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Iraq Situation Report: October 18-25 2016

1 ISF, Peshmerga continue advance to encircle Mosul. The Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) advanced along the eastern axis, reaching Mosul's urban border on October 24, and coordinated with the Peshmerga to besiege Bashiqa, northeast of Mosul. Meanwhile, Peshmerga, CTS, and Iraqi Army units advanced towards Mosul from the north. The ISF continued its advance on the southern axis, recapturing the Christian city of Hamdaniya, southeast of Mosul, on October 22 and encircling Shura, north of Qayyarah, by October 24. The southern axis has continued to lag behind efforts in the north and east of Mosul, requiring the ISF to call for operational pauses on October 19 and 25 in order for forces to regroup.

10 ISIS launches attacks on Sinjar against Peshmerga. ISIS launched an attack against Peshmerga forces stationed near Sinjar on October 19, using three Vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIEDs). Peshmerga repelled the attack with Coalition air support. ISIS launched a second attack on October 24 with upwards of nine VBIEDs which the Peshmerga repelled.

9 ISIS targets tribal fighter leader near Samarra. A source in the Salah al-Din police stated that two ISIS attackers detonated SVESTs at the home of a tribal Popular Mobilization leader, Sheikh Adnan al-Bazi, in al-Mutasim, southeast of Samarra, on October 21. The attack killed three people including Sheikh al-Bazi and wounded 15 others.

8 ISIS launches major attack against western Anbar district, captures neighborhoods. ISIS attacked Rutba District in western Anbar on five axes on October 23, detonating two VBIEDs and claiming to retake "most" of the town. Security forces reportedly killed four attackers wearing Suicide Vests (SVESTs) and clashed with ISIS in several neighborhoods. Anbar governor Suhaib al-Rawi stated that ISIS fighters controlled residential neighborhoods in Rutba but not the district center. The attack involved as many as 50 ISIS attackers according to Rutba's mayor. PM Abadi ordered reinforcements from the Iraqi Army (IA) and the 1st Rapid Intervention Division (RID) to Rutba. Anbar Operations Command announced full control over Rutba on October 25.

7 Popular Mobilization leaders meet with Sadr in his home in Najaf. Sadrist Trend leader Muqtada al-Sadr received senior members of the Popular Mobilization at his home in Najaf on October 18, including PMC chairman Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, Badr Organization leader Hadi al-Amiri, and two of Sadr's former deputies, Qais al-Khazali, leader of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH), and Akram al-Kaabi, leader of Harakat al-Nujaba. Meetings between Iranian proxy leaders and Sadr, who is frequently at odds with the proxies, are rare. The delegation confirmed that the militias will not enter Mosul and opposed any foreign intervention in the operation.

2 Ba'athist Sunni insurgent group JRTN calls for attacks on terrain. Ba'athist Sunni insurgent group Jaysh Rijal at-Tariqa released a statement on October 17, the day of the launch of M attacks against ISIS militants in Mosul and Ninewa and claiming statement called for the attacks to occur "without holding territory." JRTN activity in Mosul since it took the city. JRTN also warned ag Shi'a militias and Iranian f

3 U.S. service member killed in northern Iraq on October 20 that a U.S. Navy sailor died from w explosion near Mosul. The death marks the fourth in anti-ISIS operations. The Pentagon reported on 100 U.S. advisors and Joint Terminal Attack Cont ground with the Peshm

4 U.S. Defense Secretary in Baghdad. Defense Secretary Ash Abadi in Baghdad on October struction, U.S. and Coalition Carter visited Arbil on October

5 ISIS launches major attack in Kirkuk. ISIS launched a major attack in Kirkuk on October 22-24 as security forces remaining ISIS attackers. Badr al-Amiri and Popular Mobilization Mahdi al-Muhandis arrived in where they met with Kir Karim and security a both security in retake I

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added that Ira in Najaf earlie leaders, which Shi'a support for CoR on October 24.

- Major Cities ● Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) ● Peshmerga ★ Major Clash 🚗 VBIED
- ✈ Airstrikes ● Iraqi Shi'a Militias ● ISIS 🚩 SVEST
- 🛡 Coalition ● Anti-ISIS Iraqi Sunni Tribes ● JRTN 🧑 Demonstration

The operation to retake Mosul entered its second week with the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Peshmerga advancing along the axes, nearing Mosul's city limits. ISF units in the southern axis advanced but lagged behind the other axes, resulting in operation 19 and October 25 in order for the southern units to regroup and catch up. Delays on the southern axis will challenge the op encircle Mosul if the axes cannot close in on the city in sync and there remains an opening for ISIS to escape to Syria or othe The southern axis is critical to closing that aperture as there is no offensive moving in from the west.

ISIS responded to gains made by the ISF and Peshmerga in Mosul by launching sophisticated counteroffensives in far-reaching effort to draw security forces away from frontlines and to prove that ISIS remains strong despite territorial losses. ISIS launched Iraq's northwest corner, on October 19 and 24, in Kirkuk City on October 21, and Rutba, in far western Iraq, on October redeployment of security forces to secure the areas. The attacks undermine the argument that ISIS's command and control leadership echelon and that knocking out that leadership damages its ability to attack. ISIS may further increase attacks in order strength, despite losses, including large-scale suicide attacks in Baghdad and southern Iraq.

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