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Iraq

Iraq: A wind of anger blows

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Massive new mass mobilizations are shaking Iraq. The protesters are denouncing economic and social difficulties, corruption and the ruling bourgeois and confessional political parties.

The movement is mainly affecting Baghdad and the south of the country, while Iraqi Kurdistan and the Sunni-majority areas of the country, which have suffered great destruction during the multiple military conflicts since 2003 and the war against Islamic State in Mosul, are for the moment spared.

The overwhelming majority of protesters are denouncing the processes of Islamization and the confessionalization of social and political life, calling for civil status and inclusive citizenship. The famous slogan of revolutionary processes “the people want the fall of the regime” has also been heard on many demonstrations.

The protest movement also denounces the corruption, unemployment and decay of public services in a country chronically short of electricity and drinking water. These demands for social justice and economic redistribution in the face of destructive neoliberal policies cannot be dissociated from demands for the end of the confessional political system, which determines political representation based on community identities - religious, ethnic or confessional.

Protesters also denounced Iran's role in the country, chanting “Iran, Iran, Out, Out”. Indeed, Tehran has had a massive political influence in Iraq since the US occupation in 2003, through its support for Islamic fundamentalist Shiite movements and its armed militias. As a result of the protests in the country, Tehran has also deployed a surveillance system along its border with Iraq.

The Iraqi government responded to the violent mobilizations, killing more than 100 people and injuring more than 6,000 people between October 1 and 6, while accusing protesters of being “saboteurs” and “unidentified snipers”. At the same time, Baghdad announced on October 6 a series of social measures in response to protesters' demands, ranging from housing assistance to the allocation of payments to unemployed youth, as well as the construction of 100,000 dwellings.

Since 2015, Iraq has experienced repeated popular protests. This wind of protest shows the determination of broad sectors of Iraqi society, especially among the youth, in demanding radical change.

PS:

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