



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

# JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

JIM SAXTON, CHAIRMAN

CHRISTOPHER FRENZE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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## PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Daniel Guido  
(202) 224-0379

### IMF PLANS FOR NORMAL RELATIONS WITH IRAQ UNEXPLAINED — USE OF U.S. TAXPAYER MONEY FOR IMF IRAQ MISSION OPPOSED —

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Plans by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to normalize relations with Iraq still have not been explained by either the IMF or the U.S. Treasury Department, **Joint Economic Committee (JEC) Chairman Jim Saxton (R-N.J.)** said today.

IMF plans to normalize relations with Iraq were first disclosed in a recent interview given by a high IMF official to an Arabic newspaper in London, and have since been corroborated by two international news agencies. The IMF official also noted that an IMF mission to Iraq has been scheduled for February and that the IMF will consider an Iraqi request for technical assistance.

“The use of U.S. tax dollars to fund IMF plans to normalize relations with Iraq or provide any form of assistance to that country is totally unacceptable,” Saxton said. “With the U.S. on the brink of conflict with Iraq, an IMF effort that contradicts and undermines U.S. Iraq policy is mind-boggling. The United States is by far the largest donor to the IMF.

“By now the U.S. Treasury Department must be aware of the IMF initiative to Iraq. The Treasury should now publicly explain its role in this IMF decision and what action it has taken to date to stop the IMF overture to Iraq. This episode only reinforces the impression that U.S. policy on Iraq is inconsistent, if not contradictory.

“The IMF also should explain its position on Iraq by releasing the minutes of any Executive Board meetings in which the Iraq initiative was discussed, along with IMF documents related to this ill-conceived effort,” Saxton said. “IMF transparency requires that policy decisions of this kind be subjected to independent scrutiny. Needless to say, the IMF’s new Iraq policy is not going to stand up to such scrutiny very well.”

For more information on the IMF’s decision to normalize its relations with Iraq, visit the JEC website at [www.house.gov/jec/](http://www.house.gov/jec/).

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