

Iraqi Troops Campaign to Wrestle Ramadi from ISIL

By [nsnbc international](#)

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Iraqi military and counter-terrorism units, Kurdish Peshmerga units, local Yazidi units, supported by the Iraqi and US-led coalition air forces are fighting to regain control over the strategically important city of Ramadi from the self-proclaimed Islamic State, a.k.a. ISIS, ISIL or Daesh.

Iraqi counter-terrorism spokesman Sabah al-Numani said late Tuesday Tuesday that the military units have secured parts of the city and are advancing toward the government complex in the central district of Ramadi. Al-Numani added that fighting was taking place in neighborhoods around the complex, and that the Iraqi Air Force was providing support, along with the U.S.-led coalition.

The city, located about 100 kilometers west of the capital Baghdad was seized by ISIL brigades in May 2015 after ISIL launched a major campaign in 2014, seizing the city of Mosul.

It is worth recalling that a source close to the former Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri documented for nsnbc international that the final decision to invade Iraq with ISIL forces [fell on the sidelines of the Atlantic Council's Energy Summit in Turkey in November 2013](#), and that the [European Union \(EU\), on April 22, 2013](#), lifted its ban on the import of Syrian oil from "rebel-held territories".

Ramadi is strategically located near the Iraqi - Syrian border. Recapturing the city is likely to disrupt ISIL's capability to export smuggled Syrian oil via northern Iraq to Turkey. Analysts do, however, forecast that the recapture of Ramadi is likely to exacerbate tensions between Iraq's central government and the strongly US / NATO-backed Kurdish administration of Barzani in northern Iraq.

Progress with the recapture of Ramadi is not only obstructed by ISIL's resistance. The insurgents have placed and are placing mines, improvised explosive devices and Boobie Traps in areas from which they are forced to withdraw.

U.S. military engineers are assisting in the repair of damaged bridges across the Euphrates river and are setting up floating bridges to help troops advance. U.S. Army Colonel Steve Warren, a Baghdad - based spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition said confidently that

"The end is coming. That said, it's going to be a tough fight". ... Iraqi security forces have much work to do, still have hard fighting, and it's going to take some time."

Warren also noted that documents seized from ISIL in Fallujah, a city still controlled by the insurgents, include orders to try to blend in with government forces as the militants retreat, and to attack civilians and mosques, in an effort to discredit the government. The veracity of the statement could not be independently confirmed.

It is noteworthy that non of the pro-Baghdad government Shi'ite militia participate in the campaign against Ramadi, supporting the notion that the recapture of Ramadi is likely to exacerbate both conflicts between Iraqi Kurds and Baghdad as well as the Sunni - Shi'ite tensions in he war-torn country. The United States has currently stationed some 3,500 troops in Iraq.

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