



International Association of Contemporary Iraqi Studies

3rd Annual Conference, 16-17 July 2008

SOAS, University of London

Abstract of paper to be presented at the conference.

For details of the conference programme go to www.iraqistudies.org

Speaker: Ahmed M. Jiyad (Independent Scholar), Mou-jiya@online.no

Title: Federal Petroleum Policy in Iraq: Feasibility and Challenges

Abstract:

Oil production may continue to have vital and critical role in the Iraqi economy for many decades to come. Hence, federal petroleum policy has the most outstanding impact on the future of the country and the course of its development. Both federal petroleum policy and future development will be fundamentally affected, among others, by two pieces of legislations: the Constitution and the hydrocarbon law. Considering the prevailing conditions in the country and those surrounding these two essential legal frameworks, the paper argues that sound effective and operational federal petroleum policy is less likely unless serious reviews are taken place and comprehensive changes are introduced on both the Constitution and the still "proposed" Oil and Gas Law.

The paper first examines briefly the basic premises, which a national petroleum policy in Iraq should, in the normative, take into consideration. These basic premises include: Structural Dependency on Oil; The depleting nature of the hydrocarbon resources; The "economic rent" associated with these resources and its consequences and finally Geo-political reality and considerations. In the second part I will elaborate on the feasibility and challenges of the federal petroleum policy by analysing the main components of such a policy within holistic development orientations in a post-conflict resource-rich country or situation. The main components of the federal petroleum policy include the following: I- Mandatory Framework and Guiding Principles; II- Institutions, Stakeholders and Partnership; III- Macro-economy dimensions and IV- The "sector specific" role. Having addressed the basic premises and the main ingredients of such a policy, the paper conclude by discussing selective key issues of pertinence to sound federal petroleum policy in Iraq.