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SUBJECT: COM SEC GEN BLAMES SHAHRISTANI FOR HYDROCARBON
LEGISLATION MISHAP

¶1. (C) On August 7, EMIN made an introductory call on Council of Ministers (CoM) Secretary-General Ali al Alaq. Al Alaq recounted the chain of events that led to the confused July 3 initial introduction of the Framework Hydrocarbon law to the Council of Representatives (CoR). According to al Alaq, following review by the Shura Council, the text of the legislation was to be finalized by a group of three comprised of Oil Minister Hussein Shahrستاني, Oil Adviser Thamer Ghadban, and DPM Barham Salih. The law that was forwarded to the CoR on July 3, claimed al Alaq, was sent unilaterally by Shahrستاني, much to the chagrin of DPM Salih.

¶2. (C) On the Revenue Management law, al Alaq explained that the Shura Council had already reviewed the legislation (though the Shura Council complained that sufficient time for a thorough review was not provided). A lack of political will in the CoM notwithstanding, a vote on the Shura-reviewed text by the CoM is the only step remaining before the law may be transmitted to the CoR. Al Alaq clarified that, should there be changes agreed as part of the upcoming "leaders" meetings, a new version of the Framework Hydrocarbon law could be approved by the CoM and submitted anew to the CoR, perhaps in association with adoption of the Revenue Management law (That is, if the CoM agrees upon any changes to the July 3 Framework Hydrocarbon law text, it would not need re-referral to the Shura Council and the CoR can take it up in substitution for the July 3 text).