



The end of the 'No to the war' conflict?

The author analyzes the progress of the conflict started by George W. Bush in Iraq on March 3, 2003, and leaves a number of questions about the country's future unsolved.

More than seven years ago (20-3-2003) George W. Bush along with Tony Blair, with the moral and military support of José María Aznar, started the war in Iraq. And Barack Obama, his successor in office, has been the one to end conflict that already seemed endless, both for soldiers and their families (over 4,000 soldiers killed in more than seven years of intervention) as well as the coffers of the American state (which according to the newspaper 'Los Angeles Times, are now 809.1 billion).

Operation Iraqi Freedom, as was described by the U.S. Army, and which the UN and countries like France and Germany as well as political figures such as the current Spanish Prime Minister, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero were against, was based on the presumption that the Asian country, then ruled by Saddam Hussein, owned a large arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. Supposedly, these weapons would be made available to Al Qaeda to repeat the attacks of September 11, 2001 in the nerve center of the world's first power.

The reports submitted by U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, among others, to justify the war even showed pictures of suspected storage facilities, although shortly after, the truth appeared as well as disinformation that refuted the data previously used to mislead and get half of the world on the warpath.

Furthermore, the 'neocons' considered Saddam Hussein a threat to the international community and an ally of Al Qaeda, and therefore a price was put on his head and his persecution began. He was found in December 2003 and executed three years later by his country's own government, accused of killing 148 Shiites and Kurds in 1982.

In this sense, we must not forget that it was these same people, representatives of the most extreme right in the U.S., who created the 'monster' (who would later become the exterminator of Shiites and Kurds) in order to prevent Ayatollah Khomeini's rise of power in Iran (1979). They provided the weapons necessary to wage and win the war against the neighboring country that despite everything politically resisted the Iraqi-American attack and moved forward with its revolutionary process.

After the January 2005 elections, the formation of a National Assembly, in charge of drafting and enacting the Iraqi Constitution on October 15, 2005, was approved. Months later, in June 2006, Nuri al-Maliki (a moderate Shiite) became Prime Minister of Iraq, while across the country, a wave of bombings that would end up being classified as Civil War was unleashed; it seemed that the conflict was a fight between two major clans of the Muslim world: the Shiite and Sunni.





The years since have only provided catastrophic data. The number of dead, wounded, and refugees has been increasing. According to the Californian newspaper 'Los Angeles Times', there has been a total of 112,625 Iraqi civilians who died over these past seven years. If we add the data from the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the United Nations, which estimated by 4.7 million the total number of refugees - a figure equivalent to 16% of the population of Iraq - one can conclude that Operation Iraqi Freedom, apart from the complete destruction of infrastructure and the high economic cost for the country, has proved to be a major disaster in humanitarian terms.

With this outcome, it is not surprising that President Obama has happily announced return home for U.S. troops, and that the end of the Iraq War is already a fact, although he committed himself to working to maintain stability in the country with 50,000 officers who will be in charge of supporting the Iraqi army and fighting against the terrorism that still causes death and pain.

But now that the conflict is coming to an end, can we say that we have achieved the objectives sought after? Has the illegal war sponsored by George W. Bush, Tony Blair and Jose María Aznar made the world, or even Iraq, a safer place? Has so much destruction been worth it?

It seems clear that it has not. The only positive lesson that can be drawn from this is that Iraq is now a country that is no longer ruled by a bloodthirsty dictator such as Saddam Hussein. But I do not think, not in the slightest, that is enough reason for the disaster that has been caused. Societies must be, mainly, the ones to struggle to overthrow their governments. Otherwise, we could be failing into what International Law defines as interference in internal affairs.

Now all that is left is to hope that the U.S. withdrawal does not trigger a fierce struggle for power, the Iraqi Army and security forces become strong in order to counteract terrorism and, furthermore, that the term 'New Dawn', chosen to name the new phase in the U.S. Operation, is adequate to describe the new situation in the country.

