

23. The situation concerning Iraq

During the period under review, the Council held four meetings in relation to the item entitled “The situation concerning Iraq”. On 30 May 2023, the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 May 2024, through the unanimous adoption of resolution [2682 \(2023\)](#).⁸⁰⁷ All other meetings under this item during the period under review took the form of briefings.⁸⁰⁸ More information on these meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the table below. In addition to the meetings, Council members held closed informal consultations of the whole to discuss this item.⁸⁰⁹

In 2023, the Council heard regular briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI on the situation concerning Iraq. In her briefings further to the regular reports of the Secretary-General,⁸¹⁰ she discussed political progresses in Iraq, especially the developments around the new government and leadership, the human rights situation in the country, developments in the Kurdistan region, in particular, the repeated delays of the region’s parliamentary elections, the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals, and missing Kuwaiti property.

On 2 February, the Special Representative focused her briefing on the activities of the new President and new Government of Iraq, under the leadership of Prime Minister Mohammed Shia’ al-Sudani, in its first three months in office, including on public service delivery and economic and fiscal reforms.⁸¹¹ She stressed the importance of protecting and promoting human rights, including accountability for human rights violations and abuses. On the relations between Baghdad and Erbil, she informed that the dynamics between the federal authorities and the Kurdistan Regional Governments had been generally positive, yet a structured dialogue was still missing. Concerning the Kurdistan region, she expressed regret that divisions among the ruling

⁸⁰⁷ For more information on the mandate of UNAMI, part X, sect. II.

⁸⁰⁸ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. I.

⁸⁰⁹ See [A/78/2](#), Part II, chap. 28.

⁸¹⁰ See [S/2023/51](#), [S/2023/341](#), [S/2023/698](#). See also [S/2023/58](#), [S/2023/340](#), [S/2023/700](#). Pursuant to para. 5 of resolution [2631 \(2022\)](#), the frequency of the Secretary-General’s report to the Council on the progress made towards the fulfilment of all UNAMI responsibilities changed from quarterly to every four months.

⁸¹¹ [S/PV.9253](#).

parties in the region continued to have adverse effects on the institutions and its people. On Iraq's external relations, she was pleased to report that the Government had continued its policy of openness and balance based on mutual interests and on respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and good neighborliness. She noted, nonetheless, that Iraq continued to face repeated and destabilizing violations of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Regarding the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, she welcomed steps taken by the Government of Iraq to encourage more witnesses to come forward and the continuing cooperation of members of the Tripartite Committee on the provision of satellite imagery.

Following her briefing, the Council also heard a briefing by the Director of Donor and International Relations at the Iraqi Health and Social Care Organization on the issue of explosive-ordnance contamination in Iraq. He emphasized that Iraq remained one of the most contaminated countries in the world and asserted that donors had prioritized clearance and risk education over victim assistance. He urged the Government of Iraq and donors to fund and deal directly with national NGOs on mine action, with more efforts towards localization.

On 18 May, the Special Representative indicated that, following the confirmation of the Iraqi Government in October 2022, the Government had shown its resolve to tackle a number of pressing issues, and emphasized that the resources needed to turn certain government goals into realities, such as adequate public service delivery, had to be unlocked with the passage of a federal budget.⁸¹² Meanwhile, she added, Iraq continued to rely on oil and the public sector remained the biggest employer. In that regard, she indicated that economic diversification and major structural reforms remained urgent. She acknowledged the efforts of the Government to push Iraq closer to a state of energy independence. Concerning Kurdistan, she reported that disagreements between the two ruling parties in recent months had driven the region close to the brink and called on the parties to step up, bridge differences and work in the interests of all peoples. She noted that the region's parliamentary elections, which were long overdue, had been scheduled for 18 November. Concerning the relations between Baghdad and Erbil, she indicated that the dynamics were good but complicated, and informed that Baghdad and Erbil had

⁸¹² [S/PV.9324](#).

announced a temporary agreement to enable the resumption of oil exports through the Turkish port of Ceyhan while exports through Türkiye had not yet been resumed. Turning to Sinjar, she expressed disappointment at the little to no progress made in the implementation of the 2020 Sinjar Agreement and indicated that a recent rise in tensions between communities in Sinjar was in large part further fueled by online disinformation targeting the Yazidi community. Concerning the issue of returnees from north-east Syrian Arab Republic and other internally displaced persons, she noted that Iraq's commitment to ensuring the return of its citizens continued to serve as an example. On the issue of water scarcity, the Special Representative underlined that it represented the most critical climate emergency for Iraq and noted that it was estimated that by 2035, Iraq would have the capacity to meet only 15 per cent of its water demands, which had become a significant multiplier of the threats to Iraq's stability. She welcomed the priority the Government had placed on the issue of water security. She emphasized the importance of the Government's efforts to scale up diplomacy with and among its neighbors in a number of areas, from border security and trade to water-sharing and climate issues while underlining that regional stability would also hinge on respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and good-neighborliness. On the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals, she welcomed the Prime Minister's decision to establish a committee of members of security agencies mandated to support activities in that regard.

Following her briefing, the Council also heard a briefing by the Founder and Director of Asuda for Combating Violence Against Women, who said that the situation in Iraq was characterized by widespread violence against women in all fields, including the targeting of women human rights defenders and underlined that the space for women to fully and freely exercise their rights was highly restricted. She further noted that a sharp increase in gender-based violence was occurring against a backdrop of impunity for perpetrators and lack of access to services, legal protection and justice for survivors of gender-based violence. She urged the Council to call on the Iraqi Government to take all necessary measures to protect girls and women from all forms of gender-based violence, to support access to justice for survivors, and to also call on the Iraqi Government to provide survivors with robust access to shelters and to implement the Yazidi female survivor law and allocate a budget for it. She further called on the Council to pressure the Iraqi Government to establish a national mechanism for women and to

allocate a budget that could adequately implement the second national action plan for the implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). She further emphasized that as the mandate for UNAMI was renewed, it was essential to strengthen its role in advancing issues related to the women and peace and security agenda and called on the Council to be explicit in requesting the Mission to support women's participation and to monitor and report any violations against women human rights defenders or other women leaders. She also called on the Council to urge the Special Representative to provide detailed analyses on women and peace and security in her briefings and reports to the Council.

On 30 May, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2682 \(2023\)](#) extending the mandate of UNAMI until 31 May 2024.⁸¹³ In the resolution, the Council welcomed the confirmation of Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani's government by the Council of Representatives and, encouraged the recently formed government to deliver on reforms, aimed at meeting the Iraqi people's legitimate aspirations, to address corruption, respect and protect the human rights of all individuals in Iraq, promote accountability for human rights violations and abuses, deliver essential services, diversify the economy, create jobs, improve governance, combat climate change and environmental and water-related challenges, and strengthen viable and responsive state institutions, including the security sector.⁸¹⁴ The Council also recognized the progress made by the Government of Iraq in implementing the Yazidi Survivors Law, noted that the lack of inclusion of children born of conflict-related sexual violence needed to be addressed, and called on the Government of Iraq to hold perpetrators of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence accountable and provide mental health and psychosocial support to all survivors and victims.⁸¹⁵ The Council further welcomed the efforts by the Government to adapt to or mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and ecological change.⁸¹⁶ The Council further reiterated the tasks of UNAMI with several additions by requesting the Secretary-General to provide the Council, no later than 31 March 2024, with an independent strategic review of UNAMI, in consultation with the Government of Iraq, in addition to UN agencies, member States, regional organizations, independent experts and civil society, and the

⁸¹³ Resolution [2682 \(2023\)](#), para. 1

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*, fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs.

⁸¹⁵ *Ibid.*, eighth preambular paragraph.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid.*, ninth preambular paragraph.

Government of Kuwait, consistent with paragraph 4 of resolution [2107 \(2013\)](#), assessing current threats to Iraq's peace and security, the continued relevance of UNAMI's tasks and priorities, and providing recommendations to optimize UNAMI's mandate, mission structure and staffing to support the Government of Iraq in addressing the challenges of peace and security; and further assessing the options to support the Government of Iraq in strengthening effective regional cooperation on a variety of issues.⁸¹⁷

During her briefing to the Council on 10 October, the Special Representative reported that, under the leadership of the new government, several important steps and promising initiatives had emerged, including reforms in the banking and finance sectors, a new law on social security, a road project for regional infrastructure, measures to shore up energy independence and a new national strategy for the prevention of narcotics and psychotropic substances to address the issue of rapid drug proliferation.⁸¹⁸ While expressing the hope that Iraq would be well-positioned to seize the opportunities in front of it, she also noted the need to combat pervasive corruption, diversify the economic structure, and mitigate the effects of climate change, the feelings of exclusion, marginalization and stigmatization among the population and influence of non-state armed actors in certain areas. On regional stability, she commended the Government of Iraq for proactively engaging with countries in the region on issues related to energy, water, economic cooperation and security. She cautioned that the developments in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory could impact the entire region. Turning to the Kurdistan region, she reported that the Council of Ministers of Iraq had recently agreed to provide loans to pay for the salaries of the public servants in the Kurdistan Regional Government for the next three months. Meanwhile, she regretted that the Kurdistan region's parliamentary elections had been further postponed to February 2024. She also expressed disappointment that there continued to be no progress in implementing the Sinjar Agreement. Regarding the issue of Al-Hol returnees, the briefer reported that a further 173 households had returned to Iraq in the past month and commended Iraq for continuing to serve as an example on this matter. On the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, she noted the need for regular exchange of genetic data and swift and decisive action to retrieve Kuwaiti property,

⁸¹⁷ Ibid., para. 3 (a) and (b). For more information on the mandate of UNAMI, see part X, sec. II.

⁸¹⁸ See [S/PV.9432](#).

including the national archives. Finally, she called on all actors to play their part in maintaining stability in the run-up to the upcoming provincial council elections in December, including making efforts to counter misinformation and disinformation.

The Country Manager of the Iraq Foundation, a civil society briefer, focused her statement on the efforts that civil society organizations had made to support the political participation of women. Noting that the past two decades had witnessed remarkable progress in the political participation of women in Iraq and the number of women's organizations, networks and movements has increased, as reflected in the strength of their influence in local, national and international policies, the briefer also regretted that gender-based discrimination against women by men remained an obstacle to women's formal participation in decision-making and resource management. She called on the international community to provide full support for projects and programmes promoting women's rights and participation in the political arena and on the Iraqi government to complete relevant plans and policies, including the National Strategy for Iraqi Women 2023-2030.

Following briefings, Council members welcomed the commitment by the new Government of Iraq to implement reforms and deliver essential services⁸¹⁹ and called for normalization of relations between Baghdad and Erbil.⁸²⁰ Council members also welcomed initiatives to combat effects of climate change⁸²¹ and commended Iraq for its role as a regional

⁸¹⁹ See [S/PV.9253](#) (United States, United Arab Emirates, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana) (p. 9), Russian Federation, Switzerland, China, United Kingdom, France, Brazil, Albania, Japan, Malta); [S/PV.9324](#) (United States, France, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Malta, Albania, United Arab Emirates, Japan, Ecuador, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Switzerland); [S/PV.9432](#) (United States, France, Malta, Ecuador, United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, China, Japan, Albania, Ghana (also on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique), United Kingdom, Russian Federation).

⁸²⁰ See [S/PV.9253](#) (United States, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Brazil, France, Albania, Malta); [S/PV.9324](#) (France, China, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Malta, Albania, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Russian Federation); [S/PV.9432](#), United States, Malta, United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, China, Ghana (also on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique), United Kingdom, Russian Federation).

⁸²¹ See [S/PV.9253](#) (United States, United Arab Emirates, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Switzerland, United Kingdom, France, Albania, Japan, Malta); [S/PV.9324](#) (United States, France, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Malta, Albania, United Arab Emirates, Japan, Ecuador, United Kingdom, Switzerland); [S/PV.9432](#) (United States, France, Malta, United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, Albania, Ghana (also on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique), United Kingdom, Brazil).

actor⁸²² while also expressing support for Iraqi sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.⁸²³ Some Council members also emphasized the need for the adoption of a federal budget.⁸²⁴ Many called for the implementation of the Yazidi female survivors law⁸²⁵ and the Sinjar Agreement.⁸²⁶ Numerous Council members emphasized the need to counter the threat of ISIL (Dae'sh) and dismantle its networks for recruitment and radicalization, including through the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL and UNAMI.⁸²⁷

During his interventions in Council meetings, the representative of Iraq shared with Council Members, among other things, important developments in his country during the reporting cycles, including, inter alia, relations between Baghdad and Erbil, the security situation, in particular, its counter-terrorism dimension, support for displaced persons and Yazidi survivors, the human rights situation including the empowerment of women, and relations with its neighbors, especially with Kuwait.⁸²⁸ He re-iterated his country's call for respect for its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and underscored the importance of upholding the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, especially sovereign equality and the principles of good-neighbourliness.⁸²⁹ He also recognized that combatting climate change and

⁸²² See [S/PV.9253](#) (United Arab Emirates, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Ecuador, Russian Federation, Switzerland, France, Japan); [S/PV.9324](#), France, China, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Malta, Albania, United Arab Emirates, Japan, Russian Federation, United Kingdom); [S/PV.9432](#) (United States, France, Malta, United Arab Emirates, Japan, Ghana (also on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique), Russian Federation, Brazil).

⁸²³ See [S/PV.9253](#) (United Arab Emirates, Russian Federation, Switzerland, China, United Kingdom, France, Brazil, Albania, Japan, Malta); [S/PV.9324](#) (United States, France, China, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Malta, Albania, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Japan, Ecuador, Russian Federation, Switzerland); [S/PV.9432](#) (France, Malta, Switzerland, China, Japan, Albania, Ghana (also on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique), Russian Federation).

⁸²⁴ See [S/PV.9253](#) (United States, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Albania, Malta); [S/PV.9324](#) (France, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Malta, Albania, United Kingdom); [S/PV.9432](#) (China, United Kingdom, Brazil).

⁸²⁵ See [S/PV.9253](#) (Ecuador, Malta); [S/PV.9324](#) (United States, Malta, Albania, United Kingdom, Switzerland); [S/PV.9432](#) (United States, Malta, Albania).

⁸²⁶ See [S/PV.9253](#) (United States); [S/PV.9324](#) (United States). [S/PV.9432](#) (United States).

⁸²⁷ See [S/PV.9253](#) (United States, United Arab Emirates, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Ecuador, Russian Federation, China, France, Brazil, Albania, Malta); [S/PV.9324](#) (United States, France, China, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Malta, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Ecuador, Russian Federation); [S/PV.9432](#) (United States, France, Ecuador, United Arab Emirates, China, Ghana (also on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique), Russian Federation, Brazil).

⁸²⁸ See [S/PV.9253](#).

⁸²⁹ See [S/PV.9324](#).

water scarcity was one of the Government’s top priorities.⁸³⁰ Increased frequency of climate-related crises, the representative added, constituted a serious threat multiplier and concurred with the arguments by Gabon, Ghana and Mozambique in favor of raising the Council’s profile on climate, peace and security. In that context, he welcomed assistance from UNAMI to the government on climate change, which remained essential to Iraq’s quest for sustainable solutions.

In addition, developments in 2023 relating to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh /Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant established pursuant to resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#) were dealt with under the item entitled “Threats to international peace and security”.⁸³¹

Meetings: The situation concerning Iraq, 2023

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.9253 2 February 2023	Thirty-sixth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2023/51) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2631 (2022) (S/2023/58)		Iraq	Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Director of Donor and International Relations at the Iraqi Health and Social Care Organization	13 Council members, ^a all invitees ^b	

⁸³⁰ See [S/PV.9432](#).

⁸³¹ For further details, see part I, sect. 36 and part IX, sect. III.

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.9324 18 May 2023	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2631 (2022) (S/2023/340) Thirty-seventh report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2023/341)		Iraq	Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Founder and Director of Asuda for Combating Violence Against Women	13 Council members, ^a all invitees	
S/PV.9331 30 May 2023	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2631 (2022) (S/2023/340) Thirty-seventh report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2023/341)	Draft resolution submitted by the United States (S/2023/378)				Resolution 2682 (2023) 15-0-0
S/PV.9432 10 October 2023	Thirty-eighth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2023/698) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2682 (2023) (S/2023/700)		Iraq	Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Country Manager of Iraq Foundation	13 Council members, ^c all invitees ^d	

^a Albania, Brazil, China, Ecuador, France, Japan, Mozambique (also on behalf of Gabon and Ghana), Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States.

^b The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNAMI and the Director of Donor and International Relations of Iraqi Health and Social Care Organization participated in the meeting by videoconference.

^c Albania, Brazil, China, Ecuador, France, Ghana (also on behalf of Gabon and Mozambique), Japan, Russian Federation, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States.

^d The Country Manager of Iraq Foundation participated in the meeting by videoconference.