



[Iraq's Political Impasse Continues as the Country's Highest Court Says That It Cannot Dissolve Parliament](#)

In one of the latest developments in Iraq this week, the country's top court has rejected a petition to dissolve the parliament, extending the longstanding political stalemate. The court stated that they do not have the legal authority under the constitution to act in such a manner. Some analysts have argued that the decision is also meant to serve as a strong rebuke of the parliament's behavior, effectively relaying to them that this is their mess to sort out and resolve. The petition to the court to intervene in the manner was put forth by populist leader Muqtada al-Sadr and his political bloc following more than 10 months of political paralysis and inability to form a government post-election. This impasse has created a major crisis, which has even boiled over in recent months into deadly violence between security forces and demonstrators.

In the elections held back in October of 2021, Al-Sadr and his allies came out as the biggest political bloc, winning 73 of the 329 seats in parliament. Although his bloc won the most votes, they have been unable to form a ruling government and recently their rival coalition submitted a list of lawmaker names and claimed to have more seats than Al-Sadr with a bloc of 88 members. The rival coalition, the Coordination Framework, has expressed that they are not opposed to early elections but are insistent on parliament to meet and vote on new electoral laws. Iraq's federal court has also played a role in hindering the formation of the government, as it ruled that the legislature's quorum for selecting a president is two-thirds of the members, meaning that if one-third of lawmakers fail to show, a president cannot be selected and the formation process is unable to ensue.

The parliamentary system of Iraq is an authority which possesses the power to choose the prime minister and president, and they also must approve any law before it passes. As it maintains such a stronghold of political power, it is stated that only the Iraqi parliament can dissolve itself if it is no longer serving the interests of the people. The Iraqi parliament is given a period of 30 days from its first session to elect the country's new president, and it is then put to the largest bloc to form the government.

Al-Sadr supporters stormed the parliament back in late July in an attempt to prevent their rival coalition group from forming a new government. The ensuing rallies, sit-ins, counter rallies, and clashes with authorities have witnessed outbreaks of violence and further stalled the government-formation process. Last week, a deadly clash broke out as 30 people were killed in violence between Al-Sadr loyalists and security forces. The Judiciary in Iraq has urged the parliament to continue its constitutional duties by either forming the government or by dissolving itself. If parliament moves forward with a plan to dissolve itself and hold early elections, this could help to alleviate the longstanding political impasse. Both Al-Sadr backers and the Coordination Framework insist that the parliament be dissolved. To date, the calls for a new government have not materialized into concrete actions, and the recent court decision is the latest failed attempt to resolve the ongoing crisis.