

An Open Letter to Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi

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Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I am writing this letter to you from Baghdad, where the stifling summer heat mingles with the perpetual stench of exhaust fumes and dust. Just a month ago, you took the oath of office and entered the Green Zone as head of government. You are a man from the world of big money—a banker and a businessman—and for an Iraq that has seen nothing but religious zealots, party apparatchiks, or warlords at the helm for decades, your arrival represents a massive experiment. We gave you a chance, hoping that the logic of construction and business would finally triumph over the logic of war and destruction.

You assumed office amidst a "perfect storm." You do not even have a fully formed Cabinet; key security agencies are paralyzed as Washington and Tehran vie for influence within our parliament. The US has blocked our dollar reserves, demanding a purge of Iranian proxies from the government, while radical groups like Kata'ib Hezbollah hurl curses and threaten to turn our cities into a battlefield against America.

Iraq is fed up with serving as a testing ground for others. We do not need slogans of resistance; we need the restoration of our sovereignty and a return to normal life:

A state monopoly on weapons—without compromise: Your initial steps in June inspire both caution and hope. The fact that Muqtada al-Sadr and the Imam Ali Brigades have begun handing over their archives, equipment, and heavy weaponry to the state committee marks a major tactical success for your administration. But see the job through to the end. There must be no "parallel armies" in Iraq. As long as pickup trucks carrying armed men—who answer to orders from Tehran rather than Baghdad—roam our streets, we do not have a functioning state. Ensure that legal authority and the use of force belong solely to the official Iraqi army.

The September deadline and the Coalition withdrawal: The government has officially confirmed that the military mission of the US and the international coalition will conclude by the end of September 2026, with no possibility of postponement. We support this decision—Iraq must be independent. But as an economist, you must understand the critical question: are our forces ready to maintain security on their own? The American withdrawal must not become an invitation for the return of ISIS or for the total domination of our political landscape by Iranian intelligence agencies. The transition to bilateral agreements must protect Iraq, not weaken it.

An economy free from the dollar blockade: Washington uses the Federal Reserve as a noose around our economy, restricting the supply of US dollar cash. Our businesses suffer because of this, and the prices of imported goods are rising. You are a banker; this is your area of expertise. Find a systemic solution. Bring order and transparency to financial flows so the US has no grounds to accuse Iraq of currency smuggling, and restore stability to our dinar. Ordinary people should not be impoverished simply because Baghdad fails to balance its foreign policy.

Revitalizing infrastructure: Iraq is sitting on oil, yet our people endure summers without electricity, home air conditioning runs on a schedule, and clean drinking water is becoming scarce in Basra. Stop feeding a corrupt system where oil revenues vanish into the pockets of party bosses. As a businessman, overhaul the management of state-owned enterprises. Direct investment toward energy independence, grid modernization, and job creation for the millions of young Iraqis who currently have

no choice but to work as hired guns for militias for \$300 a month.

Mr. al-Zaidi, you came to power as a compromise candidate acceptable to all major players. But if you try to please everyone—Iran, the US, Shiite factions, and Sunni clans—you will quickly become just another weak puppet.

Show the toughness of a businessman auditing a bankrupt company. Seize the current wave of militia disarmament to finally strip the radicals of their power. Protect our borders from being dragged into a regional war between Iran and Israel. We want to see Iraq as a strong, sovereign, and prosperous Middle Eastern hub, not a gray zone where foreign powers settle scores at the expense of Iraqi children's lives.

Demanding iron will and order,

A Citizen of the Republic of Iraq

P.S. Initial Assessment: Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi

Evaluating the potential and initial moves of Iraq's new leader amidst the 2026 crisis (on a scale of 1 to 5):

Professional competence and economic potential: 4.7 (Outstanding background. His experience as a banker and multimillionaire is precisely what is needed to reform Iraq's deeply corrupt, oil-dependent financial system.)

Internal stability and security control: 3.8 (Got off to a strong start by initiating the integration of Shiite militias (PMF) under state authority, yet the situation remains volatile due to resistance from radical pro-Iranian factions.)

Political independence and authority: 2.5 (Key vulnerability. Al-Zaidi is a compromise figure put forward by the Shiite "Coordination Framework" alliance; he must constantly navigate the pressures exerted by both Washington and Tehran.)

Crisis management and decisiveness: 4.0 (He demonstrates unexpected firmness regarding the withdrawal of US troops by September and the state's monopoly on weaponry, showing no fear of confronting radical factions.)

Final verdict: 3.75 / A Banker on a Powder Keg. Ali al-Zaidi has introduced a new, technocratic management style to Iraqi politics. His "state-only" arms policy represents the only viable path to saving the country from endless civil war. However, his ultimate success hinges on whether he can withstand the immense pressure from the US and Iran. If al-Zaidi manages to navigate the US coalition's September withdrawal without an outbreak of violence and free the economy from dollar-based blackmail, he stands a strong chance of becoming the architect of a new, sovereign, and prosperous Iraq. Yet, his room for maneuver is critically limited.

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