The Role of International non-Governmental Organizations and their Impact on Development After 2003

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Abstract

The current study aimed to explore the role of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) as a mechanism for achieving development in the fields of human rights. It examined their origins, the evolution of their concept, and the significant events that Iraq experienced after 2003. Additionally, the study highlighted the positive contributions of INGOs active in Iraq. The importance of this research lies in presenting the positive impacts of INGOs in achieving at least a minimum level of human rights principles and assisting in addressing the challenges and obstacles faced by the government. These organizations have become a crucial force that cannot be overlooked in correcting the course of government policies and decisions. The study employed a descriptive, analytical, and deductive methodology by reviewing academic sources on the study's elements and variables, alongside data related to the role and mechanisms of INGOs in various fields. The study concluded that INGOs play a significant and central role alongside other international actors across the domains they operate in. Global transformations have demonstrated that these organizations, with their capabilities, resources, and grassroots influence, are essential for promoting good governance and solidifying desired principles across various systems. INGOs have emerged as a pivotal force representing the aspirations of people, particularly marginalized groups suffering from exclusion. These groups have found in such organizations a platform to express their needs, often neglected by governments and states. Consequently, these groups have gained a voice in various international forums. The study concluded with recommendations, the most notable of which was fostering stronger relations between the Iraqi government and the global system to combat terrorism in all its forms international, regional, and local. This can be achieved by leveraging the positive aspects of the new global order and globalization, formulating strategic plans, and signing agreements and treaties that support government efforts in developmental progress and the enhancement of human rights principles.

Keywords: *Non-Governmental Organizations, International Relations, Iraq, Human Rights, Development.*

Introduction:

Iraq witnessed radical political, economic, and social transformations after 2003 due to the US invasion and the radical change in the regime, which in turn led to the collapse of the state's infrastructure and the increase of challenges in several areas. In this context, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) played an effective role in providing political and humanitarian support and contributing to reconstruction and development efforts. This study aims to examine the roles of these organizations and their impact on Iraq during that period.

The growing influence of NGOs within the international sphere has generated attention not only to the achievements of the organizations themselves, but also to the issues and motives they advocate. It constitutes a potential revolution that has an unlimited impact on the structure, formation, and operation of modern systems of state administration, the way of dealing with and thinking about organizations, and on the political, economic, and social relations between the states that make up the (international community). Studying the topic of the role of international non-governmental organizations and their mechanism of work in the field of development and human rights is considered a topic of academic and scientific considerations, as it represents the real position and effective role of organizations towards government decisions, and ways to work to influence those decisions. It even reached the point of participating in making government decisions, competing with international governmental organizations that work in the same fields.

Therefore, it has become necessary to show the effective role of international non-governmental organizations and the nature of their work, and the reasons that lead to influencing their decisions, in addition to their role in helping peoples and governments through logistical and advisory support, in addition to their presence on the ground.

Important Of the Study

In this study, we seek to present the negative and positive repercussions of the role of organizations active in the field of human rights to achieve - even the minimum - the concepts related to human rights, since these organizations have become a role that cannot be ignored in correcting the path and decisions of governments, and the expansion of the international representation of these organizations and the repercussions of their reports towards Iraq after the fall of the Baath regime.

Objectives of Study

The research objectives focus on several points, including:

1. Identify the origins of international non-governmental organizations, their emergence, and the development of their concept.
2. Identify the important events in Iraq after the events of 2003.
3. Clarify the positive role of active organizations and their repercussions in Iraq after the events of 2003.

Hypotheses

A. Main hypothesis:

The effective role of international non-governmental organizations and their mechanism of work in the political, humanitarian, and social fields is a topic of academic and scientific considerations, as it represents the real position and effective role of organizations towards government decisions.

B. Sub-hypotheses:

The nature of international relations of active non-governmental organizations, and their impact on the new world order, through the activities that these organizations pursue in influencing the international community.

Methodology

The study is based on the deductive approach using the descriptive method through studying the scientific sources of the elements and variables of the study and the data related to the role of international non-governmental organizations and their work mechanism in various fields, with a focus on their role in developing the political, economic, social and humanitarian process.

Section One: International Non-Governmental Organizations:

First: General concepts and principles

The term "non-governmental" or "non-profit" is commonly used to describe a category of organizations operating within the framework of civil society. These organizations are generally characterized by their non-profit nature, meaning their existence is driven by purposes other than generating profit. Their primary goal is to pursue a broad and diverse range of projects and activities. The work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) spans a wide spectrum, from small advocacy groups addressing specific environmental concerns or human rights violations, to educational and charitable associations, women's shelters, cultural and religious organizations, and legal foundations. NGOs also encompass humanitarian aid programs. The range extends to large international organizations with branches and members covering various parts of the world.

The contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is significant not only because of the outcomes they achieve and the optimism they inspire regarding the defense of human rights worldwide, but also because NGOs, in every sense of the word, are tools available to individuals and groups globally. These organizations are often managed and coordinated by individuals, as is the case with many organizations, and they derive a substantial portion of their strength from other members of society who voluntarily support their causes. This fact underscores the critical role of individuals who wish to contribute to improving human rights around the world (Omar Saadallah, 1993, pp. 15-16).

1. International non-governmental organizations are organizations that do not have a profit dimension. They are distinguished from commercial companies by their humanitarian service dimension, while commercial companies have a profit nature.
2. The work you do is subject to at least two countries, so it is not locally oriented, but rather internationally oriented, and has international law, not national law, and the activity you do is an activity directed at all countries.
3. The term non-governmental refers to many meanings, including:
4. There is a general agreement under which NGOs are established, and they are not established according to government agreements.
5. The impact of international non-governmental organizations as a non-governmental actor in international relations, and according to the theories of international relations, where the term non-governmental actors in international relations (Non-state actovsnsas) refers to all non-governmental organizations such as multinational corporations, the media, criminal military groups, and international terrorism, which constitute the pivotal and important relationship in the framework of research in international politics. (Martina Fischer, 2006, p. 04.)
1. There is no governmental influence on the decisions taken by NGOs, and if there is a negative indicator of their independence within their own funding, then most NGOs are funded by the governments of countries or depend on major countries for their funding.

   - Definition of international non-governmental organizations: It is certain to researchers in international non-governmental organizations that there is no agreed-upon definition, due to the multiplicity and diversity of names given to this type of organization. Some diverse definitions can be mentioned according to different cognitive and cultural frameworks.

Marcel Merle defines it as "any group, association or movement formed in a sustainable manner by people belonging to different countries, for the purpose of achieving goals that do not include making a profit." (Magda Ahmed Mahmoud, 2007, p. 21.)

Professors Mansour Milad and Kolar document that non-governmental organizations are: "organizations that are not formed by states, but rather by gatherings and movements that do not aim for profit and are formed spontaneously and freely among individuals in order to express their opinions away from the opinions of the states they join." (Mabrouk Ghadhban, 2007, p. 249.)

As for the definition of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, it can be said that it used a brief definition stating that "any international organization not established by agreement between governments." Thus, it is a negative definition because it defined non-governmental organizations in comparison to the establishment of international governmental organizations, which were established according to treaties between governments. (Mabrouk Ghadhban, 2007, p. 23.)

In our description of the definition of international non-governmental organizations, we take an example that differs from the previous concepts, which is the definition of the World Bank, which describes non-governmental organizations as "private organizations, with partial or complete independence from governments, characterized primarily by having humanitarian or cooperative goals rather than commercial goals, and generally seeking to alleviate suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or engage in community development." (Mabrouk Ghadhban, 2007, p. 27)

From the above, it becomes clear that the definition of international non-governmental organizations is "independent international organizations, established in accordance with international agreements, whose primary goal is service, not profit, established to promote general social and economic concepts, and to help societies achieve prosperity and enhance respect for human dignity."

Second: The emergence of non-governmental organizations

During the last two decades of the last century, and at the beginning of this century, international non-governmental organizations have become major players, and even essential partners, in building national governments, due to the diversity and breadth of the activities of non-governmental organizations in several fields.

In fact, international non-governmental organizations have witnessed a positive and tangible development since the stages of their establishment until they became a stable and permanent phenomenon, imposing itself on all levels and in all fields. The reason for their rise and the growth of their effective role on all levels lies in a number of reasons, including:

A.   Working to achieve economic goals in the broad sense, while the other type of these goals lies in defending specific issues that concern domestic or international communities, or both. Providing services and consultations and conducting the required research and studies.

B.   The mechanism for achieving economic goals in their broad sense is through providing consultations, services, and research, in addition to studies provided by organizations to solve all economic problems and obstacles.

C.   Defending issues that concern societies internally or internationally, or both. The most prominent of these issues are racism, human rights, poverty, and women's issues, and working to monitor these priorities in peace and war.

It becomes evident that it is difficult to pinpoint an exact date for the emergence of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), as their work is not confined to a single objective. However, it can be said that the first INGO was established in 1839, the **Anti-Slavery International** organization (Jamil Ouda, 2011).

In the service sector, the **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**, founded in 1863, stands out (International Committee of the Red Cross, 1863). The organization grew rapidly due to the crises and accelerated events of that era.

By the end of World War II, INGOs were multiplying at a rate of 90 organizations per year, compared to a growth rate of 10 organizations annually by the end of the 19th century. Notably, only 30% of these organizations belonged to the first generation. The outbreak of World War I did not hinder the establishment of INGOs, as approximately 50 such organizations were founded between 1915 and 1919.

The twentieth century witnessed the rise of the role of non-governmental organizations due to the encouragement of states and international diplomacy to communicate with non-governmental organizations, and to give them an active role, so that the number of these organizations rose to between (400-700) during the years 1920-1939.

Various terms have been used to describe this type of voluntary service organization, including **Private Voluntary Organizations**, **Citizens' Organizations**, and **Third Sector Organizations** (Marten, K., 2002, p. 27). The term **international non-governmental organizations (INGOs)** were officially adopted by the **United Nations Charter** in 1945, specifically in Article 71 of Chapter 10, to distinguish private organizations from agencies. However, the term was already in use by labor activists in the early 20th century, particularly during the 1920s, who were affiliated with the former **International Labour Office**. Subsequently, in 1910, a group of 132 NGOs collaborated under a unified entity called the **Union of International Associations** (Peter Willetts, 2013).

Through this, and because the nature of the work of non-governmental organizations is not limited to a specific type, and because of the multiplicity of concepts that define them, we can rely in this research on focusing on

the most prominent generations that have passed through the stages of development of international non-governmental organizations, which are:

A.   Relief Generation:

The emergence of this type of non-governmental organization (NGO) was driven by events such as World War I, World War II, periods of religious persecution during the dominance of clergy and the church over most state institutions, as well as various crises and natural disasters. The operational approach of these organizations focused on addressing these issues without delving into their causes. Their primary focus was on relief activities, providing aid and social services to the poor, vulnerable groups, and wounded war victims, as well as evacuating those affected by natural disasters.

Examples of such organizations include Oxfam and Save the Children, among others (Asma Al-Maraissi, 2012, p. 17).

B.   Self-reliance generation:

One of the main reasons for the emergence of this generation of NGOs is the growing need of societies for social and economic support. Additionally, there was a recognition of the inefficacy of addressing issues classified at the primary level, as well as the widening gap between the economically advanced North and the underdeveloped South. These factors led to efforts to understand the root causes of problems and to work on finding suitable solutions—or at least mitigating their impact. These developments also contributed to enhancing the self-capacity of local communities and fostering development by ensuring access to essential resources. An example includes all NGOs engaged in development activities (Talal Al-Moushi and Sami Najoush, 2012, p. 206).

C.   Generation of Public Policy Participants:

The persistent economic disparity between the Global North and South led to the emergence of a new generation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focused on participating in the formulation and development of international public policies. This generation also emphasized strengthening the role of international organizations and regional blocs, addressing the growing developmental needs of Southern nations, and fostering economic development. These NGOs aim to enhance individual participation and adopt interconnected strategies to promote collaboration with international organizations, ultimately striving to establish democratic societies. An example of this new generation is international NGOs concerned with human rights (Wit, S. W., 2006, pp. 17-18).

Through this simplified explanation of the successive generations in the development of the concept of non-governmental organizations, the following becomes clear to us:

●   The flexibility enjoyed by non-governmental organizations, which in turn led to enhancing the ability of these organizations to work and adapt to the historical stages they went through, which in turn led to the success of the organizations at all levels.

●   Focus on the problems of vulnerable groups in society.

●   Interest in social, economic, and developmental welfare, especially in the countries of the South, although most of these organizations were established in the North, and this reinforces the argument that urges the comprehensiveness and universality of non-governmental organizations.

Third: Classification of international non-governmental organizations:

From the above, it becomes clear to us that during the period of the emergence and development of international non-governmental organizations, classifications were presented for these organizations, reflecting the extent of the interest they received since their emergence.

International non-governmental organizations are classified into several forms and according to various concepts, based on the activities they perform (types of activities), the type of commitment they undertake (types of undertake), the field of focus of their work (types of sectorial focus), the size and capacity of the organization (types of size), or the sources of funding (types of sources of funding) (Gose`pha la Roche, 2000, p. 134).

There is another classification by researchers in non-governmental organizations, including:

1. Advancement NGOs: These are organizations that work at the national and regional levels to preserve the interests of groups that cannot defend their rights and issues on their own.

2. Operational NGOs: These are organizations that provide goods and services to segments of society and groups that they advocate for, so that their role in development is embodied.

3. Hybrid NGOs: They are a combination of the tasks of two previous organizations together. (Yasry Mustafa, 2007.)

There is no doubt that the fundamental role of the growing role of international non-governmental organizations in society cannot be ignored on more than one level (internal and external), and we can demonstrate this as follows:

1. Through responding to global awareness and understanding, international non-governmental organizations play a fundamental role in contributing to the establishment of a global civil society in an intricately interconnected world. This ensures the promotion of the concept of international citizenship by creating a complex network of voluntary organizations and affirming the participation of marginalized groups and communities in expressing their opinions. It guarantees equality, provides them with strength and support, and works to eliminate instances of oppression

and abuse more effectively than what governments alone can achieve in realizing these goals. (Zeinab Abdul-Azim, 2002, pp. 52-53).

2. It is evident from the above that some of the global diversities and challenges surpass the capacities of individual states as well as intergovernmental organizations bound by legal and political constraints. This has highlighted the positive role of non-governmental organizations, owing to their flexibility and distance from political tensions, administrative complexity, and bureaucracy. This enables them to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies and crises, particularly in disaster relief and emergency situations. (Zeinab Abdul-Azim, 2002, p. 55).

3. The loss of security in the current phase of the evolution of the international system, particularly in the post-Cold War era, along with the spread of violence such as extremism and armed civil conflicts, has led some governments to resort to repression and the extermination of opposing elites. This has driven populations to turn to non-governmental organizations, as these organizations operate independently of their members' will and play a significant role in fostering human security based on standards that prioritize serving the people, rather than the interests of sovereign states. (Atiyah Hussein Effendi, 2006, pp. 21-22).

4. The failure of states to provide care and welfare to their people was a strong motive for the spread of international non-governmental organizations and their growing role (Zainab Abdel-Azim, previous reference, pp. 56-57).

5. The spread of non-governmental organizations and the growth of their role suggest that the support and funding provided to them by international governmental organizations and donor Western countries led to their emergence on the political, social, and economic scene.

Section Two: International Non-Governmental Organizations and the Relationship with States and Governments:

First: The Relationship with States

The mechanism followed for the relations that non-governmental organizations establish and exchange with the policy of governments of countries and international governmental organizations of different specializations and types of membership is considered one of the most important tools and means through which these organizations can begin their desired role in the field of enabling international protection for many concepts.

Second: The relationship with the governments of countries

In reality, the relationship between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and states/governments is not uniform. Rather, such relationships vary in nature from one case to another and from one form to another. The ways in which these relationships manifest between the two parties are diverse and can influence the scope of the NGOs' work. The nature of these relationships is affected by various factors and variables, including the nature and orientation of the political system in the concerned country, as well as the activities of these organizations and their relationships with external forces in general, and with the major powers influencing the international system in particular. In more precise terms, the relationship between NGOs and governments is generally very different, and to a large extent, more so than the relationships between NGOs and governments of developed countries, including the governments of powerful and major states. Additionally, these relationships differ depending on the political system in each country and its stance on democracy. (Hala Said Ismail Al-Hilali, 2007, pp. 83-84). In simpler terms, the key characteristics of the relationship between NGOs in general and governments of third-world or non-democratic countries lie in the fact that these relationships are based on suspicion, mistrust, and mutual scepticism. In general, we observe that democratic countries in the West allow NGOs, to varying degrees, to access decision-making rooms through formal or informal channels, enabling them to criticize government policies and, at other times, influence governments to change or provide services and fair decisions to the public. This contrasts with totalitarian or non-democratic countries, which tend to suppress NGOs because they see them, as mentioned earlier, as a real threat to their policies toward their citizens. (Atiyah Hussein Effendi, 2006, pp. 46-47).

The vision and directions taken by mutual relations between international organizations and governments of countries vary as follows:

1. There is an opportunity for the organization to establish a headquarters in the country within the administrative framework or one of the offices of the international non-governmental organization, allowing it to activate its role and strengthen its relationships with the relevant state officials across various sectors concerned with public opinion. This is due to the material and moral advantages it offers, which will support the organization's active role and enable it to carry out the tasks assigned to achieve its goals.

2. The non-governmental organization's communication with decision-makers and officials in various countries, through official correspondence and memorandums, to find solutions to obstacles and individual problems, is based on monitoring and tracking the human rights situation in the concerned country.

3. Additionally, the reciprocal relationships between the two parties involve the organization sending experts and fact-finding missions to countries where violations of human rights are reported, in order to prepare reports and

obtain credible, accurate information and data from the ground. This enables the organization to adopt plans to defend a particular cause or exert efforts to resolve and address the issue. (Ibrahim Hussein Ma'mar, 2011, p. 26).

The third topic: The role of non-governmental organizations and their impact on development in Iraq after 2003

The study in this section aims to address the positive roles of organizations and their impact in pressuring the government to work hard to achieve the basic concepts of human rights and development.

Examples of the humanitarian and socio-political dimensions can be briefly addressed.

First: The political dimension

I wished I could kill myself, because no one there could stop what was happening (Hussein Matar, 2003).

During the period of occupation, specifically between March 2003 and June 2004, initial reports emerged regarding the mistreatment of detainees by U.S. and other foreign forces in the early days following the onset of the invasion (United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq Report, 2005, p. 132). By July 2003, Amnesty International had documented several cases of torture and other forms of abuse by the occupying forces in Iraq. The organization urged U.S. authorities in Washington to conduct urgent investigations into these cases and publicly disclose the results (Amnesty International, 2013). However, the U.S. administration, following its defensive strategy, denied the allegations, justifying the actions with claims of dismantling dictatorial regimes and promoting human dignity. This stance was further supported by U.S. television broadcasts in late April 2004, which aired images of "spoils of victory" and other photos taken by soldiers and accompanying reporters.

As soon as these lies were exposed, American TV channels and social media platforms revealed images of American guards torturing, humiliating, and degrading Iraqi detainees at Abu Ghraib prison. In these images, groups of detainees were shown naked, forced by American soldiers, including female soldiers, to adopt humiliating sexual poses. Other scenes depicted one detainee with a hood over his head, forced to stand on a box while his hands were bound with electric wires. Some detainees were seen curled up while American soldiers threatened them with attack dogs. Other photos showed American soldiers posing with the body of a detainee who had died.

The release of the Abu Ghraib photos caused an international scandal and prompted US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to "assure Congress that he would make the necessary changes to ensure that this would never happen again." But in the end, only a few low-ranking US military personnel were brought to trial for abuses against detainees at Abu Ghraib.

In January 2005, a U.S. military court in Texas heard a recorded testimony on video from a former detainee at Abu Ghraib prison, Hussein Matar, who had been tortured and mistreated by U.S. forces when he was held at the prison in November 2003. He identified himself as one of the prisoners who had been stripped naked and forced to sleep on top of one another—a photo that had been published. He said that American guards forced him to masturbate on top of the bodies of his fellow detainees, which left him feeling humiliated and shamed. He added, "At first, I couldn't imagine that could happen. But I wished to die, to kill myself, because there was no one there who could stop what was happening" (Special document from Amnesty International, 2013).

Since the British forces, which were part of the coalition forces, took control of Basra, the second-largest city in Iraq, and the surrounding provinces, they, alongside the American forces, played a role in the torture and mistreatment of detainees. This included placing masks on their heads, subjecting them to repeated beatings, depriving them of sleep, and other forms of brutal treatment.

In September 2003, British soldiers assaulted Baha Daoud Salem al-Maliki, a 26-year-old hotel worker, who they had arrested, leading to his death in custody. WikiLeaks documents in 2010 revealed previously unpublished incidents of detainee abuse by US and other coalition forces.

Human Rights Watch stated today, in the occasion of releasing its annual report that provides an overview of human rights conditions around the world, that the global human rights protection system has significantly weakened during 2004 due to the crisis in Darfur, Sudan, and the Abu Ghraib prison scandal in Iraq. Despite the differences between the two situations, the vitality of the global human rights system was centred on the immediate actions taken for both, namely ending the massacres by the Sudanese government in Darfur and conducting thorough investigations and fair trials for all those responsible for torture and mistreatment in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo. Kenneth Roth, the Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, stated, "Achieving justice abroad is shameful, as they are unwilling to achieve it within their own borders." The organization urged the Bush administration to take measures, such as appointing a special investigator to probe any U.S. official involved in torture or other inhumane or degrading practices, or who ordered or was responsible for them. Furthermore, Human Rights Watch's 2005 annual report pointed out that U.S. officials worked to shift the blame for the scandal onto the soldiers they sent to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, rather than taking direct responsibility for the policies and orders that weakened the rules preventing torture or encouraging inhumane treatment.

2. Arrests by the government

The arrests carried out by security forces have continued since the rehabilitation of the Iraqi forces, and these arrests are mostly random and illegal, especially in provinces experiencing severe violence. According to the

semi-annual statistics from the monitoring observatory, the number of detainees reached 6,141 individuals. The most severe cases occurred in the provinces of Diyala, Basra, Baghdad, Nineveh, Salah ad-Din, Anbar, and Kirkuk. During this period, there were victims among prisoners and detainees (killed and injured), which represents one of the serious and deliberate violations of their rights and freedoms, such as the discovery of secret prisons and cases of torture. There were also reports of the death of two detainees in the prisons of Anbar and Diyala under mysterious circumstances during May 2010. According to the statistics from the Constitutional Rights and Freedoms Observatory (MRFC, 2010 Report), in response to appeals from human rights organizations and international public pressure, the Iraqi government released detainees, with 3,023 individuals being released during the first half of 2010. The Iraqi forces released 2,943 detainees, while the U.S. forces released 80 detainees. The largest share of released detainees came from the provinces of Baghdad, Anbar, and Basra. Subsequently, the government began to implement changes regarding random arrests or those based on secret informants, and it took legal actions to condemn criminals and armed groups by issuing a decision to halt the work of secret informants and adopt proper legal and ethical procedures for arrests.

3. ISIS terrorist events

Since the events of April 2003 until now, Iraqis have faced the greatest challenges from local, regional, and international terrorist organizations under many names, the latest of which is the terrorist organization ISIS or (what is called the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant).

Terrorist attacks continued almost daily, with the United Nations reporting that approximately 67,370 civilians were killed between 2014 and 2017, and 5,625,024 displaced. The majority of these attacks were directed against civilians (UN Casualty Figures for Iraq, 2017). International organizations of all stripes have been raising their concerns with the Iraqi authorities and have called on all political entities in Iraq to work together to reject extremism and block terrorism from exploiting the sectarian dimension.

1. In 2013, the British Foreign Secretary expressed his concern about the current levels of violence when he met the Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives on 10 October and the Iraqi Foreign Minister on 25 November. Tensions also continued in the western provinces, and a number of violent clashes occurred, requiring the mobilization of Iraqi security forces to deal with them. (Amnesty International, 2013)

2. The Islamic State (ISIS) continued to carry out attacks, mostly targeted killings of local leaders and security forces. Some of the atrocities committed by ISIS since 2014 constitute war crimes under international law and may amount to crimes against humanity or genocide. Iraq has not adopted any legislation making war crimes and crimes against humanity specific crimes under Iraqi law. (Human Rights Watch, 2014)

3. Pursuant to a 2017 UN Security Council resolution, a team was established to document serious crimes committed by ISIS in Iraq. In 2018, the investigative team (known as UNITAD) helped Iraqi authorities identify at least 14 mass graves left by ISIS in Sinjar, as a first step toward gathering evidence and building cases against suspected ISIS members. (Human Rights Watch, 2014)

4. Iraqi Law No. 1 of 2009 was issued, which includes committees to compensate Iraqis affected by terrorism, military operations, and military errors. Compensation committees in areas under ISIS control have received thousands of compensation requests but have not paid out all compensation since 2014. (Iraqi Human Rights Commission, 2010)

5. German judicial authorities continued their efforts to investigate ISIS crimes in Syria and Iraq under universal authority, a principle of international law.

6. Member states of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS continued discussions on accountability options for ISIS crimes, including the possibility of establishing a criminal court in the region.

Second: The human dimension
1.   Human trafficking

The United Nations Protocol to Prevent Trafficking in Persons (Protocol against Transnational Organized Crime, 2003) defines the term "human trafficking" as follows: "Human trafficking refers to the process of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring, or receiving persons through the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, exploitation of vulnerability, or by giving or receiving payments or benefits to obtain the consent of a person who has control over another person, with the purpose of exploitation."

Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon that occurs when a combination of factors combines to push people into vulnerable situations and pull them into exploitative situations.

The factors that lead to such phenomena can be summarized as follows:

1. Lack of access to employment or education.
2. Need for money and/or shelter.
3. Absence of systems or institutions supporting family life.
4. Lack of proper regulations for adoption or organ donation.
5. Absence of a legal migration mechanism.
6. Lack of stability, civil unrest, armed internal conflict, and natural disasters.

7. Availability of other better-paid jobs.
8. Increasing demand for organs.
9. Constant update of activities by global networks and associations involved in human trafficking.
10. Aspiration for better life opportunities.

This affects the lives of millions of women, men, and children around the world.

The Iraqi Observatory for Victims of Human Trafficking (Iraqi Observatory for Victims of Human Trafficking, 2018) announced that during the period between February 1, 2019, and July 1, 2019, there were 27 human trafficking networks and 6 trafficking-related violations in Baghdad and other Iraqi governorates. Most of these network's trade in human organs and lure women into prostitution networks. The Observatory said in an official statement, "Female and male victims of trafficking are exposed to many types of sexual violence during their trafficking experience - regardless of the type of exploitation they are subjected to."

In addition to organ trafficking, sex trafficking of women and children is one of the fastest-growing forms of illegal trade. Every day, dozens of women and children are lured into the world of local and international sex trafficking or begging, through promises of a better life and profitable work. The Iraqi Observatory for Human Trafficking Victims documented five organized crime networks involved in trafficking women, especially minor girls, in Baghdad and forcing them into prostitution (Iraqi Observatory, 2019). These networks employ modern tactics through the internet to trap girls by contacting them with fake marriage promises to entrap them in sexual behaviour. The observatory also warns of the growing number of girls and children on the streets, alleyways, and intersections under the guise of begging, providing an opportunity for these networks to exploit them sexually and gain financial profits. The observatory documented three networks managing groups of children and women who are used for begging in the alleyways and streets of Kirkuk, as well as two other networks operating in Diwaniya and Babil provinces. Despite more than two centuries of the abolition of slavery, many foreign workers in Arab countries, including Iraq, continue to face new and varied forms of slavery, particularly domestic servitude. These individuals are controlled and forced to work against their will and dignity, in addition to being deprived of their rights and threatened with punishment. The observatory conducted personal interviews with six individuals, including a woman, of African and Asian descent, who shared their experiences of abuse, harassment, exploitation, and violations they faced while working in Iraq, sometimes involving sexual violence (Arabi Post, 2020).

2. Domestic violence and violence against women

Domestic violence remains a taboo issue that is often ignored. Cases of abuse against women, including verbal insults, physical violence, and mutilation, are justified by customs, traditions, and religion, and are legally covered under Article 16 of the 2002 Penal Code. These practices are deeply rooted in misguided socialization and awareness, extending into state institutions and decision-makers. Despite the issuance of a law in the Kurdistan region of Iraq in 2011 that defines domestic violence, there is still little protection for women from domestic violence in areas governed by the central government. Efforts in the Iraqi Parliament to pass a domestic violence law were stalled throughout 2019. The Iraqi Penal Code, which is applied in Baghdad and the Kurdistan region, criminalizes physical assault but does not clearly address domestic violence. Instead, Article 41(1) of the Penal Code states that "a husband has the right to discipline his wife, and parents may discipline their minor children within the limits of what is prescribed by religious, legal, or customary law." The Penal Code also provides lighter penalties for acts of violence, including murder, under the guise of "honor motives" or if a person finds their wife or female relative committing adultery or having sex outside of marriage.

Although the law criminalizes sexual assault, Article 398 stipulates that such charges are dropped if the assailant marries the victim. While no recent national studies have been conducted on domestic violence, women's rights organizations have reported a high rate. (Iraq State Report, 2013)

In contrast, the Iraqi government responded in its fifth periodic report to the Committee, claiming that it had initiated legislative measures aimed at promoting gender equality and prohibiting discrimination based on gender. The government notes that the 2005 Constitution of the Republic of Iraq serves as a "fundamental instrument" to ensure the protection of human rights as outlined in treaties. In this regard, the government should be commended for taking steps to integrate the enhancement of human rights into laws and policies, including those related to women and their issues (U.S. Department of State, 2017). The report emphasized the importance of adopting a national strategy to combat violence against women and establishing mechanisms to protect abused women. At the same time, it identified challenges and obstacles that need to be addressed, including delays in the issuance of the domestic violence protection law and the lack of political will to move forward with the enactment of this law.

3. Depriving children of education

The Norwegian Refugee Council reported that around 45,000 displaced children in camps lacked civil identification documents (Norwegian Human Rights Council, 2019). Government officials often denied security clearances for displaced families with ties to ISIS to return to their original areas. The Human Rights Watch Monitoring Centre reported in August of the same year that the government was depriving thousands of children, whose parents had affiliations with ISIS, of their right to education (Human Rights Monitoring Report, 2019). It was also stated that officials were instructing school principals and aid groups to prevent children without identification

documents from enrolling in public schools, despite a document from September 2018 signed by Ministry of Education officials, which seemed to support allowing children who lost their civil documents to register in schools.

Non-governmental organizations in the Kurdistan region of Iraq have documented many cases of women who were forced by ISIS to marry fighters and later became widows with children, lacking the required marriage and birth certificates to obtain legal documentation for their children. The children born to ISIS fighters were often rejected, abandoned, or placed in orphanages, as reported by NGOs and Yazidi media outlets (Mahajer News, 2019). The central government and governors took steps to close or merge camps in an attempt to force displaced people to return to their original areas. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported that between August and September, the number of official displacement camps decreased from 89 to 77 due to camp closures mandated by the government. These forced relocations often led to displacement of more than 2,000 people from displacement camps in Nineveh governorate from August 23 to September 4, 2019.

Third: The social and economic dimension

1. Demonstrations against government policy

On November 25, the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights said on Facebook that authorities had arrested 93 protesters in Baghdad between November 21 and 24, noting that only 14 had been released. They said in the same post that the commission continued to receive reports of activists, journalists and lawyers being kidnapped by "unknown individuals."

Anyone who sheds light on the nature of the popular movement during the October 2019 protests must take into account the tensions that preceded them. These protests could not have erupted suddenly on their own; there must have been causes and consequences that occurred previously in reality, which affected, in one way or another, the ignition of protests across a wide area of the country. The researcher believes that the background of the October protests includes two types of tensions: distant and near tensions. Distant tensions are represented by popular protests that periodically erupted in protest against government corruption, deteriorating services, and rising unemployment, such as the protests of 2011, 2015, 2017, and 2018. Religious authorities have repeatedly warned of the consequences of such tensions and, on several occasions, addressed decision-makers, reminding them that "reform is an inevitable necessity, and if the demands for reform diminish for a while, they will return later, much stronger and broader" (Official website of His Eminence Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani, 2019).

The near tensions are represented by two important events in September 2019, involving the dispersal of university students' protests in Baghdad. These protests were triggered by sit-ins held by graduates of colleges and holders of higher degrees who demanded job opportunities and a solution to the unemployment crisis. Political science graduates organized protests in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs building in Baghdad, followed by an open-ended sit-in by this group in September. In addition, there were sit-ins by graduates of administration colleges in Tahrir Square and engineering graduates near the Engineers' Syndicate in Baghdad (Al-Baladi TV, 2019). Graduates of science colleges also organized several protests and sit-ins under the title "Revolution of Scientists," followed by students from the College of Administration and Economics. Finally, holders of higher degrees organized a protest in front of the Prime Minister's office in the Al-Alaawi area in Baghdad, demanding job appointments. However, the government initially ignored their demands and then launched a dispersal campaign using water cannons on September 25, 2019. This event caused a negative public reaction, especially since there were women among the protesters, and one of them fell to the ground due to the force of the water used by the riot police. More than one official and popular body condemned this incident, with the most prominent response coming from the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights, which considered the assault on the protesters a "crime" punishable by law and held the highest officials responsible. The Iraqi Academics Syndicate also condemned the government's actions, describing them as unjust, and called for the resignation of the government due to the humiliation of Iraqi academic degrees and the dignity of those demanding their rightful job opportunities (Al-Quds Al-Arabi, 2019). In response, the "Higher Degrees Campaign" in Iraq called for active participation from everyone in support of the protesters, emphasizing that the officials who stole the rights of higher degree holders were arrogant in their wrongdoing and insisted on continuing to deny justice to this marginalized group (Kalkamish, 2019).

The religious reference had a clear stance regarding the protests of holders of higher degrees, which was announced in the Friday sermon on August 2, 2019. The official website of the holy shrine of Karbala later republished it following the violent dispersal of the higher degree holders' protests. In his sermon, Sheikh Abdul-Mahdi Al-Karbalaei stated: "Media outlets have reported the protests and sit-ins of a group of higher degree holders, including those with doctoral and master's degrees, in front of some ministries, expressing their legitimate demands as citizens of this country. They are demanding to be employed according to their academic specializations. These graduates represent the elite among students who have made exceptional efforts in important scientific and professional fields." He added, "These individuals represent the most capable and distinguished group among students. They have put in extraordinary and difficult efforts over a long period to reach this status. After all this hard work, accompanied by hopes and aspirations—both theirs and ours as citizens of this country—they aspired to reach positions where they could provide exceptional services in various state departments and public service sectors. Yet, they find themselves in positions that do not match their qualifications, their efforts have been wasted, and their hopes and aspirations are dashed. They are hoping to receive something that can provide for them and ensure a

dignified life for themselves and their families. Thousands of these individuals now find themselves in positions that are unworthy of their degrees, and the country and its people would greatly benefit from their skills and knowledge." Sheikh Al-Karbalaei directed his speech to the government authorities, saying, "We say here and direct our words to the concerned governmental and parliamentary bodies to take this matter seriously and address it according to legal entitlements, and to find solutions that are in line with the reality of Iraq and its financial situation."

2. Economic Reform White Paper:

      The Iraqi economic reality has been reflected for many years in its heavy dependence on oil revenues, which has caused worsening problems, in addition to the many pressures that have been imposed on it resulting from some complex financial and economic crises, as a result of the decline in oil prices, and the devastating effects that the world is witnessing, and a sharp economic recession during the complete lockdown imposed globally due to the spread of the Corona pandemic; which led to the sorting of a group of pressures that led to the inevitability of accelerating the finding of radical solutions for reform.

      The White Paper for Reform aims to place the economy and budget on a single sustainable path, working to create a roadmap within the correct economic trajectory for Iraq, with a medium-term strategy spanning 3-5 years. This is considered the strategic objective of the existing strategies, on which governmental institutions and international governmental and non-governmental organizations are working to prepare responses within frameworks that contribute to implementing the planned economic reforms. (Dr. Lujain Mustafa Ismail / Research Paper on Economics and Development / Al-Bayan Centre for Studies and Planning, 2022).

1. International organizations play a prominent developmental role that can contribute to supporting the Iraqi White Paper for Reform. This humanitarian and developmental role is less susceptible to political and security conflicts and differences, which often raise doubts and questions in many events. These organizations work to mobilize resources, financial support, and technical assistance to back the efforts made by the Iraqi government to regain the trust of its citizens through achieving economic stability and governance to support economic reforms and reinforcing the pillars that are clouded by significant "negative risks" that require the government to expedite the implementation of structural reforms. These risks include:
1. Possibility of deterioration and decline in oil prices,
2. Exacerbation of the global crisis due to the spread of new variants of the coronavirus,
3. Possibility of deterioration of security conditions at the global level.
4. Increase in the severity of climate change shocks,
5. More fluctuations in the macroeconomy.

      To avoid, limit or mitigate the impact of negative risks and developments on future government policies, comprehensive reform measures must be adhered to, in line with what is stated in the white paper, which represents the government's program for achieving economic reform in the country.

Conclusions and recommendations:

Conclusions:

      International non-governmental organizations have come to play an important and major role alongside other international actors in the various fields in which they are active. Various international transformations have shown that these organizations - and the capabilities and resources they possess and the popular circles they enjoy - are very necessary for activating the desired governance and consolidating democratic principles in various systems. They represent the most important lever that expresses the aspirations of peoples, especially marginalized groups that suffer from exclusion and who have found in these organizations the space that enables them to express their needs, which countries have neglected. These groups now have a voice heard in various international bodies.

      These organizations were able to build a network of relationships with various official and unofficial parties, which helped increase their strength and ensure their survival and development, especially in the field of human rights. There is no doubt that human rights issues require a broad network of relationships with actors at the local, national, and international levels. Therefore, international non-governmental organizations active in human rights have realized the importance of clarity in their work and have focused on it in the various activities they contribute to.

Recommendations:

1. Emphasizing cooperation between the government and organizations, especially those active in human rights, by establishing the principle of transparency in the management of human rights issues, and exchanging information on detention centers, to avoid pressures exerted by organizations on countries in international forums and international public opinion.
2. The Iraqi government should avoid duplication of dealings and issuing unconfirmed reports against its policies. It has become necessary to support the work of these organizations and provide the appropriate environment to achieve this, by increasing transparency in dealings by both sides, and providing the necessary requirements to help organizations achieve their goals to enhance the management of development projects.

3. Emphasizing the work of organizations active in Iraq, which falls within international treaties and laws, and not giving organizations the opportunity to interfere outside legal contexts by interfering in internal affairs and influencing the sovereignty of the state.

4. Working to win international public opinion in favor of the country by influencing organizations active in the fields of development and human rights, exploiting their globality and influence on the policies of governments and countries that support them, and benefiting from the globalization of international media in achieving this.

5. Supporting the relationship between the Iraqi government and the global system to eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whether international, regional or local, by taking advantage of the new formation of the global system and globalization in its positive concept, through developing strategic plans and signing agreements and treaties that would support the government's plans for development advancement.

6. Reducing reliance on short-term aid and increasing investment in sustainable development projects.

7. Improving oversight mechanisms to prevent corruption and ensure that aid reaches those who deserve it.

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