

In an Interview with Al-Monitor Website, Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim: The Citizen Bloc Possesses the Credibility and is a Bridge that Connects Everyone



The head of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim, assured that the root of the crisis in Iraq is represented by the absence of a unified understanding for building the new Iraqi state. Some seek to build the state on a centralized basis, while others seek to build it on the basis of a confederation and go beyond the framework of a federation. And some seek to make it a state of sects and nationalities. He added that other causes of the crisis are the deficiency or vagueness in some of the constitutional mechanisms, which has opened the door wide for circumventing the constitution and finally, the lack of maturity of many parties and political currents. He stressed that all of these factors put Iraq on course for a continuing crisis, but in our assessment, the basis of the crisis is the lack of a unified understanding regarding the new Iraqi state.

This came in an interview held by Al-Monitor American website with Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim in his Baghdad office on March 18th, 2014.

Regarding the changes that have brought about to the Islamic Supreme Council, his eminence stated: We have changed the mechanisms and put in place a new system, and focused our project on the state and our perception of democracy. His eminence affirmed his belief that change is a necessity of life, and that successful political work is work that aspires to the future, benefits from the experiences of the past, and interacts with the present. He said that he is looking forward to the completion of the renovation process, opening our doors to young blood and integrating more and more with our people in different social classes. His eminence explained that the Martyr of the Niche movement's vision to state building is based on building a modern, just and powerful state, indicating that justice is a supreme religious value not a political one, and adding that politics gives us the means while religion gives us the values.

On the Anbar crisis, his eminence assured that the crisis in Anbar will end when what we stressed in our initiative "Our Resisting Anbar" is adopted, explaining that "fabricated" crises cannot be solved with security solutions and that the problem in Anbar is "fabricated", and its solution must comprise security, political, social and service-based solutions.

In an answer to a question about the politicization of the army, his eminence strongly warned against the issue of the politicization of the army, highlighting his belief in building a state based on institutions and adding that the military institution, in democratic systems, must be neutral and independent. Therefore, he added, we will not allow for the politicization of the army, destroying its creed or weakening it.

Concerning the security problem, his eminence stated that it is part of the problem related to the mentality with which the security file is managed. The government does not deal with security as a single and comprehensive file, or on the basis that security stability stems from political stability or that the fight against terrorism will be effective when the political

environment is stable. Iraq needs a comprehensive strategy to address the security situation, practical and effective plans, and to re-evaluate the tools used in dealing with the security file. This includes the efficiency of management of this sensitive file that is fateful for Iraq.

As a reply to a question on the political map after the parliamentary elections, and what is the position of the Citizen's Bloc in this map, Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim underlined that the political map is drawn by the elections, and that the Citizen Bloc has great ambitions to take its natural position and its popular entitlements. He indicated that the Bloc has the most important cards on the national scene, namely the card of "credibility" and clarified that its honest relations with everyone have given it a lot of credibility and that the bloc's policies are established, not volatile, and this is an important factor in determining the extent of influence in the next stage. His eminence stressed that Iraq is a pluralistic democracy, and whoever has their doors open to all has a role in bringing together a unified team at a single table, expressing his hope that we can be a bridge that connects everyone. Regarding the relations between Iran and the international community especially with respect to the nuclear issue, his eminence assured that both sides are working hard to find common ground for understanding, despite the difficult circumstances and that there is a strong will to reach a settlement. He explained that the two sides are today closer than ever to reaching a comprehensive and final solution, pointing out that Iran is an important and influential state in the region and the world, and putting an end to this issue will make Iran a state that has a positive impact in the international arena. Sayyid Al Hakim indicated that the fair equation in this issue involves the international community recognizing Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy and lifting the embargo, in exchange for Iran reassuring the international community that it will not turn towards developing nuclear weapons.

On a question regarding his view towards Geneva II and his assessment of the Syrian crisis and mechanisms to solve it, Sayyid Ammar Al Hakim replied: Our vision is always based on the ability of dialogue to reach a solution. A military solution will only bring destruction to Syria and the region. He added that, regardless of the immediate results of the dialogue at the Geneva II Conference, it was very useful, because the mere fact that both parties sat down at the same table means that they have arrived at the conviction that a military resolution is impossible. His eminence finally stated that dialogue is the only way to get Syria to safety and to preserve its unity and protect the rights of its people.