



SALEEM AL JUBOURI: WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ISIS IS THE PERIOD AFTER THE MILITARY OPERATION

Saleem Al Jubouri



Dr. Saleem Al Jubouri was elected as the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament on 15 July 2014 with 194 votes. Al Jubouri is from Muqadadiya, Diyala Governorate and obtained a doctorate in law in 2001. He worked as a law professor at Nahrain University in Baghdad. He was originally a member of the Iraqi Islamic Party. He was elected to the Council of Representatives of Iraq in December 2005 for the Iraqi Accord Front list and he became deputy head of parliament's legal committee. He was elected in the 2014 general election on the "Diyala is Our Identity Coalition", a predominantly Sunni Arab list which won 5 out of 14 seats and is part of a wider alliance with the Muttahidoon party.

ORSAM: While Turkey and Iraq try to open a new page after the difficult times they have gone through in their bilateral relations, both sides are determined to move these relations forward. Can you make an overall evaluation related to the current situation of Turkey-Iraq relations?

Saleem Al Jubouri: We would like to end the tense relations between the two countries as well. Both countries will solve all the problems through dialogue. At the same time, the officials and decision makers of both countries should continuously hold negotiations. Turkey and Iraq need each other. It is envisaged that Ankara and Baghdad will make common efforts especially in terms of economy and fight against terrorism. Good relations should be maintained in order to ensure security and build peace in the two countries, and even in other countries. Each country should primarily understand the governmental structure of one another and respect their sovereignty. In the meantime, each country should take actions which will not threaten the national security of each other. When good relations are maintained between these countries, national interests are also protected. We need to speak more clearly. Different methods each country

has adopted in the fight against ISIS and especially the presence of Turkish soldiers in Iraq in order to fight ISIS has recently deteriorated the problems between two countries. Therefore, problems should be indicated and solutions should be found for the rapprochement of both sides.

You have mentioned the fight against ISIS. Indeed, this is frequently on the international agenda in terms of both Iraq and Syria. There are some comments that the fight against ISIS has gradually entered its final phase in Iraq and Syria. Raqqa operation in Syria and Mosul operation in Iraq will determine the course from now on. Can you express your views about Mosul operation concerning Iraq? You wrote a noteworthy article in March especially on this issue on *International New York Times*.

In my opinion, military operations always constitute only half of the fight against ISIS. What is more important is the period after the fight and we cannot overlook this matter. The previous mistakes should not be repeated after the end of the military operation since these mistakes will cause the radical groups to emerge somehow in the following period. If the mistakes

are repeated, nothing will be changed with military operations. Therefore, this operation should send positive messages to the people who live in the regions under ISIS control and also encourage them to resist ISIS. If the practices in the military operations give wrong messages to the people, this will cause them to have a passive role against ISIS. Another important message should be given to the refugees. Families should be able to return to the regions where ISIS is cleared away. A lot of families could return to their home in Anbar and Diyala. No torture or false detention should be resorted to towards the refugees during the military operation. I have even written an article titled "Good Governance" (*El Hikeme El Raşide*). In this article, I have suggested proposals to rebuild an administrative and security structure in Mosul which is based on the opinions of the people in Mosul with the participation of all groups in Mosul.

Some questions still remain unanswered in terms of Mosul operation. The answers to these questions should be found before the military operation is launched. The first question is whether the Kurdish forces will enter Mosul and what will happen to the Kurdish forces in the post-ISIS period.

Will these Kurdish forces turn back to their previous positions? Secondly, will al-Hashd al-Shaabi forces join Mosul operation? What kind of co-operation will these forces and the Iraqi army maintain? Thirdly, how will the people in Mosul react to the participation of al-Hashd al-Shaabi in the operation? What kind of system will Mosul have and who will have a joint administration there? Under whose sovereignty will Mosul be governed? Will there be a local decision making authority in Mosul? How many forces will Turkish soldiers have and how will they join in Mosul operation? What kind of duties will be granted to Turkish soldiers? What kind of cooperation and coordination will be ensured among Iraqi soldiers, Turkish soldiers and the coalition states? What will the Coalition states be in charge of? How long will the coalition states stay in Qayyarah military base in the south of Mosul? We should already try to find an answer to all these questions.

As you have indicated, debates continue on the future of Mosul, as well. Assuming that ISIS is eliminated, what do you think about the future of Mosul? Could different models come to the agenda? Is a federal structure considered

It is envisaged that Ankara and Baghdad will make common efforts especially in terms of economy and fight against terrorism.



as an option? Or will the current structure be maintained? Can you express your views about these matters?

I think that Mosul may be transferred to a comprehensive administrative region under the center. The people in Mosul will take this decision. In other words, Mosul may turn into a federal region. It may not be under the central government but it will not have an unconstitutional authority.

Will Iraq continue to keep its current constitution in force or will it draft a new constitution after it is cleared from ISIS? Mosul is on one side and Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq (KRG) is on the other side. We also know that

Basra sometimes expresses interest to become a federal region. Will the political structure in Iraq be reshaped after ISIS is eliminated? Could a new constitution come to the agenda?

The priority is unity and solidarity for me. The requests will be realized according to the constitution within the framework of this unity and solidarity. In other words, the integrity of Iraq comes first. Any province could demand for a regional administration system, provided that it does not violate unity and solidarity and is not contrary to the constitution. A regional administration model with a sectarian, ethnic and national identity is seen less and such an administration will not be beneficial.

There are certain problems between the central government and KRG. KRG Prime Minister Nechervan Barzani has recently visited Baghdad. Are the problems solved or do they continue after this visit? Can you express your views generally on the relations between Baghdad and Erbil?

The purpose of this visit is the solution of the problems through dialogue. In the meantime, KRG aims to compromise with the central government. Therefore, it is expected that the problems will be solved.

How do you interpret the recent developments in the government? Will this government be successful?

There are 4 vacant positions for ministries. We expect

that problems will be solved in two ministries (ministries of industry and commerce). What remain are the ministries dealing with security issues (ministries of domestic affairs and defense). We envisage that the problems with these ministries will be solved in the short run. It is certainly quite difficult but I hope we can find a solution.

Will Turkmens be given a position in the Ministries?

I supported the statements of Turkmens about the cabinet revision. I support the idea of granting authority to Turkmens in the ministries. I hope they will have such opportunity.

Thank you for sharing your views with us.

I wish you success.

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