



# Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

**8571**<sup>st</sup> meeting

Thursday, 11 July 2019, 10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Meza-Cuadra . . . . . (Peru)

*Members:*

Belgium . . . . .	Ms. Boels
China . . . . .	Mr. Yao Shaojun
Côte d'Ivoire . . . . .	Mr. Adom
Dominican Republic . . . . .	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea . . . . .	Mr. Esono Mbengono
France . . . . .	Mrs. Gueguen
Germany . . . . .	Mr. Licharz
Indonesia . . . . .	Mr. Syihab
Kuwait . . . . .	Mr. Alotaibi
Poland . . . . .	Mr. Lewicki
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Safronkov
South Africa . . . . .	Ms. Goolab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Clay
United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Cohen

## Agenda

Security Council mission

Briefing by Security Council mission to Iraq and Kuwait (27 to 30 June 2019)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Security Council mission**

#### **Briefing by Security Council mission to Iraq and Kuwait (27 to 30 June 2019)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by the co-leads of the Security Council mission to Iraq and Kuwait from 27 to 30 June 2019, namely, Kuwait and the United States.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Alotaibi.

**Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for holding this meeting on the visit to Iraq and Kuwait.

*(spoke in English)*

On 28 and 29 June, the members of the Security Council visited the State of Kuwait and, for the first time, the Republic of Iraq, in a mission co-led by the State of Kuwait and the United States of America. The purpose of the visit was, first, to demonstrate the Security Council's support for Iraq's post-conflict recovery and reconstruction and for the sovereignty, unity, security and territorial integrity of Iraq; secondly, to observe and support the efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) aimed at implementing its mandate, in line with resolutions 2470 (2019) and 2107 (2013) and other related Security Council resolutions; thirdly, to observe and support the efforts of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, established under resolution 2379 (2017); fourthly, to recognize the challenges Iraq faces in its transition into a post-conflict environment to include addressing the humanitarian situation, the need for economic reform and attracting inward investment, and to better understand the aspirations and concerns of the Iraqi people as they begin the process of stabilizing and rebuilding their country; and fifthly, to address

Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and the return of Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, in line with a solution 2107 (2013).

The visit was conducted over two days in Kuwait City and Baghdad. On the first day, in Kuwait City, the members of the Security Council met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al Hamad Al Sabah. The members of the Security Council discussed bilateral engagement between Iraq and Kuwait and regional issues. In Kuwait City, we met with the Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs of UNAMI, Alice Walpole, and the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross delegation in Kuwait in his capacity as Chair of the Tripartite Mechanism, Omar Odeh. The members of the Security Council discussed the role of both organizations in the implementation of resolution 2107 (2013) to resolve outstanding issues related to missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and the return of Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. Members of the Security Council also met World Bank representative, Ghassan Khoja, to discuss follow-up of international financial bridges to Iraq, including from the 2018 Kuwait International Conference for Reconstruction of Iraq, co-chaired by Kuwait, Iraq, the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank.

On the second day, in Baghdad, the members of the Security Council met with President Barham Salih, Prime Minister Adil Abd Al-Mahdi, Foreign Minister Mohamed Ali Alhakim, Speaker of the Council of Representatives Mohammed Al-Halbousi, Kurdistan Regional Government President Nechirvan Barzani, and representatives of political blocs in the Council of Representatives and members of civil society and non-governmental organizations. During meetings with the Iraqi interlocutors, members of the Security Council recognized the progress Iraq has made while also noting that challenges remain in Iraq's post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.

Members of the Security Council welcomed the positive progress towards the full formation of the Government of Iraq, with the confirmation of Ministers for Justice, Defence and Interior on 24 June. The members of the Security Council welcomed the continued engagement of the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the Iraqi

Constitution. They also welcomed progress towards the full formation of a new Kurdistan Regional Government.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed that the Government of Iraq is upholding the values set forth in the Iraqi Constitution and is responding to the needs of all Iraqis, including woman, youth, children, displaced persons and persons belonging to all ethnic and religious groups. Members of the Security Council also commended Iraq for seeking stepped-up regional diplomatic and economic reintegration.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ambassador Alotaibi for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Cohen.

**Mr. Cohen** (United States of America): Personally, returning to Baghdad three years after I completed my assignment at our embassy there gave me an opportunity to observe first-hand the progress that Iraq has made on so many fronts. The first-ever visit to Iraq by members of the Security Council underscored the strong and continued commitment of the international community to supporting Iraq's stability, prosperity, sovereignty and security as it turns the page to a new chapter.

In our meetings with Iraqi and United Nations interlocutors, we noted that while much progress has been achieved, there remain challenges facing Iraq in the process of its transitioning into a post-conflict environment, including the delivery of basic services. We stressed the need for economic reform, attracting greater inward investment, and regional economic integration to better address the aspirations and concerns of the Iraqi people. We noted that while the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) no longer controls any Iraqi territory, the fight is not over. The enduring defeat of ISIS requires the stabilization of liberated areas, building up resilient communities and ensuring continued security for all Iraqis, recognizing that Iraq's diversity is critical to its richness and strength.

We also discussed the humanitarian situation with Iraqi and United Nations interlocutors and underscored the importance of the safe, dignified and voluntary return of all internally displaced persons affected by conflict, including in areas liberated from ISIS.

We thank all members of the Security Council delegation for their insights, perspectives and thoughtful questions throughout our many meetings during the course of our mission. And, of course, we want to thank our Iraqi interlocutors for sharing with

us the stories of the progress made and the remaining challenges that they face. We affirm that the mission of the Security Council to Iraq was a success due to the extensive amount of the first-hand information that we obtained in face-to-face meetings with Iraqi and United Nations interlocutors, gathering a better understanding of the aspirations and concerns of the Iraqi people as they begin the process of stabilizing and rebuilding their country.

We extend our thanks to the Government of Kuwait for its co-sponsorship of the mission and its generosity in sponsoring air travel for Council members between Kuwait City and Baghdad as well as accommodation in Kuwait City. Kuwait's sponsorship of the mission is again a positive reminder of the strengthening bilateral ties between Iraq and Kuwait, which send a great signal to the whole region.

We also extend our thanks and appreciation to the Government of Iraq, including the President, Prime Minister and Speaker's Offices, the Foreign Ministry and our friend in New York, Iraqi Permanent Representative Mohammed Hussein Bahr Aluloom, who joined us for many of our meetings. We also commend and appreciate the time that President Barzani and the Kurdistan Regional Government leaders took to join the delegation in Baghdad from Irbil for our meeting on the continuing engagement between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Government of Iraq to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the Iraqi Constitution. We thank the brave civil-society members who joined us to candidly speak to members of the Security Council about the challenges confronting Iraqi society in the present and in future. They are at the forefront of efforts to realize a better Iraq.

Finally, we wish to convey our thanks and appreciation to United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) Special Representative of the Secretary-General Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, UNAMI Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alice Walpole, Resident Coordinator Marta Ruedas and United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) Special Adviser Karim Khan, as well as all members of UNAMI, UNITAD and the United Nations country team, the Secretariat, and in particular the Security Council Affairs Division, for their hard work in facilitating and implementing this important mission on behalf of the Security Council.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ambassador Cohen for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Safronkov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation thanks the delegations of Kuwait and the United States for having organized the Security Council's regional visit to Kuwait City and Baghdad. We underscore the importance and timely nature of this kind of visit, as well as the efforts made by the leadership of Kuwait and Iraq to cooperate with the Security Council. We note in particular the efforts of the Special Representative for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, and her team to ensure the superb organization of the visit and for the assistance they provided to the Iraqi authorities in the process of achieving national reconciliation and the recovery of the country's economy.

Contacts with regional players once again confirm that the Security Council mission remains an important part of the Council's activities and plays a key role in enabling it to take balanced decisions. That is what we have all heard in the region. We welcome the fact that during our visit to Baghdad and Kuwait City we heard that there was an intention to engage in good-neighbourly cooperation and to help to resolve crisis situations in the region through political and diplomatic means.

We note the activities carried out by Iraqis and Kuwaitis in re-establishing historical fairness in what we call the Iraq-Kuwaiti humanitarian dossier, which is a legacy of the first Gulf War. We would highlight in particular the fact that in 2018 the Kuwaiti leadership held a conference on the reconstruction of Iraq, which once again demonstrates their readiness to move forward in making progress in Iraq and in establishing sound bilateral relations.

During the course of the visit, it was stated time and again that there was a need to de-escalate tensions in the Persian Gulf region. Every State in the region has an interest in this, as do international partners without exception. We reiterate the timeliness of the Russian concept on guaranteeing collective security in the Persian Gulf, and we advocate heightening the profile of the United Nations in implementing mediation-based diplomacy.

Also important is the fact that the visit also confirmed that the fight against terrorism is far

from over; we were told this by all regional partners. The Security Council adopted the corresponding resolution — resolution 2462 (2019) — on cutting off financing to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other terrorist organizations and preventing fighters from returning to their homelands from areas of armed conflict. The Russian initiative to create a broad international front to fight terrorism remains relevant.

Russia advocates a comprehensive approach to fighting international terrorism. We believe that in resolving this issue, it is important to have cooperation at all levels, international and regional. Time and again we have stressed that countries such as Iraq, Syria and Iran, as well as other countries of the region, can make a contribution here. The fight should be waged on the firm basis of international law under the auspices of the United Nations. A coalition made up of a narrow range of States can only lead to a new wave of violence.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

**Mr. Al-Tememy** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to address a message of thanks to all the members of the Security Council for the visit they paid to Kuwait and Iraq. That visit was timely, as Iraq needs the support of all the members of the international community. The message is also addressed to the whole world and all peoples: that Iraq has been able to get back on the right track, overcome all the shocks of the past and achieve a developed state of democracy that has proved to the world the awareness of the Iraqi people in this respect and the progress made in terms of democratization according to international standards.

Iraq has proved to all the peoples of the world that it is continuing to fight terrorism and that it has fought it for five years now. We have fought a terrorist group that controlled 30 to 40 per cent of Iraqi territories, and through the blood of Iraqi martyrs we have been able to prove to the world that Iraq remains a safety valve not only for the region but also for the whole world.

Once again, I thank the Council for its visit, and we look forward to cooperation in broader areas leading to reconstruction, stability and security in the region.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Council, I should like to express my appreciation to all the members of the Security Council and the Secretariat who participated in the mission for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibilities.

*The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.*