

Tony Blair: Iraq war contributed to rise of Islamic State

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London: Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair says the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq was partly responsible for the emergence of the Islamic State militant group in the Middle East.

Blair told CNN that "there are elements of truth" in the assertion that the war caused the rise of IS.

He said that "of course you can't say those of us who removed Saddam in 2003 bear no responsibility for the situation in 2015" — though he said the Arab Spring had also played a role.

Blair's decision to take Britain into the Iraq war — based on false claims about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction — remains hugely divisive.

Blair insisted that removing Saddam was the right thing to do, but apologized in Sunday's interview for mistakes in post-war planning.

- AP