

# Preemptive Democracy for Iraq: following the example of the Founding Fathers

## Proposal to create an independent political alternative to Saddam Hussein: a Democratic Transitional Government of Iraq

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### The Idea:

The American people and the world either do not want war at all or want their governments to exhaust all peaceful alternatives first. This is also the stated policy of the U.S. administration. But we are told that all diplomacy has failed and that therefore, the only alternative left is war. Yet there is one alternative which is simple, logical, and inexpensive and which minimizes risk (geopolitical, economic, terrorism and national security etc.) and which has not been discussed yet. This alternative is to enable the creation of a credible and independent Democratic Transitional Government, of, by and for the people of Iraq.

The mere existence of this government will ratchet up the political, diplomatic and psychological pressure on Saddam (who then becomes a usurper) and has three main functions.

1. It dramatically increases the likelihood that Saddam will fall without a war (estimated at 70-80%)
2. If the U.S. decides on war anyway, it could transform a “preemptive” war into a “normal” war which creates no precedent which can be used by others (because intervention should only happen upon the express request of the new government);
3. If any war takes place, it either eliminates or reduces the duration and risks of a military occupation and turns over Iraq faster to the Iraqis.

It has many other benefits as well (creates a positive precedent for the region; minimizes

### How it would work: a three-step process

The key to Preemptive Democracy is the independence (from the U.S.) and global public trust of the new government. Hence the need for a “clean” creation. We suggest the following as maximally clean under present circumstances:

Step one: foster the creation of an independent and credible Democratic Transitional Government (based in N. Iraq?) via the following clean process:

1. a constitutional convention to discuss outstanding issues and make a formal transitional constitution and government,
2. with broadly representative participation, e.g. all the existing opposition groups, plus representatives of the Iraqi Diaspora
3. with complete open and transparent access to the world’s media (Al-Jazeera, CNN, BBC, TF1 etc.)

Step two: the new government requests recognition from the world and acts as a focus for opposition. In the best case, Saddam loses power without war. In the worst case, a military occupation is either totally avoided or minimized.

Step three: deciding on a permanent constitution by a second Constitutional Assembly chosen by free and fair elections in Iraq (after the government comes into power in Baghdad).

Notes: Step one can be done quickly, in 1 or 2 months. It is budgeted at \$10M (400 participants with twice more for support, security, media).

global geopolitical risk and terrorism, protects the short and long-term security of Israel, Jordan, Kuwait etc., helps the U.S. regain the trust of global public opinion etc.). And in all cases, since it is independent from the U.N. track, it allows the U.S. to calm down and let inspections proceed, without the political pressure “to do something” just because President Bush feels he is trapped by an inconclusive U.N. process (since there is now a better more moral and U.N.-independent roadmap to regime change).

There could be a bipartisan and international Independent Advisory Group for Democracy in Iraq with U.S. congress people and former politicians (e.g. Carter, Clinton, Albright, Gingrich and Kirkpatrick from the U.S., former Presidents Mandela, Havel, Brundlandt, Robinson, Ahtisaari etc. from other countries).

Is there a downside?

The only potential “downside” we know of is to set a precedent for other dictatorships (to some, this is not a downside). There are two answers:

1. most people will prefer a precedent with democracy than with war
2. for many reasons, Iraq is a unique case.

Conclusion: The world has nothing to lose and everything to gain from Preemptive Democracy. This plan offers the best chances for peace and democracy, for people and for the economy. The idea should be seriously analyzed, discussed and debated. Preemptive Democracy deserves a fair hearing, and the first condition for that, is to spread the concept far and wide.