

Iraqi parliament approves new government

Iraq's parliament has approved a new government headed by Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, ending nine months of deadlock after inconclusive elections. Lawmakers approved a total of 29 ministers – the remainder of the 42-member cabinet will initially be made up of acting ministers

■ Power-sharing deal on Nov 10 returned Shia **Nuri al-Maliki** (1) as prime minister, Kurd **Jalal Talabani** (2) as president and made Sunni **Osama al-Nujaifi** (3) speaker of parliament



■ **Iyad Allawi**

Head of National Strategic Policy Council

Former Premier (2004-05), and secular Shia whose

cross-sectarian coalition won most seats in March 7 vote, Allawi is to head new council with decision-making powers equal to those of prime minister

■ **Hoshyar Zebari**

Foreign Minister

Appointed foreign minister shortly after 2003 U.S.-led invasion, Kurd Zebari is regarded

as well-versed diplomat who relishes his international status

■ **Hussain Al Shahrastani**

Deputy Prime Minister for Energy

Shia architect of ambitious plans to turn Iraq into top

global oil producer, Shahrastani's reappointment is key to assure investors Iraq will honour deals to develop its vast reserves

■ **Abdul Kareem Luaibi**

Oil Minister

Has good relations with international oil companies. Led talks in two bidding rounds

for Iraq's oilfields and signed many contracts with global majors

■ Sunni deputy prime minister in outgoing government, **Rafi al-Issawi**, becomes finance minister