

# Positive Neutrality and Iraqi Foreign Policy After 2020

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## Abstracts

Different countries have different foreign policies, and the significance of the state varies in accordance with the foreign policies pursued. Some have neutral foreign policies based on balance and non-alignment, while others have policies based on bias and the interlocutor's policy. The role of decision makers in formulating foreign policy is determined by the foreign policy of a given nation, as any balanced and impartial foreign policy benefits the state. Additionally, internal policy plays a role in formulating foreign policy as it is a continuation of foreign policy.

## 1. Introduction

The principle of neutrality began to be recognized in the Middle Ages, influenced by international law at that time, and then gradually developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the sixteenth century, one of the jurists (Groch-Yus) said that "if there is a dispute between the conflicting parties, the state may pledge to remain neutral." In this context, the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 can be considered one of the pioneering treaties signed between France and Great Britain. In the nineteenth century, neutrality was recognized at the international level at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and the Paris Declaration of 1857 affirmed the rights and obligations of the principle of neutrality. The nineteenth century also witnessed important moments in the emergence of neutrality, such as the emergence of the United States of America as a neutral state in the face of crises between European countries. In the context of conflicts, political tension and escalating crises, the most important principles that countries work to adhere to in the context of conflicts, political tension and escalating crises are sovereignty and sovereign equality between countries, territorial and international integrity and self-determination, non-interference in the internal affairs of any country, peaceful settlement of disputes, and commitment to the principles of good conduct that do not conflict with international peace and security.

Importance of research:

The importance of the research stems from the fact that Iraq's adoption of the principle of positive neutrality represents a turning point in its foreign, regional and international policy. By adopting this principle, Iraq can achieve important strategic goals, which are moving away from the circle

of regional and international conflicts, resolving crises through peaceful means, restoring relations between neighboring countries and maximizing Iraq's national interest.

Research objective:

The research aims to provide a scientific analysis and vision of the role played by Iraqi foreign policy in light of its adoption of the principle of positive neutrality, and its important role in converging viewpoints between conflicting parties as an effective and reliable mediator in its regional and international environment.

Research problem:

Iraq has been exposed to negative repercussions that have greatly affected it due to the nature of regional and international conflicts of which it was a part and was greatly affected by, which prompted it, since 2020, to make an important change in its external behavior by transforming Iraq from a party affected by regional and international conflicts to a new stage in which Iraq is outside the framework of these conflicts or resolving them radically, but the main question is: Can Iraq adopt the principle of positive neutrality in its external political behavior despite all regional and international interactions? Several sub-questions arise from this problem:

- 1- Are there indications of Iraq's success in adopting the principle of positive neutrality?
- 2- What are Iraq's motives for adopting the principle of positive neutrality?

Research hypothesis:

The research proceeds from a scientific hypothesis that Iraq in adopting positive neutrality in its foreign political behavior has achieved important successes, most notably the mediation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which led to reducing tension between the two sides to reach an agreement and the return of diplomatic relations, and Iraq aims by adopting the principle of positive neutrality to stay away from the circles of conflict and crises, whether regional or international, and reduce their severity and impact on it.

## **2. Research Methodology:**

The research relied on the descriptive and analytical approach to describe the political behavior of the Iraqi government activity by adopting positive neutrality and analyzing the impact on actors in the international system and the regional environment using the possibilities available for Iraqi foreign policy.

Research Structure:

The first topic: the nature of positive neutrality (concept, characteristics)

The first requirement: the concept of positive neutrality.

The second requirement: the characteristics of positive neutrality.

The second topic: Iraqi positive neutrality (motives - goals)

The first requirement: the motives for Iraq's positive neutrality.

The second requirement: the objectives of Iraq's positive neutrality.

The first topic: the nature of positive neutrality (concept, characteristics)

The accurate definition of the concept of neutrality in the context of international relations interacts with the variables of international law and the principles of international politics and is in line with developments and general ideas about war and security at all stages of relations between states, so that the scope and potential effects of the commitment of states to this principle and its vital importance expand, during and after the Cold War, many terms similar to neutrality appeared, which overlapped with the concept of neutrality and sometimes led to confusion and confusion among them, hence the importance and necessity of specific and precise definitions of neutrality Positive neutrality in the context of international relations as a legal and moral principle.

The first requirement: the concept of positive neutrality

Therefore, this research deals with the concepts of neutrality and positive neutrality in terms of language and terminology, thus avoiding any confusion with other concepts.

First: Neutrality and positive neutrality in a language

The (Oxford Dictionary\_Dictionary Oxford) referred to the concept of neutrality as, non-belonging to any of the parties to the conflict between two or more States, for example, Switzerland remained neutral during the war 1, according to the Cambridge English-Arabic dictionary known as "Neutrality", is the non-accession of a state to any of the warring or conflicting states, or the failure to provide support to any of them, and not to be biased or inclined to any party, opinion or group on a subject, while (in the Merriam-Webster dictionary\_Merriam-Webster)<sup>2</sup> Neutrality is defined as the impartiality or inclination of a state to any party, group, opinion or position, and neutrality is required or recommended in some areas, while it can be the subject of criticism or controversy in some cases, such as morality, politics or religion.<sup>3</sup> It is the characteristic or state of not supporting either party in an argument, fight, war, etc., for example: the characteristic or state of neutrality, the country has adopted the official policy of neutrality without interfering in any conflict, and the newspaper is known for its political neutrality<sup>4</sup>

A positive term is also mentioned in the Encyclopedia Britannica, as "thinking about the good qualities of someone or something, or thinking about a good result, and you should try to be more positive about the whole situation<sup>5</sup>.

In the (Cambridge Dictionary\_Cambridge) he defined the adjective positive as "an adjective full of hope and confidence, or giving a reason for hope and confidence, and on the other hand, the past ten years have witnessed some very positive developments in relations, for example: the United Nations calls on all parties to the conflict to take a positive attitude towards the new peace initiative<sup>6</sup>, The Merriam-Webster dictionary \_Merriam Webster states that "something is

optimistic and joyful, and positivity: increases certainty or certainty and may involve a firm conviction or strong expression of it<sup>7</sup>, In the Oxford Dictionary, a positive adjective is defined as "a good or useful adjective or side, and the term is associated with thoughts, feelings and behaviors that promote happiness, success and progress<sup>8</sup>, Based on the above, it can be said that the linguistic definition of the term positive neutrality consists of knowing the meaning of neutrality and its intention on the one hand and positivity on the other, and when we combine these two meanings, we come up with the linguistic definition of positive neutrality, "thinking with positive eyes and good qualities towards the conflict situation without leaning towards any of the parties to the conflict, that is, reducing or resolving the conflict, as opposed to the negative that seeks to provoke conflict, war and confrontation."

Second: The concept of neutrality and positive neutrality idiomatically

Jurists differed in the definition of neutrality, as (Dr. Abdul Wahab Kayyali) in his book *The Encyclopedia of Politics*, defined positive neutrality as "a political approach that requires the state that is following it to interact politically with global events and participate in solving the problems of the international community on the basis of non-alignment and as dictated by the principles of international justice in order to reach global peace and security<sup>9</sup>, Others believe that positive neutrality is that the state does not take sides with one of the opposing countries while participating with other states while maintaining public peace<sup>10</sup>, Ali Sadiq Abu Haif also defines neutrality in his book *Public International Law* as the role of the state not to participate in the conflict between two or more states and to maintain its peaceful relationship with all conflicting parties<sup>11</sup>, In the same regard, the United Nations defines neutrality as "the legal status, resulting from the abstention of a state, from participating in a war with other states, maintaining a position of neutrality towards belligerents, and impartiality, through which the United Nations gains confidence and cooperation from all parties, in order to act independently and effectively<sup>12</sup>, The third paragraph of Article II of the Charter of the United Nations stipulates the obligation of member states to settle their international disputes, by peaceful means, and to refrain from the use of force in their relations <sup>13</sup>, In an old study by researcher J.A.A. STOCK WIN) entitled (*Positive Neutrality - the Foreign Policy of The Japanese Socialist Party*), the study stated that positive neutrality as a basis for foreign policy can be defined as "a position for peace, de-escalation and non- Taking sides, or participating in any military blocs of the West or the East with the aim of dissolving these blocs and axes, is neutrality from military action and plans<sup>14</sup>, Neutrality can be defined as, a sovereign decision taken by the state to stay away from any conflict or war and thus avoid itself entering or interfering in the affairs and problems of states<sup>15</sup>, and an explanation for this, Dr. Smouhi defines extraordinary in his book *Public International Law* neutrality as: a set of legal rules, through which a state is prevented from participating in war in the event of its outbreak, between two or more states, and not to align with any of the warring parties<sup>16</sup>, There are those who say that positive neutrality is not just a political principle adopted by countries in their external actions, but it is a principle (legal \_ jurisprudential \_ judicial), that one of the most important qualities of the judge is neutrality that can be devoted to looking at the conflict of the litigants and therefore the classical judicial thought made these two parties disputing are in control of the course of the case and the conflict between them is the final result, and Dr. (Abdel Moneim Zanabili) mentions in his book (*The evolution of the concept of neutrality through international conferences*) neutrality Positive and

non-alignment is a political phenomenon of the post-World War II world, which means non-alignment with any of the parties to the conflict, and therefore countries aim from neutrality not to enter into any armed conflict that does not concern them, and thus neutral countries avoid their peoples and territories from possible damage, and of course variables have occurred on some countries' positions, some of which have remained neutral to this day, and there are countries that found themselves forced to engage in one axis without another according to international variables<sup>17</sup>. In light of the above, positive neutrality is a political act in which the state does not intervene in an existing dispute between two or more states, so that all parties to the conflict remain at the same distance and do not take sides with any of the parties to the conflict and seek to bring the parties to the conflict closer together by peaceful means, for example in the event of a dispute between state A and state B, state C should remain neutral without providing assistance to either state and instead intervene effectively from During peaceful means to resolve the ongoing conflict and reduce tension between the conflicting parties, neutrality also refers to the political and diplomatic position taken by a state or organization in international relations with regard to intervention and participation in conflicts, neutrality can be understood as a multifaceted concept affected by many factors and variables, as neutrality aims to contribute to maintaining global peace and stability, avoiding military escalation, providing humanitarian and diplomatic assistance in the event of a humanitarian crisis or international conflict, and promoting peace. and international security and its role in promoting international peace and security.

### Second Requirement: Characteristics of Positive Neutrality

Positive neutrality is a political and diplomatic principle adopted by a state towards two or more conflicting, opposing or warring parties, so the state distances itself from the conflict and does not intervene in it, except to reduce tension, resolve the conflict or end the war, without siding with one party at the expense of the other.

#### First: Characteristics of positive neutrality

Some have argued that the characteristics of positive neutrality can be determined as follows:

##### 1- Positivity

In addition to the principle of neutrality, there is a positive characteristic, which means that one party should not take sides at the expense of the other, and at the same time support for just causes in the world, such as the right to national self-determination, the disposal of national wealth and the protection of national sovereignty<sup>18</sup>.

##### 2- Non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries

This is one of the most important features of positive neutrality, as non-interference in internal affairs does not mean sitting on the sidelines in the crises and conflicts of a country with another country, but rather dealing realistically and effectively with the existing crises, preferring dialogue and diplomatic methods to resolve disputes and calling for the non-use or threat of

force<sup>19</sup>, International law also recognizes the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, whether by coercion, or through political or economic pressure by major countries on small states<sup>20</sup>, The Charter of the United Nations provides that no State has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, in the internal affairs or foreign policy of another State for any reason whatsoever, and that all States are under an obligation not to use or threaten to use force against the sovereignty of another State<sup>21</sup>, - Non-Aligned.

A key characteristic of active neutrality is that it does not take sides in the conflict, and by not taking sides with any of the parties to the conflict <sup>22</sup>, it can gain the trust of the international community regardless of whether it is a party to the conflict or not, for example, Algeria maintained a position of neutrality in World War II, did not intervene in the conflict and did not take sides with any of the parties to the conflict,, The Non-Aligned Movement was founded as a result of the situation witnessed by the international community after the Second World War and the beginning of the cold war, which divided the world into two camps (socialism and capitalism)<sup>23</sup>.

#### 4- Peaceful resolution of crises

For centuries, disputes and wars between countries, neutrality has occupied a prominent place in the arena of international politics and diplomacy, and was a third way and a vision different from the vision of the parties to the conflict, but it is not easy for countries to adopt this principle in the face of wars and conflicts, especially when the principle of "whoever is not with me is against me" prevails, due to the overlap and complexities of international politics that impose conflicting equations and axioms between countries, but nevertheless peace and non-aggression can provide a number of advantages Political and even security of the Trucial States<sup>24</sup>, The principle of positive neutrality emphasizes the need to resolve crises by peaceful means, and to avoid the use or threat of force, and therefore this matter needs the experience and ability of the leaders responsible for the foreign policy of the State, especially with regard to the management of international crises<sup>25</sup>, The Charter of the United Nations allows states to resort to diplomatic, political and judicial means as well as regional and international institutions and organizations to settle international disputes by peaceful means, and the Charter of the United Nations obliges states to use peaceful means primarily to settle disputes, provided that the use of force is the last resort, and the peaceful settlement of disputes refers to a range of methods including negotiation, negotiations are an ancient method of settling disputes and involve a direct or indirect exchange of views and ideas between the conflicting parties to resolve An existing crisis<sup>26</sup>.

#### 5. Support for the right of peoples to self- determination

Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognizes that all peoples have the right to self-determination, and the right to self-determination is of particular importance because its realization is a prerequisite for the effective guarantee and respect of human rights, Paragraph 3 affirms that States parties to the Covenant, including those responsible for administering their territory, recognize that no people, including those responsible for administering their territory, shall be deprived of their means of subsistence<sup>27</sup>, Non-Self-Governing Territories and Territories under administration should strive for the realization of and respect for the right to self-determination in accordance with the provisions of the Charter

of the United Nations, All States parties to the Covenant should take positive measures to promote the realization of and respect for the right of peoples to self-determination, Such measures should be consistent with States' obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as with States' abstention from interfering in the internal affairs of other States, Affirmative action must be consistent With the obligations of States under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as with the abstention of States from interfering in the internal affairs of other States. Therefore, it is not possible to speak of a positive neutrality of a particular State in the face of armed or unarmed conflicts that do not respect the freedom, struggle and self-determination of peoples.

## Second: Rights and Duties of Neutral Countries Positively

Neutral States enjoy a number of rights that do not violate the territorial integrity of neutral States, neutral States prevent belligerent States from passing through the territory of neutral States convoys of troops, ammunition or war materiel, and belligerent States are prohibited from establishing radio stations or other communication devices with belligerent States on land or at sea as a result of the policy of neutrality to prevent belligerents from doing so. We address the most important rights and duties of neutral countries, which are as follows:

### 1- Rights of positively neutral States

The most important rights enjoyed by neutral States are respect for their neutrality, and the neutral State may oblige belligerent States to observe these rights by all means at their disposal, as well as to respect the sovereignty of the neutral State. Article I of Chapter I of the Hague Convention of 1907 stipulates that the territory of neutral States shall not be violated<sup>29</sup>, It should be noted that the Hague Convention on the Rights and Duties of Neutral States and Impartial Persons in the Event of War on Land, considering that, in addition to the search for means to maintain peace and avoid armed conflicts between nations, attention should also be paid to the situation in which the resort to arms is the result of incidents that the parties have failed to avoid, the Hague Convention, that a neutral State is not required to prevent or limit the use of its telegraph, telephone or radio, or of companies or individuals for the benefit of warring parties, Article X of the Convention stipulates that any action taken by the neutral State to repel attempts to undermine its neutrality shall not be considered a hostile act, even if by force, and Article XIV, Chapter II of the Convention provides for allowing the neutral State to receive the sick and wounded from fighting armies and cross its territory, provided that trains transported by them do not carry fighters or war equipment, and Article (16) of Chapter III stipulates that citizens of countries that do not participate in war are considered neutral, and Article (19) of the Convention stipulates that that a belligerent party may not confiscate or use railway equipment originating from the territory of neutral States, whether such equipment belongs to it or to companies, except in cases of extreme necessity", and therefore it can be said that the most important rights of the neutral State are<sup>30</sup>:

- A. The right of the neutral state to communicate with the parties to the conflict.
- B. The right of the neutral State to protect itself from the parties to the conflict.

C- The human dimension and the provision of humanitarian services to the parties to the conflict is the right of the neutral state.

## 2- Duties of positively neutral countries

There are two types of obligations with which neutral States must comply: first, the "precautionary obligation" to prevent belligerents from committing acts of aggression on their territory, and second, to refrain from providing any assistance to one belligerent that could harm the interests of the other party and to refrain from participating in hostilities. In addition, there is the "obligation to abstain" which requires belligerents not to provide a belligerent with arms and ammunition and not to report positively on a belligerent<sup>31</sup>. From a legal point of view, Article 3 of the Hague Convention prohibits the establishment of radio stations or other communication devices with belligerents, whether on land or at sea, Article 4 provides that no war organization may be established or offices opened in the territory of a neutral State to assist belligerents, article 11 of the Convention provides that it is the duty of neutral States to receive in their territory the forces of belligerent armies and to quarterly them in camps as far as possible from the theatre of operations, and article 12 of the Convention provides that, in the absence of special agreements, the neutral State must provide those it detains with the food, clothing and assistance it requires. Article 13 of the Convention provides that, in the absence of special agreements, neutral States shall provide persons detained by them with food, clothing and assistance required by humanitarian regulations; Article 17 of the Convention provides that neutral States receiving escaped prisoners of war shall be granted their liberty; Article 17 of the Convention stipulates that neutral States may grant freedom to fugitive prisoners of war, and prisoners of war may not be provided with food, clothing and assistance required by humanitarian rules, Article 20 stipulates that these provisions apply only between States parties, and Article 22 stipulates that States not parties to the Convention may accede to it. One of the duties of neutral States is to deal with the principle of equality with all parties to the conflict, without bias to any party at the expense of the other party. Examples of countries that still maintain their neutrality are Switzerland and Austria, and Switzerland has been placed in a state of permanent neutrality since the Vienna Conference of 1815<sup>33</sup>, and the warring countries respected the neutrality of Switzerland, during the First and Second World Wars, and the neutrality of Austria was agreed after World War II by the United States of America, Britain, France and the Soviet Union, through the peace treaty concluded in (1955), where Austria pledged not to establish any military alliance as well as not to participate in any existing alliance, It also pledged to do everything possible to ensure that its neutrality is internationally recognized<sup>34</sup>.

The second topic: Iraqi positive neutrality (motives - goals)

Since 2003, large-scale and increasingly complex developments in the Middle East in general and in the Arab region and the Arab Mashreq in particular confirm that the regional reality is moving towards a new (geo-strategic-political) situation, as the international competition between the United States, China, Russia and other international actors has reached its highest levels, and regional powers such as Iran, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates compete and struggle for influence in the region, and conflicts are taking place in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Libya<sup>35</sup>. This will inevitably have a negative impact on Iraq's regional role, especially in light of the internal conditions and crises that Iraq has faced since 2003 and the



events of 2014-2020, and these circumstances have forced Iraq to reaffirm and rethink its regional position, and created the need to develop a new strategy based on Iraq's various strengths and capabilities while taking advantage of regional opportunities to re-establish Iraq's role and influence.

#### The first requirement: Motives for Iraqi positive neutrality

It is necessary to identify the most important internal and external components that Iraq possesses, on which its foreign policy is based, and on which it has built its strategy to adapt to regional and international variables, Iraq has taken its geographical location as a guide to achieving its goals and its quest to achieve national reconciliation, based on the fact that foreign political work is not only linked to achieving the principles and goals of foreign policy, but also creates job opportunities that stimulate the economy, attract investments and capital, and improve the economic reality.

First: The nature of regional and international conflicts in the region.

The Middle East has never enjoyed independence from the conflicts and ambitions of the major powers that run the international system, seeking a foothold in the region according to their strategic and economic interests. Global conflicts are reflected in this region, and Iraq is not isolated from these conflicts and disputes because of the components and capabilities it possesses, which makes it the focus of attention and ambitions of the major powers<sup>36</sup>, Iraq has always been exposed to the ambitions of the surrounding countries because it possesses great wealth and an important strategic location, taking into consideration that it is the main player in the balance of the region. The stronger it is, the more balanced the region is from east to west. The weaker it is, the more fragile the area of competition between regional powers becomes and vulnerable to competition from both Iran and Turkey, so that Iraq becomes their vital sphere, It is like a balance between the relations of neighboring regional countries, whether from the Iranian, Turkish, or Gulf side, Kenneth Waltz, the founder of the structural realism theory, says, "Multipolar regions that consist of countries that are balanced in terms of power do not enjoy stability." Because it tends towards violence, "and thus Iran seeks to have an effective role in the region, given that it has an important geographical location and possesses important resources, which gives it the opportunity<sup>37</sup>, to be an important regional power, given that this environment is unstable in light of the presence of external influence in it<sup>38</sup>, While Iraq was subjected in the past to sanctions as a result of the irrational policy of the previous regime, among these sanctions was the imposition of a severe economic blockade on Iraq, which made Iraq isolated from the outside world, These sanctions were the reason for the deterioration of the economic and political situation in Iraq and made it an outcast in the eyes of the international community, It is certain that a successful foreign policy requires a unified and stable internal situation because internal policy is an extension of foreign policy<sup>39</sup>, Russia has moved to engage in the Middle East through diplomatic tools and military intervention in Syria in 2015, followed by political, economic and military cooperation with Iraq in an attempt to restore the traditional partners of the Soviet Union, The Russian role in Iraq also came as a result of the decline of American influence in the region, as is the case with China, whose role has increased as a result of the American orientation towards Asia and the Pacific Ocean, It seeks to include Iraq, which has a strategic location overlooking the Arabian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz and the road linking China

and Europe via Iran and Turkey, to implement the Belt and Road project. From here, the security of the Middle East region has become largely linked to Iraq, and all regional and international powers seek to play a role in Iraq and build important alliances and try to win it over to this axis against other axes<sup>40</sup>.

#### Second: Interference of neighboring countries in the internal affairs of Iraq

The US occupation of Iraq in 2003 represented the beginning of a new and difficult phase for Iraqi foreign policy, as it was necessary to reshape the features of the Iraqi state, but the Iraqi foreign policy was made up of a mixture of conflict of interest for internal political forces supported externally to obtain influence inside Iraq, which made foreign political behavior unbalanced and not based on a fixed strategy based on the national interest, as much as it was based on the interests of political groups at home and the nourishing regional power, The US invasion of Iraq also helped create a suitable environment for the intervention of neighboring countries in the internal and external affairs of Iraq, as a result of the weakness of the authority, as these countries were able to indulge and impose their control over Iraq through their internal agendas<sup>41</sup>, And that the American strategic perception witnessed two important junctures, namely the 2003 Iraq war, and the control of the terrorist organization (ISIS) over large areas in Iraq and Syria in 2014, where these two events paved the way for Israel to exercise the role in the region and that the heavy spread of the terrorist organization (ISIS) changed the balance in the region, which paved the way for intervention in Iraqi affairs, as is the case now with neighboring countries, as well as showed fragile security indicators in the region to the American intervention directly under the pretext of protecting However, the main objective was to protect and secure Israel and its strategic allies as well as its economic interests in the region, and that security for Iraq is very important because stability in it prevents the establishment of external regional alliances that threaten American interests as well as prevent the exacerbation of terrorism<sup>42</sup>, Iraq, according to the Iranian strategic vision, is a gateway to achieve its dream of expansion in the Arab region, in addition to the fact that Iraq is a huge oil reserve added to its oil reserves, and is considered a strategic depth for it to repel hostile forces that are trying to change its political system, while the Turkish strategic vision in Iraq is based on several aspects, including economic, political and security, in addition to several issues, including the revival of the legacy of the Ottoman Empire, the issue of the Wilayat of Mosul of the Ottoman Empire, and the Treaty of Lausanne to form the Turkish borders. As the security of Iraq is important for Turkey because it is affected in parallel with the crises that Iraq has been exposed to, which necessitated Turkey to seek to organize its relations with Iraq to resolve the issue of the PKK and Turkey's quest to eliminate the PKK (as it considers it a direct threat to its national security) and the neutralization of the PKK is important from Turkey's point of view to secure the development road project between Turkey, the UAE and Iraq, which would change the trade route and link Asia and the Gulf countries. In the large port of Faw in southern Iraq and then to Turkey heading towards Europe through this road, and on the other hand, despite the adoption of this project by the United States, it expressed concern because of the alternative Indian corridor to the Chinese Belt and Road project, which it is working on to surround this waterway, Iran also does not support this project because it would make Turkey a major player in global trade, which contradicts its strategic interests in the region. In addition, Iraq has differences with neighboring countries, including security, as is the case with Turkey because of the presence of

the Kurdistan Workers' Party and the water problem as well, and with Iran because of interventions and problems of borders, water and oil, as well as the political intervention of the Arab Gulf countries, Facilities for obtaining additional quantities of water, where the Turkish government maneuvers to reach the (oil-for-water) agreement, as it was in the nineties when it was (oil for food)<sup>44</sup>, And that Iraq has been benefiting from the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers for thousands of years, and this does not harm Turkish interests and does not reduce its water wealth, because Turkey has large quantities of water sources, and that the political and economic goals of Turkey are the establishment of dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which reflected negatively on the Iraqi economy, and the Turkish government has established a huge project in eastern Anatolia (GAP) for multiple purposes "and includes (13) basic projects, including the generation of electric power through (21) dams, including (17) dams on The Euphrates River, (4) dams on the Tigris River, the establishment of (17) hydroelectric stations, in addition to other projects in the sectors of agriculture, industry, transportation, health and education<sup>45</sup>, The agreement held by Turkey, Iraq and Syria in 1946 is one of the most important agreements of friendship and good neighborliness, as it was aimed at solving the water problem between these countries, and Protocol No, (1) on the regulation of the Tigris and Euphrates waters came in addition to Article V of the same protocol, which obliges Turkey in the event of its establishment of projects on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, to be in agreement with Iraq, but Turkey ignored the terms of the agreement as a result of its use of international river waters, as international agreements stipulate the following:

- 1- The use of the waters of international rivers must be in accordance with the principles of international law.
- 2- Not to deprive the State of Hungary and its mouth of the waters of international rivers.
- 3- Not to establish any water projects on the waters of international rivers except by joint agreement of the river basin countries.
- 4- An international river situated in the territory of a particular State is not absolutely subject to the sovereignty of that State.

### Third: Internal Instability in Iraq after 2003

The US occupation of Iraq was accompanied by the introduction of a new phase and its effects were dire, including the collapse of legal institutions and the lack of oversight, and Iraq became in front of a state of political and security instability and without them there is no economic stability, in addition to the decline in GDP as a result of the collapse of the economic sector (industrial, agricultural, service), as well as the low rate of internal investment, increased inflation rates and a decrease in foreign investment as a result of the deterioration of the security situation, which led to an increase in the unemployment rate, high poverty and the deterioration of the health and education sector, and it was opened Iraqi markets in front of foreign goods, as a result of the absence of tax policies and customs duties on imports, which led to the suspension of national factories because of their inability to compete with foreign goods, and this led to an increase in the imbalance in Iraqi trade and the superiority of imports over exports, so the majority of goods are imported from abroad except for crude oil<sup>46</sup>, This was done as a result of the promulgation of the Trade Liberalization Act No. 54 of 2004<sup>47</sup>, and that the occupying forces

played two different roles in Iraq, on the one hand they acted as allies of the Iraqi government in accordance with Security Council resolution 1546 of 2004<sup>48</sup>, and on the other hand they deal as an occupying power with the Iraqi forces in accordance with resolution 1483 of 2003<sup>49</sup>. Despite the existence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, Iraq's belief that it has sufficient water capabilities to achieve water security is incorrect, because the low level of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers proved the weakness of Iraq's water capabilities and that water security falls within the framework of regional conflicts such as Turkey and Iran, and this leads to dependency in all its forms and that the approval of Turkish and Iranian territorial water projects means approval of the threat to water security and threatens food security, and in return leads to increased dependence on the import of materials. food from neighboring countries, and in the event of achieving food security, the state is not subject to external pressures and takes its political and economic decisions absolutely freely<sup>50</sup>. Iraq suffers from internal challenges that threaten its economic growth, the most important of which is economic corruption and rentier economy due to its dependence on the source of oil by 90%, most of which are as a result of the occupation of Iraq by the United States of America, and the inability of successive Iraqi governments to address failures in the Iraqi economy, and the deterioration of infrastructure, which made Iraq to import goods from countries of the world in large proportions, and thus the Iraqi economy became dependent on the countries from which it imports goods and services, as well as terrorism had a significant impact on the economic and security conditions In Iraq, the control of terrorist groups (ISIS) over some areas of Iraq is a major challenge due to the destruction, displacement and smuggling it has left behind, which cost the Iraqi economy large sums of money to bear the consequences to this day<sup>51</sup>. It is necessary to follow the policy of economic diversification and reduce dependence on oil, and economic diversification is a goal sought by all countries, because it gives flexibility to the economy, provides new job opportunities, reduces the unemployment rate, and increases the country's GDP through the establishment of new projects<sup>52</sup>. There is no doubt that economic diversification depends on how to employ resources, which leads to the creation of a solid and broad economic basis through which the contribution rates for all sectors within the structure of the domestic product are raised<sup>53</sup>. From this standpoint, the (Iraqi Development Road) project put forward by Prime Minister (Muhammad Shia Al-Sudani), which is considered a geopolitical breakthrough to adapt to the developments of events, in light of regional and international tensions, is one of the important projects that increase Iraq's foreign partnerships, and with the completion of this project, Iraq becomes an important commercial center in the region as well as its openness to the wider world, heading towards Europe through Turkey.

#### Second Requirement: Objectives of Iraqi Positive Neutrality

Iraq has endeavoured to achieve an effective role in resolving regional crises, taking into account its internal interests and regional and international aspirations by attempting to achieve the following objectives:

First: Independence in external political performance and protection of national sovereignty

The philosophy of Iraqi foreign policy in the post-2003 phase is embodied in the principle of independence and adherence to real national interests, Iraq follows an independent foreign policy that moves away from external pressures that arise from the regional and international

environment and relate to the active forces in the region, so Iraqi foreign decisions are made based on strong principles and external political balance, Iraqi foreign policy works steadily, calmly, rationally, objectively and externally, as the rapid events in the region did not affect the stability of the orientation and the effective dynamic. For foreign policy, this has given Iraq regional acceptance and pushed it to deal with the countries of the world freely and with high transparency<sup>54</sup>, Iraqi foreign policy differs from the period before 2003, and the Iraqi foreign political behavior has become oriented towards the use of soft power means, to achieve the goals and higher interests of the state and the use of more rational means in foreign dealings and away from the language of the use or threat of force<sup>55</sup>, Iraq witnessed radical changes after 2003 in terms of the nature of foreign relations and the system of government<sup>56</sup>, and these political changes in Iraq led to the emergence of new concepts (democracy, consensus, quotas and political balance), which led to obstruct the process of democratic transition and the weakness of international institutions<sup>57</sup>, And that the commitment to United Nations resolutions and diplomatic openness led to the acquisition of regional and international legitimacy of the Iraqi political system after 2003, and work to strengthen foreign relations to achieve stability at home and create a positive environment<sup>58</sup>, The Iraqi government has been seeking since 2003 by intensifying the efforts of government institutions to build broad relations with the international community with the aim of restoring its regional and international standing<sup>59</sup>, Iraqi foreign policy seeks, through the principle of positive neutrality, to play an effective regional and international role without falling into the policy of There is no doubt that adopting the principle of positive neutrality means not taking sides with any of the parties, whether regional or international, and this means the establishment of a strong Iraqi state politically, economically, security and militarily capable of achieving a positive balance in the region, and Iraq is keen to resolve outstanding issues with neighboring countries and form diplomatic relations with the external environment<sup>60</sup>.

Second: Avoid engaging in regional alliances and stay away from conflicts and wars

Iraqi foreign policy began to work on an important idea is to try to avoid alliances, axes and blocs in the Middle East in general, as Iraq seeks today to achieve a leading role in the region without engaging in conflicts of interests of other countries, so Iraqi foreign policy was based on positive neutrality as a basis in its foreign dealings, especially in the Middle East, which is witnessing the escalation of tensions between different axes, these tensions negatively affect the interests of Iraq, whether internally or externally<sup>61</sup>, and including The Iraqi state seeks to pursue a policy of economic reform, and this reform is subject to regional and international support in the fields of investment, energy and infrastructure reform, trade deals with one country should not be at the expense of other countries, and give priority to neighboring countries, To increase trade exchanges among them, this does not mean not dealing with international parties, and the Iraqi government must build partnership and cooperation relations with external parties in a way that contributes to political stability and the creation of a safe investment environment taking into account the national interest, and not at the expense of other countries, especially Iraq's neighbors, for example, Turkish companies that have great capabilities and experience in the field of construction and energy, and this contributes to strengthening Iraq's relations with neighboring countries, enhances trust between them and encourages attraction Investment<sup>62</sup>,

On the other hand, Iraq suffered from the repercussions of reckless wars that brought it

nothing but destruction and ruin, and accordingly Iraqi foreign policy depends on the principle of peace and constructive diplomatic dialogue with the aim of resolving regional crises, and at present Iraqi foreign policy follows a set of interrelated trends that explain regional interactions, and seek through them to avoid engaging in extremist issues, favor diplomatic policies and moderation, and adopt non-confrontational behaviors, although the region is currently witnessing an escalation in conflicts and rivalries. Regional, but Iraq seeks to maintain its stability and not to be drawn into these conflicts<sup>63</sup>, It also seeks to follow independent paths in its external surroundings, which are characterized by many turmoil, and there are many pressures by some countries on neutral countries to align, as is the case with Saudi Arabia, where it pressures some countries to support its policy towards Yemen and Qatar, and in return, Iran pressured Iraq to support its policy towards Syria, and beyond any doubt that the principle of positive neutrality plays an effective role as a geostrategic barrier to repel external pressures or as a mediator to intervene positively to resolve differences as This is the case with Iraq's role as an important mediator in the Saudi-Iranian agreement<sup>64</sup>.

### Third: Achieving regional balance and enhancing the stability of the region

Iraq's foreign policy today revolves around the principle of strategic openness to regional powers, as Iraq seriously seeks to strengthen its positive relations and overcome previous differences, Iraq aims to build security and political cooperation with regional and Arab countries, and correct tense relations with them, and Iraq has witnessed an improvement in its relations with regional countries recently, including improving relations with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries in general<sup>65</sup>, Iraq can play the role of a balancer in the circle of discordant regional alliances, as it seeks to play the role of a bearer of the balance of regional powers, as Iraq adopts a policy of one distance with all the forces surrounding it, after the eruption of regional crises and the differences that arose from them, these crises began to lead the parties towards exploiting Iraq in their favor, as they realize that its position can change the balance of power in the region, as these parties began to seek to accommodate Iraq as a strategic party in the region, given that the imbalance in the balance Strategic powers in the region lead to major shifts in the shape of international and regional alliances and their parties, as all alliances in the region are based on two strategic goals: first, mutual security between allies and second, common interests in all their forms<sup>66</sup>, The strategic rebalancing in the Middle East is a positive step that greatly affects the interests of the active powers in the region, however, it seems that this issue of rebalancing requires a major role from Iraq due to its geostrategic position and the influence it possesses, and Iraqi foreign policy depends on the strategy of dual openness, as Iraq seeks to bring together the discordant views of both regional and international, and thus Iraq maintains strategic relations with both countries and works to calm political tensions. Between them<sup>67</sup>.

### Conclusion:

Based on the above, it can be said that the Iraqi foreign policy, through the principle of positive neutrality, is trying to achieve its external goals by rational means and quiet diplomatic discourse, and this principle has given Iraq a positive image in regional and international diplomacy, and Iraq's foreign policy at this stage aims to move from diplomatic reactions to planned actions and

pave the way for a greater role in regional balances, and Iraq seeks to avoid becoming an arena for regional conflicts and threats from neighboring countries, and to avoid interference in the internal affairs of countries. Iraq's foreign policy also emphasizes respect for national sovereignty

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