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Isam Abd al-Rahim al-SHALABI  
(Phonetic: CHAlabee)

IRAQ

Minister of Oil  
(since March 1987)

Technical competence, coupled with Iraq's need for increased oil revenue to finance its war with Iran, has allowed Isam Abd al-Rahim al-Shalabi to quickly advance through the ranks to head Iraq's state controlled petroleum sector. As Oil Minister, he has spearheaded Baghdad's efforts to increase commercial ties to the world's oil consumers. He has overseen the recent completion of a second Iraqi pipeline across Turkey, allowing Iraq to better compensate for its inability to export its oil through the volatile Persian Gulf. Shalabi also represents Iraq at OPEC meetings. (U)

Shalabi, born in 1942, received his early education at a Jesuit school in Baghdad. He later earned an M.A. in engineering in Great Britain and then worked as an engineer in the Iraq National Oil Company. He was appointed Chairman of the General Organization for Oil Projects in 1975 and, in 1981, Shalabi became Deputy Chairman of the Iraqi National Oil Company. He went on to become the company's president and, from July 1983 until his appointment as Oil Minister, concurrently served as the Ministry's under secretary. Shalabi speaks fluent English. (U)

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