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IRAQ 3

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

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Subject: Council conclusions on Iraq

Delegations will find in the Annex the Council conclusions on Iraq, adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 15 July 2019.

Council conclusions on Iraq

1. The EU recalls its January 2018 Council Conclusions endorsing the EU Strategy for Iraq. The EU reiterates its steadfast support for Iraq's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the importance of Iraqi ownership of the country's internal political and reform processes. It underlines its continued commitment to the preservation of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of Iraqi society. The EU also reaffirms its strong support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as for UNAMI's work.
2. The federal elections held in May 2018 reaffirm Iraq's commitment to democracy. The EU welcomes the formation of a Federal Government, including the recent ministerial appointments. It is now crucial that all political players and institutions in Iraq work together to address the country's urgent needs, especially in relation to the provision of security, basic services and sustainable jobs for all Iraqis across the country. These steps, together with continued efforts towards national and local reconciliation and the voluntary, dignified, safe and non-discriminatory return of internally displaced persons, are essential to restore trust between the Iraqi people and their political institutions.
3. Strong Iraqi ownership of reforms and of the reconstruction process is necessary. On that basis, the EU reaffirms its readiness to support the Government of Iraq in the implementation of its programme of political, social, economic and security sector reforms, with a special focus on:
 - a. Strengthening democratic and inclusive governance, fighting corruption, building institutional capacity, improving public services and the effective delivery of basic services, especially water and electricity;

- b. Improving the business environment, and creating the basis for a more sustainable, diversified, and green Iraqi economy in line with the commitments made at the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq in February 2018. The EU calls for the international partners to deliver on the pledges they made in Kuwait in a timely fashion. Economic and financial reforms are necessary to attract further investments and support;
 - c. Civilian security sector reform, upholding rule of law and ensuring effective control of the Iraqi state over all armed groups and full respect of human rights, is crucial for the future stability of Iraq. The EU and its Member States will maintain their efforts, including in the framework of the Global Coalition against Da'esh, to support the Iraqi authorities in addressing the continued Da'esh terrorist threat, strengthening the justice sector and reforming the police. The EU will also continue to provide support to Iraq on civilian security sector reform through the EU Advisory Mission (EUAM Iraq).
4. In all processes, inclusive citizenship, respect for human rights and gender equality need to be promoted. The full participation of women, youth, civil society and all components of Iraqi society, including ethnic and religious minorities, as well as the full protection of children's rights, need to be ensured at the national, regional and local level.
5. The EU notes with satisfaction the election of the President and the formation of the Kurdistan Regional Government after the holding of regional elections in September 2018. The EU welcomes the improved relations between the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and encourages both parties to maintain the dialogue based on the Constitution of Iraq. Joint work to improve governance and security coordination in the "disputed territories" is especially needed.
6. The EU is focused on the implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq (PCA), including enhanced political cooperation, and on the continued implementation of the EU Strategy for Iraq of January 2018. This EU-Iraq partnership has been underpinned by EU financial support in excess of EUR 1.2 billion since 2014 from the EU institutions alone.

7. The EU welcomes the recent dialogue on migration based on Article 105 of the PCA and stresses the importance of working with the Iraqi authorities on strengthening cooperation and putting into practice their obligation on the return and readmission of own nationals in full respect of the rights, obligations and responsibilities of the parties arising from relevant International Law.
8. The EU fully supports the work being carried out by the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), and cooperation with the Iraqi authorities on the collection and analysis of evidence in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2379. The EU reaffirms its principled objection to the use of the death penalty. Progress in accountability with due process and respect for human rights for persons who have committed crimes in Iraq, including Foreign Terrorist Fighters, is a priority for the EU.
9. In view of the current tensions in the region, the EU underlines the importance for all countries in the region, and all international actors engaged in the region, to fully respect Iraq's sovereignty and its policy of constructive engagement with its neighbours. The EU expressly welcomes the Presidency and Government of Iraq's consistent pursuit of a balanced policy in the region, including its recent outreach efforts.

