

# IRAQ

**Date of Elections:** 1 April 1989

## **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament after postponement of the poll since 1988. General elections had previously been held in October 1984.

## **Characteristics of Parliaments**

The unicameral Parliament of Iraq, the National Assembly, comprises 250 members elected for 4 years.

## **Electoral System**

All Iraqi citizens who are at least 18 years of age are entitled to vote. Disqualified are the insane, undischarged bankrupts, persons convicted of crime and those under allegiance to a foreign State.

Electorate registers are compiled on the constituency level; voting is not compulsory.

Candidates for the National Assembly must be qualified electors, literate and at least 25 years of age. Furthermore, they must have been Iraqi by birth, from Iraqi parents by birth or from an Iraqi father by birth and a mother from one of the Arab countries; upheld the principles and aims of the July 1968 progressive and socialist revolution; completed military service or been exempted from it; not been expropriated landowners from whom land was taken under the Agrarian Reform Law, or whose properties were nationalized or confiscated by the State; not been convicted of crimes related to the State's internal or external security after the July 1968 revolution; not been convicted for violating public confidence, harming the national economy and the State's financial confidence, violating public morality, or misdemeanour; and not have had a record of imprisonment for murder for a period not less than 15 years.

For electoral purposes, the country is divided into 59 electoral districts. In each, Deputies are elected by absolute majority system, and vacancies are filled through by-elections.

## **Background and Outcome of the Elections**

Originally set for August 1988, the election date was postponed several times, owing partly to uncertainty over the course of the Gulf war. It was ultimately fixed on 31 January 1989 in order to "provide more chances for those who want to stand".

Of the 921 candidates for the Assembly's 250 seats, it was reported that one-fourth were members of the ruling Arab *Baath* Socialist Party and 65 were women. The remainder were either independents or members of groupings affiliated to the umbrella National Progressive Patriotic Front. All candidates were screened by an election committee headed by Mr. Izzat Ibrahim, the Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which is the highest authority in the country. Mr. Ibrahim stated that the Government had embarked on a course of democratization and liberalization to redraft the Constitution and pave the way for multi-party elections. The National Assembly was therefore regarded as a transitional body until the adoption of a new Constitution.

According to voting results, the majority of the new Deputies were *Baath* partisans. The first post-election parliamentary session took place on 12 April, when the Speaker was chosen. The Prime Minister (also President and Chairman of the RCC since 1979) is Mr. Saddam Hussain.

## Statistics

### 1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the National Assembly

Voters . . . . . 7,171,000 (approx.)

Political Group	Number of Seats
Arab <i>Baath</i> Socialist Party. . . . .	207
Independents and minor parties. . . . .	43
	250

### 2. Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex

Men. . . . .	223
Women. . . . .	27
	250