

***Public Policy Discussion and Luncheon***

**THE MOST DISPUTED AREA OF IRAQ: U.S. OBJECTIVES IN KIRKUK**

with

**Thomas K. Yazdgerdi**

Principal Officer, U.S. Diplomatic Presence Office Kirkuk

Thursday, December 22, 2011 | 12:00-1:45 pm

Rivers Club | 301 Grant Street | Pittsburgh

This event is free of charge.

This event is by invitation only.

**Register Now!**

Email [caitlin@worldpittsburgh.org](mailto:caitlin@worldpittsburgh.org) or call 412-281-1259

Please advise in advance of any dietary restrictions.



This past October, President Barack Obama announced the withdrawal of all U.S. combat troops from Iraq by December 31, 2011. While some rejoiced at the news, many residents in Kirkuk greeted the announcement with trepidation. Kirkuk, home to significant oil reserves, is a divided city and province that is disputed among its Kurdish, Arab and Turkmen inhabitants. Terrorists have sought to exploit divisions among these communities, and the lack of a unified security force has led to instability.

For many, solving the divisions in Kirkuk are intrinsic to Iraq's security. As the U.S. troops begin to withdraw, what are the United States' objectives in Kirkuk? How can the U.S. help support stability in the region, and in Iraq as a whole?

**Thomas K. Yazdgerdi** entered the U.S. Foreign Service in 1991 and is currently Principal Officer of the U.S. Diplomatic Presence Office in Kirkuk, Iraq. Previously, he served as Deputy Political Counselor for Iran Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. He also served as Deputy Chief of Mission and Political-Economic Chief at the U.S. Embassy in Pristina, Kosovo in the run-up to and aftermath of Kosovo independence. His other assignments include Panama, Bratislava, Tirana, and Athens, as well as positions in the European Bureau (Czech Desk) and the Political-Military Affairs (PM) Bureau at the State Department, and as Senior Balkans Program Officer with the National Democratic Institute in Washington.

Before joining the Foreign Service, Mr. Yazdgerdi worked as Legislative Assistant for Foreign Affairs and Defense issues to Congressman William O. Lipinski (D-IL).