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<http://news.antiwar.com/2014/01/09/three-way-fight-sunni-tribes-gain-ground-against-govt-al-qaeda-in-fallujah-ramadi/print/>

## Three-Way Fight: Sunni Tribes Gain Ground Against Govt, al-Qaeda in Fallujah, Ramadi

By Jason Ditz

January 9, 2014

The Iraqi military has reiterated yesterday's comments that the planned conquest of the city of Fallujah is "on hold" over concerns of civilian casualties, but al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) seems to be losing territory anyhow.



That's because following yesterday's warnings by the local Sunni tribal leaders, the tribal militias have begun fighting AQI in earnest, having retaken parts of Fallujah and a solid chunk of what AQI held of Ramadi.

That may not necessarily be good news for the Maliki government, however, as while they've been pushing the locals to rise up against AQI, the tribal leaders have made clear they're also willing to fight off any attempts by the military to retake the city.

If AQI is removed from the situation, it's going to make the growing unrest in Anbar more apparent, and the Maliki government's crackdowns will be even harder to justify without them.