“The Iraq War and the Rise of ISIS” is an insider’s view of the Iraq War from a seasoned military veteran who served 28 months in country as a brigade commander in Baghdad in 2003-2004 and as executive officer to General David Petraeus, commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, during the surge of U.S. forces in 2007-2008. After exploring the dynamics of the war during its first three years, Mansoor will discuss the design and execution of the surge, a new concept that turned around a flagging war effort and reduced ethno-sectarian violence in Iraq by more than 90 percent. He concludes by analyzing why the surge failed to have lasting strategic effects, a failure that resulted in a resumption of ethno-sectarian conflict in Iraq and the rise of the Islamic State.

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