village of Ajhala, east of Qayyarah airbase and on the western bank of the Tigris River, on July 12, linking up with ISF units under Ninewa Operations Command which recently recaptured Hajj Ali, on the opposing bank.

2 U.S. to deploy 560 additional troops to Qayyarah airbase. U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter announced during a visit to Baghdad on July 11 that U.S. President Barack Obama approved the deployment of 560 additional troops to Iraq, which will be based at Qayyarah Airfield West. The troops will provide logistical and air support to the ISF as they begin operations to retake Mosul. The deployment brings the current U.S. troop level in Iraq to 4,647 soldiers. The Canadian Minister of Defense also announced, during a visit to Baghdad on July 11, that it would increase military trainers in Iraq, though did not specify the location or number of these trainers.

9 ISIS targets Shi'a shrine southeast of Samarra in deadly attack. Two ISIS attackers detonated Suicide Vests (SVES) outside of the Muhammad bin Imam al-Hadi shrine in Balad, southeast of Samarra. The attack followed rounds of mortar fire in the area. Security forces killed a third SVES attacker before he could detonate. The attack killed at least 30 people and injured 50 others. Sadrist Trend leader Muqtada al-Sadr ordered his affiliated militia, Saraya al-Salaam, to deploy to Balad to protect the Shrine. Iranian proxy militia, Kata'ib Hezbollah, reportedly also deployed forces to the area.

8 Sadr returns to Iraq, calls for protests and reforms, and criticizes Iranian influence in Iraq. Sadrist Trend leader Muqtada al-Sadr returned to Iraq reportedly on June 29, ending a two-month stay in Iran. Sadr returned to Najaf, where he met with popular demonstration leaders on July 4 and toured the bombing site in Karrada, central Baghdad, on July 12. Sadr called for mass protests to take place in Tahrir Square in central Baghdad on July 15, but ordered that the demonstration be "solemn" and not include "posters, images, or singing." In a televised interview on July 8, Sadr detailed his relationship with Iran, calling it "oscillating" and "turbulent" and rejected all foreign interference in Iraqi affairs. He stated that Iran is like "any neighboring country, such as Saudi Arabia or Turkey," which "meddle" in Iraq by sending in "suicide bombers or militias."

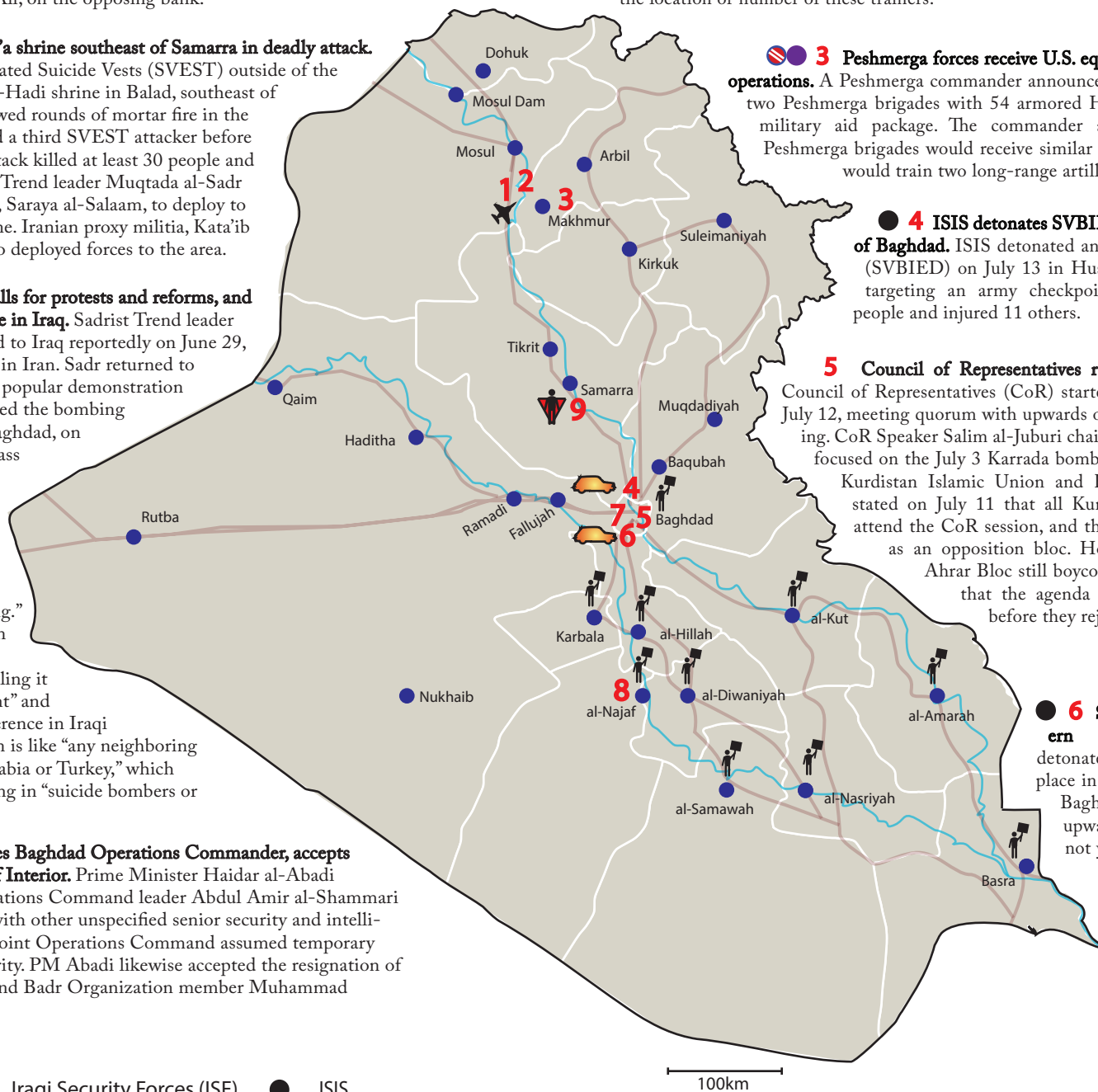
7 PM Abadi replaces Baghdad Operations Commander, accepts resignation of Minister of Interior. Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi dismissed Baghdad Operations Command leader Abdul Amir al-Shammari from his position, along with other unspecified senior security and intelligence officials on July 8. Joint Operations Command assumed temporary charge of Baghdad's security. PM Abadi likewise accepted the resignation of the Minister of Interior and Badr Organization member Muhammad al-Ghabban on July 8.

3 Peshmerga forces receive U.S. equipment in lead up to Mosul operations. A Peshmerga commander announced that the U.S. has provided two Peshmerga brigades with 54 armored Humvee vehicles as part of a military aid package. The commander also announced that other Peshmerga brigades would receive similar equipment and that the U.S. would train two long-range artillery units.

4 ISIS detonates SVBIED at army checkpoint north of Baghdad. ISIS detonated a Suicide Vehicle-Borne IED (SVBIED) on July 13 in Husseinayah, north of Baghdad, targeting an army checkpoint. The attack killed three people and injured 11 others.

5 Council of Representatives resumes, meets quorum. The Council of Representatives (CoR) started a new legislative term on July 12, meeting quorum with upwards of 216 CoR members attending. CoR Speaker Salim al-Juburi chaired the session, which largely focused on the July 3 Karrada bombing. Members from both the Kurdistan Islamic Union and Kurdistan Democratic Party stated on July 11 that all Kurdish political parties would attend the CoR session, and the Reform Front participated as an opposition bloc. However the Sadrist-affiliated Ahrar Bloc still boycotted the sessions, demanding that the agenda include motions for reform before they rejoin the session.

6 SVBIED detonates in southern Baghdad. An SVBIED detonated on July 12 in a marketplace in Rashidiya District, southern Baghdad, killing 12 and injuring upwards of 37 people. ISIS has not yet claimed the attack.



- Major Cities
- Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)
- ISIS
- ✈ Airstrikes
- Peshmerga
- 🚗 SVBIED
- 🚦 Coalition
- Iraqi Shi'a Militias
- 🚩 SVES
- 👤 Demonstration

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The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) retook Qayyarah Airfield West on July 9, meeting little ISIS resistance to secure the airbase. U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter made a surprise visit to Baghdad on July 11, where he announced that the U.S. will deploy an additional 560 soldiers to Qayyarah airbase in order to provide logistical support for future ISF operations to retake Mosul. The increase of the U.S. troop level in Iraq is an acceleration of anti-ISIS operations in northern Iraq, where the ISF continues efforts to retake Shirqat and the city of Qayyarah. The ISF also secured the village of Ajhala on July 12, on the western bank of the Tigris, across from Hajj Ali, on the eastern bank, which ISF units under Ninewa Operations Command recaptured on July 5. The recapture of the two villages allowed ISF forces to link up across the Tigris River and effectively severed Shirqat from Qayyarah, two of ISIS's remaining strongholds south of Mosul.

The Council of Representatives (CoR) started a new legislative term on July 12. The session met quorum, as the majority of the Kurdistan Alliance and Reform Front attended, and largely focused on the July 3 Karrada attack. The Reform Front submitted requests to question the Ministers of Defense, Transportation, and Finance, as a prerequisite for dismissal. The CoR approved the requests during the session on July 13. The Reform Front may be trying to undermine the control of the Abadi government by bottlenecking the legislative process with unnecessary and time-consuming demands. The Sadrist Trend-affiliated Ahrar Bloc continued to boycott the sessions, demanding technocratic reforms. Sadrist Trend leader Muqtada al-Sadr called on July 11 for mass demonstrations on July 15, having returned from Iran after a two-month absence, reportedly on June 29. Sadr reaffirmed demands for technocratic reforms, including a replacement of the three presidencies (Prime Minister, President, and CoR Speaker). Sadr's mass protest on July 15 will come as Baghdad is still coping with the aftermath of the July 3 Karrada bombing and the security reshuffle in the capital. Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi accepted the resignation of Minister of Interior and Badr Organization member Muhammad al-Ghabban on July 8, and dismissed the leader of Baghdad Operations Command the same day as well. Sadr's return comes at a vulnerable moment in the Iraqi political and security situation, and ongoing unrest in the capital due to Sadrist protests or ongoing ISIS attacks will further undermine PM Abadi's tenuous control over the government.