

## Council conclusions – Iraq- 2004-2008

### 2004

17/05/04

"The Council condemned the assassination earlier today of the Chairman of the Iraqi Governing Council, Mr. Abdul Zahra Othman Mohammad also known as Izzedin Salim. The Council expressed concern that the current campaign of terrorist violence is leading to significant loss of life, particularly among civilians, and is impeding the path to political progress and economic reconstruction in Iraq.

The Council condemned all violence and terrorist attacks, including the kidnappings and brutal murder of hostages, in particular the savage execution of Mr. Nicholas Berg. They deplored the taking of hostages in all circumstances and called on those responsible to release immediately and unharmed hostages and to desist from any further such activity.

The Council expressed its abhorrence at recent evidence of the mistreatment of prisoners in Iraqi prisons. The Council condemned any instances of abuse and degradation of prisoners in Iraq, which are contrary to international law, including the Geneva Conventions. The Council welcomed the commitment by the relevant governments to bring to justice any individuals responsible for such acts involving the abuse of Iraqi detainees, and their commitment to rectify any failure to adhere to international humanitarian law.

The EU continues to look forward to the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq to a transitional government at the end of June and to future national elections, with a vital and growing role for the UN endorsed by the United Nations Security Council. It fully supports the work carried out to this end by the UN Special Advisor, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi."

14/06/04

"1. The Council welcomed the unanimous approval of UN Security Council Resolution 1546, which reaffirms the right of the Iraqi people to determine their political future and to control their financial and natural resources. The Council looked forward to the restoration of Iraqi sovereignty by 30 June 2004.

2. The Council expressed its full support for the achievement of these goals as endorsed in the Resolution - the formation of a sovereign interim government with the important contribution of the UN, the ending of occupation by 30 June, the reassertion by Iraq of its full sovereignty, the proposed timetable for political transition to democratic government, the role of the UN and the authorisation for a multinational force.

3. The Council reiterated its condemnation of the mistreatment of prisoners and insisted that all prisoners be treated in accordance with international law.

4. The restoration of Iraqi sovereignty and the support of the international community are essential to help stabilise the situation in Iraq. In this context, the role of neighbouring countries will be particularly important, also with a view to regional stability. The Council wished the new government every success in meeting the major challenges which lie

ahead, including the preparation of the elections to be held at the latest by 31 January 2005, and confirms the EU's readiness to support the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people.

5. The Council welcomed the medium-term strategy for the EU's relations with Iraq presented by the High Representative and the Commission, and the Commission Communication entitled "The European Union and Iraq - A Framework for Engagement" and recommended their endorsement by the European Council. They noted that this strategy, along with Security Council Resolution 1546, will provide a framework within which the EU can continue to assist the Iraqi people as they enter a new era in the history of their country.

6. The Council expressed its determination to help with the political and economic reconstruction of Iraq and underlined its support for the reintegration of Iraq into the international community as a sovereign, independent democratic country, at peace with itself and with its neighbours and with its territorial integrity preserved.

7. The Council expressed satisfaction at the recent liberation of Italian and Polish hostages by coalition forces. The Council reiterated its condemnation of all violence and terrorist attacks, including kidnappings and the brutal murder of hostages."

12/07/04

- "1. The Council met the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Mr Zebari, who indicated the areas in which he hoped the European Union would be able to make a visible contribution to the political, economic and social reconstruction of his country. Ministers made clear their opposition to the restoration of the death penalty; Mr Zebari explained the special circumstances of Iraq. The Council welcomed this opportunity to discuss the future of Iraq with Mr Zebari, and looked forward to deepening political engagement with Iraq, including in the Troika format.
2. The Council warmly welcomed the restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government that took place on June 28th. It reaffirmed its support for the people of Iraq and the fully sovereign Iraqi Interim Government, as well as its commitment to support the economic, social and political reconstruction of Iraq. The Council also reaffirmed the EU commitment to support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1546 and to support the UN in its activities in Iraq.
3. The Council attaches great importance to the National Conference reflecting the diversity of Iraqi society to be convened in July. This conference and the Interim National Council to be selected by it are important steps to promote national dialogue and consensus building.

4. The Council also recalled the Union's objective as stated by the European Council on 17-18 June of a secure, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq that will make a positive contribution to the stability of the region, and the willingness of the European Union as a whole to work in partnership with the Iraqi Interim Government and the Iraqi people with the aim of reaching that goal, taking due account of the Commission's communication "The EU and Iraq - A framework for Engagement" and the letter by High Representative Solana and Commissioner Patten.
5. In the light of its exchange of views with Foreign Minister Zebari the Council agreed to:
  - Establish close engagement and cooperation with the UN in all fields;
  - Launch a dialogue with Iraqi authorities, administration and civil society to discuss how the EU could further support Iraq;
  - Examine rapidly with the Iraqi Authorities and the UN the possible modalities of EU support for the preparation of elections and engage closely with the Iraqi Electoral Commission and the UN election team for such purpose;
  - Continue EU assistance for democratization, the development of civil society, rule of law and the protection and promotion of human rights in Iraq including, if conditions permit, through an exploratory EU mission to Iraq, in particular in the fields of the rule of law and civilian administration and fully consistent with the European Council conclusions of 17/18 June 2004;
  - Look further into the suggestions mentioned in the letter by HR Solana and Commissioner Patten, as endorsed by the European Council with a view to agreeing and implementing measures to promote security and stability;
  - Continue the provision of humanitarian, technical, economic and reconstruction assistance;
  - Invite Member States to participate in internal information exchange on present and future bilateral activities and assistance, in particular on election support, assistance to

police training, rule of law and civil administration, reconstruction assistance and diplomatic representations in Bagdad;

- Enhance as appropriate the representation of the EU in Iraq, as circumstances permit;
- Use the EU's dialogue with Iraq's neighbours to encourage positive engagement and regional support for the political and reconstruction process in Iraq;
- Seek the views of the Iraqi Interim Government on the possibility of an international meeting to support the Iraqi political transition and Iraqi recovery to the benefit of the Iraqi people and in the interest of stability in the region;
- Invite the Commission to launch, as circumstances and technical capabilities permit, administrative cooperation in view of the application of trade preferences under the GSP."

13/09/04

- "1. The Council expressed its strong condemnation of the continued kidnappings and acts of terrorism in Iraq. All hostages must be immediately released unharmed. The Council fully supports the efforts underway for their liberation.
2. The Council reaffirmed its support for the people of Iraq and the Iraqi Interim Government, as well as its commitment to support the economic, social and political reconstruction of Iraq. The Council reaffirmed the EU's commitment to support the implementation of UNSCR 1546 and to support the UN in its activities in Iraq.
3. The Council reiterated the Union's objective as stated by the European Council on 17-18 June of a secure, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq that will make a positive contribution to the stability of the region, and the willingness of the European Union as a whole to work in partnership with the Iraqi Interim Government and the Iraqi people with the aim of reaching that goal.
4. The Council recalled the Commission's communication "The EU and Iraq - A framework for Engagement" that sets out medium-term objectives for the development of EU-Iraq relations and the letter by High Representative Solana and Commissioner Patten as endorsed by the European Council.
5. The Council welcomed HR Solana's participation in Cairo at the Conference of Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, where he took the opportunity to use EU's dialogue with Iraq's neighbours to encourage positive engagement and regional support for improved security and for the political and reconstruction process in Iraq.
6. The Council welcomed the holding of the National Conference in Iraq that convened from 15-18 August in Baghdad. The selection of the National Council marks an important step in the political process.

7. The Council welcomed the visit of Minister Bot to Baghdad on 29 August and the report presented at the Gymnich meeting on the EU exploratory mission that visited Baghdad from 29-31 August to explore options for concrete EU engagement in the civilian crisis management areas of police, rule of law and civilian administration as well as elections.
8. The Council agreed to take the following next steps to further develop the EU engagement with Iraq:
  - (a) To deepen and broaden the political dialogue with Iraq the Council notes that a Troika meeting with the Iraqi Interim Government will be held in New York in September in the margins of the UN General Assembly.
  - (b) Pursuant to the June European Council conclusions the Council welcomes the acceptance of the invitation Minister Bot extended to the Iraqi Prime Minister Allawi to meet the members of the European Council on 5 November 2004.
  - (c) The Council endorsed the preliminary conclusions of the EU exploratory mission. On the basis of the discussion at the Gymnich meeting the Council agrees that the suggested activities that the EU could engage in, in the civilian crisis management areas of police, rule of law and civilian administration, should be further examined and elaborated. The Council, therefore, invites the Council Secretariat to start planning, in close consultation with the Presidency and in full association with the Commission, for an EU civilian crisis management fact-finding mission to Iraq. At the appropriate moment, this mission should be sent out with the aim of preparing, in good time for the European Council on 5 November 2004, a package of concrete assistance proposals taking into account ongoing Community efforts as well as contributions to other multilateral initiatives and the need for synergy.
  - (d) The Council confirmed that in conformity with the July GAERC conclusions, agreement on EU financial and personnel support for the preparation of elections in close coordination with the UN is the overriding priority for EU support. Given the January deadline for elections, concrete proposals for EU assistance should be endorsed as soon as possible in order to play a part in the pre-election process.
  - (e) The Council reiterated that the presence and role of the UN in Iraq is of crucial importance in the social, economic and political reconstruction process. The Council decided that a positive response should be given to the request of the UNSG for EU support to the UN Protection Force in Iraq. The Council is now examining how a substantial contribution can be made to this Protection Force."

2/11/04

1. " The Council reaffirmed its support for the people of Iraq and the Iraqi Interim Government, as well as its commitment to support the economic, social and political reconstruction of Iraq. The Council reaffirmed the EU's commitment to support the implementation of UNSCR 1546 and to support the UN in its activities in Iraq. The Council expressed its full support for the political transition leading to a

constitutionally elected Iraqi Government. The elections planned for January 2005 are an important step in this process, and the Council noted the importance of the EU's continued support for these, as well as for the elections scheduled to take place in December 2005.

2. The Council reiterated the Union's objective as stated by the European Council on 17-18 June of a secure, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq that will make a positive contribution to the stability of the region, and the willingness of the European Union as a whole to work in partnership with the Iraqi Interim Government and the Iraqi people with the aim of reaching that goal. The Council recalled the Commission's communication 'The EU and Iraq - A framework for Engagement' that sets out medium-term objectives for the development of EU-Iraq relations and the letter by High Representative Solana and Commissioner Patten as endorsed by the European Council.
3. The Council welcomed the joint Fact Finding Mission for a possible integrated Police and Rule of Law operation for Iraq and considered its report. Ministers recognised the importance of strengthening the criminal justice system, consistent with the respect for the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms. They noted the wish of the Iraqi authorities for the EU to become more actively involved in Iraq and that strengthening the criminal justice sector would respond to Iraqi needs and priorities.
4. The Council agreed that the EU could usefully contribute to the reconstruction and the emergence of a stable, secure and democratic Iraq through an integrated police, rule of law and civilian administration mission, which could inter alia promote closer collaboration between the different actors across the criminal justice system and strengthen the management capacity of senior and high-potential officials from the police, judiciary and penitentiary and improve skills and procedures in criminal investigation in full respect for the rule of law and human rights. Such a mission should be secure, independent and distinct but would be complementary and bring added value to ongoing international efforts as well as develop synergies with ongoing Community and Member States' efforts. While judging that activities outside Iraq with a presence of liaison elements in Iraq would be feasible at this point in time, the Council agreed that with regard to a mission inside Iraq all security concerns need to be appropriately addressed before any decision by the Council could be taken.
5. Prime Minister Allawi's attendance at the 5 November European Council will present the Union with an opportunity to further deepen and broaden its political dialogue with Iraq. It will also enable the European Council to discuss Iraq's future with Mr. Allawi and the strengthening of EU's engagement with Iraq in the framework of the ongoing political process.
6. The Council decided that the European Union will further strengthen its relations with Iraq. The Council therefore agreed to a comprehensive package of EU assistance to Iraq, to be presented to Mr. Allawi at the November European Council. This package, comprised of elements provided by both the Community and Member States, includes the following:

- The Council agreed that Iraq will be given the perspective of an agreement between the EU and Iraq to reflect the mutual interest in developing a partnership and to promote political and trade co-operation between the EU and Iraq. The Council asked the Commission to start preparations and work with the Iraqi Government on focused assistance programmes aimed at developing the conditions for such an agreement. In that respect the Council invited the Commission to enhance as appropriate and with due regard to security its presence in Baghdad.
- The Council agreed in conformity with the July and September GAERC conclusions on EU financial and personnel support for the preparation of elections in close co-ordination with the UN. The Community will provide a further € 30 million to the elections cluster of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) and intends to provide further support to the electoral process through specific measures, such as the provision of election experts to the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq as well as the training of domestic observers. Member States are also providing assistance to the preparations for elections through bilateral contributions. Given the January deadline for elections, it is crucial that this support will be disbursed immediately in order to play a part in the pre-election process.
- The EU attaches great importance to an active UN presence in Iraq. The EU supports the UN's leading role in promoting the political process and reconstruction of Iraq. EU Member States are ready to contribute substantially to the financing of the middle ring of the UN Protection Force in Iraq, following the request made by the UN Secretary General. The Commission is still discussing with the UN a possible financial contribution of the Community to the inner ring.
- The Council decided that an expert team should be sent by the end of November 2004 to continue the dialogue with the Iraqi authorities, to start initial planning for a possible integrated police, rule of law and civilian administration mission which is expected to start after the January 2005 elections and in particular assess the urgent security needs for such a mission. A dialogue with other countries in the region should also be considered. The Council invited the PSC to agree the terms of reference for such an expert team.
- The Council welcomed on-going implementation of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance and took note that the majority of funds of the Community and Member States will continue to be directed to the IRFFI.
- The Council noted that Iraq is a beneficiary of the EU Generalised System of Preferences and encouraged Iraq to do the necessary to benefit from those preferences. The Council recalled the Commission's offer to the Interim Iraqi Government to implement GSP preferences with Iraq. As soon as conditions allow, the European Commission should work together with the Iraqi administration to set up the administrative co-operation system which is a requirement for the system to operate.
- The Council agreed to continue efforts of the Member States to exchange views on debt and related economic policy conditionality. Several EU Member States are involved in the current Paris Club negotiations on Iraq's debt. The Council

welcomed the upcoming visit of a mission of the Iraqi Ministry of Finance to the Paris Club in November.

- The EU will use its dialogue with Iraq and its neighbours to encourage continuous regional engagement and support for improved security and for the political and reconstruction process in Iraq based on inclusiveness, democratic principles, respect for human rights and the rule of law, as well as support for security and co-operation in the region. In this respect, the Council welcomed the International Conference that will be held in Sharm el Shaikh on 23 November 2004 in which the EU will participate. The EU will support the implementation of the agenda set out in UNSCR 1546 including the necessity of holding elections in January 2005.
- The Council reiterates its condemnation of terrorist attacks, the taking of hostages and the murders which have been committed in Iraq. The EU regrets that the campaign of terrorist violence in Iraq is prolonging the suffering of the Iraqi people and posing difficulties for political progress and economic reconstruction in Iraq and welcomes the commitment under UNSCR 1546 for all parties to act in accordance with international law, including the effective protection and promotion of human rights.
- The Council submitted a draft declaration on the relations between the EU and Iraq for consideration by the European Council. "

## 2005

31/01/05

- "1. The Council very much welcomes the holding of the Iraqi national elections, in which the great majority of electors voted. The level of participation in the elections, the first for more than fifty years, reflects the deep attachment of the Iraqi people to democracy and the rule of law. The Council pays tribute to the Iraqis, who have shown courage, enthusiasm and determination in taking part in the elections despite a difficult security situation. The elections are an important and successful stage in the process of democratic transition in Iraq. They represent the first steps taken by the Iraqi people on the road to democracy, freedom and peace, which will continue well beyond the transition period. The European Union reaffirms its commitment to support for the Iraqi people in this aim and stresses the importance of achieving maximum inclusiveness in this process.
2. The Council accordingly welcomes the endeavours of the Iraqi Independent Electoral Commission, its Iraqi staff, the local observers, the Iraqi interim government and the United Nations, who enabled the elections to be held within the time-limit laid down by Resolution 1546 of the UN Security Council, and notes the support given by the international community, including the European Union. The Council notes the importance of the continuing support of the European Union in the constitutional process and in the elections planned for December 2005. The Council reiterates the importance of full involvement of all sections of Iraqi society in that constitutional process.

3. The Council reaffirms its aim of a safe, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq cooperating constructively with its neighbours and with the international community to meet common challenges. It reiterates the European Union's commitment to contributing to the economic, social and political reconstruction of Iraq and its support for UN activities in Iraq. In order to attain this goal, it emphasises the European Union's intention to continue implementation of the full European Union assistance programme as presented in Iraq on 5 November 2004. The Council re-states its determination to support the Iraqi authorities and people, in particular in reinforcing the judicial system and encouraging respect for the rule of law.
4. The Council attaches the greatest importance to the continuing implementation of the next stages laid down by Resolution 1546, in particular the formation of a transitional national assembly, whose tasks will include the formation of a transitional government for Iraq and the drafting of a permanent Constitution, resulting in the formation by 31 December 2005 at the latest of a government elected in conformity with that Constitution. The EU reaffirms its willingness to work with the Iraqi transitional government and the transitional National Assembly. If asked, it is ready to give its assistance with the constitutional process in accordance with Resolution 1546 and in full coordination with the UN.
5. The Council reiterates its firm condemnation of the terrorist attacks, intimidation and criminal violence against the Iraqi electors, election candidates and election workers; and of the hostage-takings and murders which have been committed in Iraq. It expresses its solidarity and its compassion for the families and friends of those who were victims of such acts. The Council deplores the fact that the campaign of terrorist violence in Iraq is prolonging the suffering of the Iraqi people and hampering political progress and reconstruction in Iraq. It is pleased that all parties are committed, under Resolution 1546, to abiding by international law, including as regards the effective safeguarding and promotion of human rights."

21/02/05

The Council reached political agreement on a draft joint action on an Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy, EUJUST LEX, and adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council congratulates the Iraqi people on the elections held on 30 January, which reflect the attachment of the Iraqi people to the political process under way, to democratic principles and to the rule of law. The Council takes note of the results announced on 13 February by the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI), which established that the elections had taken place in accordance with international standards. It also congratulates the democratically elected representatives of the Iraqi people. The Council reaffirms its support for the work of the IECI and the UN with a view to the constitutional referendum and elections in December 2005 and commends the willingness of the European Commission to provide financial and technical support in preparing these events. It reaffirms its commitment to support the Iraqi people and stresses the importance of achieving maximum inclusiveness in this process. It reiterates its willingness to work with the transitional National Assembly and the elected Iraqi transitional government.

2. The Council reaffirms its objective of a safe, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq that upholds human rights and cooperates constructively with its neighbours and with the international community. In order to attain this goal, it emphasises the European Union's willingness to continue implementation of the full assistance programme as presented to Iraq on 5 November 2004.
3. The Council reaffirms the importance it attaches to the continuing implementation of the next stages laid down by Resolution 1546, and in particular to the formation of a transitional National Assembly, whose tasks will include the formation of a transitional government for Iraq and the drafting of a lasting Constitution, resulting in the formation by 31 December 2005 at the latest of a government established in conformity with that Constitution. The Council welcomes the intention of the Commission and the Member States, if asked by the Iraqis, to provide support for the constitutional process in accordance with Resolution 1546 and in full coordination with the UN. It supports and encourages the Iraqi authorities in pursuing the full involvement of all sections of Iraqi society in the constitutional process and in promoting genuine national dialogue.
4. The Council wishes as of now to express its willingness to set up with the transitional government a political dialogue on areas of mutual interest. For this purpose, contacts will be developed between the European Union and Iraq, including at ministerial level. Depending on political developments in Iraq, a visit by the Troika to the elected transitional government may help deepen relations between the EU and Iraq with a view to establishing regular political dialogue.
5. The Council reiterates the European Union's commitment to contribute to the economic, social and political reconstruction of Iraq and its support for the UN's activities, and refers to the contribution of some EUR 320 million that the Community has already made to humanitarian aid, reconstruction and preparation for the elections on 30 January 2005. It reaffirms its commitment to assisting Iraq through a further Community budget contribution of EUR 200 million for 2005, intended inter alia for the restoration of essential public services – education and health –, boosting employment, and support for the political process, civil society and human rights.
6. The Council notes the willingness of the Commission and the Member States to contribute to capacity-building of the Iraqi ministries and to support for the development of these institutions in a number of sectors, especially in the fields of trade and energy. It calls on the Commission to promote coordination of these European efforts at an initial stage through exchanges of information.
7. The Council has decided to launch an Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq, EUJUST LEX, which should be operational as soon as possible. The EU started planning the operation following consultations with the Iraqi interim authorities and on the basis of the report by the team of experts. The Mission falls under the scope of the ESDP. It will consist of integrated training in the fields of management and criminal investigation, to be given to a representative group of senior officials and executive staff, mainly from the judicial, police and prison sectors. The Council agreed that training activities would take place in the EU or in the region and that the Mission should have a liaison office in Baghdad. Depending on developments in the security conditions in Iraq and on the availability of appropriate infrastructure, the

Council will be called upon to examine the possibility of training within Iraq and, if necessary, will amend the relevant joint action accordingly. The arrangements for the Mission, which is to complement international efforts under way, will be determined in consultation with the Iraqi authorities.

8. The Council recalls that Iraq is a beneficiary of the EU's Generalised System of Preferences. It welcomes the contacts already made by the Commission with the Iraqi authorities and the steps taken by the Commission to develop a bilateral trade assistance programme, as well as its readiness to pursue and intensify contacts with the Iraqi authorities, including in terms of technical expertise, in order to enable Iraq to benefit effectively from these trade preferences.
9. The Council takes note of the substantial contributions made by the Member States to the financing of the UN Protection Force in Iraq, i.e. the "middle ring" of their security arrangements, and reaffirms its willingness to contribute to the funding of the integrated security structure of the UN in Iraq ("inner ring"), with a view to facilitating the UN's role in promoting the political process and reconstruction in Iraq.
10. The Council reaffirms its intention to explore with Iraq the possibilities of an agreement with the European Union which takes account of the parties' interest in establishing a partnership and in promoting political and trade cooperation between each other. The Council welcomes the Commission's intention to continue providing support to the Iraqi administration, including through targeted assistance programmes designed to create the necessary conditions for such an agreement.
11. In accordance with the Commission communication entitled "The European Union and Iraq – A Framework for Engagement", the Council calls on the Commission to open a delegation in Iraq as soon as security conditions allow.
12. The Council reiterates its firmest condemnation of the terrorist acts, murders and hostage-takings which have been committed in Iraq. The two European journalists, the other European hostage and all the other hostages must be released at once."

25/04/05

"The Council encourages the swift formation of the Iraqi transitional government as an important further step in the process of Iraq's political transition under Resolution 1546. The Council reiterates its willingness to work with the transitional National Assembly and the Iraqi transitional government. In this connection, the Council congratulates Mr Jalal Talabani on his inauguration as President of Iraq and Mr Hajim al-Hassani on his election as President of the transitional National Assembly.

The Council reaffirms the EU's willingness to continue implementation of the full assistance programme it presented to Iraq on 5 November 2004 and in its conclusions of 21 February 2005 in order to achieve the objective of a safe, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq that upholds human rights, fully exercises its sovereignty and cooperates constructively with its neighbours and with the international community.

The Council expresses its satisfaction at the progress made by the Commission in implementing that full assistance programme and its support for the next stages of discussions

with the Iraqi authorities. The Council would also recall the willingness of the Commission and the Member States, if asked by the Iraqis, to provide support for the constitutional process in accordance with Resolution 1546 and in full coordination with the UN. It supports and encourages the Iraqi authorities in pursuing the full involvement of all sections of Iraqi society in the constitutional process and in promoting genuine national dialogue.

In this connection, the Council also reaffirms its willingness to set up with the Iraqi transitional government a political dialogue on areas of mutual interest and to develop for this purpose contacts between the European Union and Iraq, including at ministerial level. Depending on political developments in Iraq, a visit by the Troika to the elected transitional government may help deepen relations between the EU and Iraq with a view to establishing a regular political dialogue.

The Council reiterates the European Union's commitment to contribute to the economic, social and political reconstruction of Iraq and its support for the UN's activities. It reaffirms that it is prepared to organise, together with the United States, in close collaboration with Iraq and the UN, and should the new Iraqi government so request, an international conference to foster, enhance and coordinate the international community's support for Iraq during the transitional period, as announced at the EU-United States summit meeting in Brussels on 22 February 2005."

18/07/05

"1. The Council welcomed the Iraq International Conference, held in Brussels on 22 June and co-hosted by the EU and the US. It congratulated the Luxembourg Presidency on the success and smooth running of the Conference. The Council reaffirmed its strong support for the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) and for the priorities set out by Iraqi Prime Minister Ja'afari, Foreign Minister Zebari, Speaker of the Transitional National Assembly al Hassani and other Iraqi Ministers at the Conference. It underlined its commitment to ensure an effective follow-up.

2. The Council welcomed the support offered by all delegations to the Iraqi people and ITG at the Conference. In particular, it welcomed their support for Iraq's continuing political transition based on UNSCR 1546, including drafting a Constitution, holding a referendum and elections for a constitutionally elected government by the end of this year. The Council recalled its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. The Council underlined the importance all delegations attached to an inclusive and transparent political process. All sections of Iraqi society should be fully involved in the constitutional process and in promoting genuine national dialogue and reconciliation. The Council called on the states of the region to co-operate with Iraq to prevent cross-border transit and support for terrorists, to strengthen good neighbourly relations, to improve regional security and to give their full support to Iraq's political process.

3. In its efforts to follow a comprehensive approach in the support of reconstruction in Iraq, the Council took note of the areas that required priority action that were stressed by the ITG at the Conference. It noted the need for increased capacity building across the Iraqi administration, for further assistance on security, rule of law, infrastructure, energy and economic issues, as well as debt reduction. In this context, it welcomed the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq meeting in Jordan on 18-19 July and urged donors to expedite the disbursement of earlier pledges and to increase their support wherever

possible. The Council recalled the ongoing support provided by the Commission and Member States to the Constitution drafting process and referendum, December elections and the provision of essential services, including in the area of education and health services, increasing employment opportunities and developing administrative capacity in accordance with Iraqi needs and priorities. The Council reconfirmed its support to the work of UNAMI. The Council also welcomed the ITG's decision to establish a donor coordination mechanism in Baghdad, with the support of the UN, and underlined the importance of this becoming operational quickly.

4. The Council reiterated its firmest condemnation of the terrorist acts, murders and hostagetakings which have been committed in Iraq. The Council deplored the fact that the campaign of terrorist violence in Iraq is prolonging the suffering of the Iraqi people and hampering political progress and reconstruction in Iraq.

5. The Council welcomed the launch of the EU's Rule of Law mission for Iraq (EU JUST LEX) and the Commission's commitment to begin preparations on complementary work in this field. Noting the needs set out by Iraq, particularly in the rule of law and human rights sectors, the Council invited relevant Council bodies to consider what further follow-up action the EU could take to help Iraq address these needs.

6. Following the Ministerial Troika visit to Baghdad on 9 June, the Council recalled its commitment to continue efforts to deepen relations between the EU and Iraq with the aim of establishing a regular political dialogue. In this context and recalling the Commission Communication entitled "The European Union and Iraq – A Framework for Engagement" approved by the European Council in June 2004, the Council considered that political dialogue, to cover areas of mutual interest and concern, should be taken forward through a joint political declaration. It invited relevant Council bodies to prepare this, with a view to issuing the declaration at the EU-Iraq Ministerial Troika in the margins of UNGA Ministerial week. The Council considered that a follow-up Troika visit to Baghdad at Political Director level could hold a round of dialogue in the autumn.

7. The Council welcomed the Commission's intention to open a delegation in Baghdad in the near future. It also welcomed the Commission's readiness to establish contractual trade and co-operation relations with Iraq and to work with the ITG on focused assistance programmes aimed at developing the conditions for such an agreement."

7/11/05

"1. The Council welcomes the 15 October referendum on the Iraqi Constitution as part of Iraq's continuing political transition leading to a constitutionally elected government based on UNSCR 1546. The referendum on the Constitution marks an important stage in the process of political transition and a further step by the Iraqi people on the road to democracy, freedom and peace, which will continue beyond the transition period. The high turnout of voters from all communities and across the country bears testament to the Iraqi people's commitment to a process aiming at building a peaceful and democratic Iraq. The Council pays tribute to the courage and determination of those who took part in the voting, braving difficult conditions and the threat of violence. The Council congratulates the Independent Electoral Commission for Iraq and the Iraqi authorities on the smooth running of the referendum. It welcomes the support given to the process by the UN.

2. Although a large majority of voters voted in favour of the Constitution, the Council notes that the results of the referendum show there are still substantial divisions to be overcome. In this regard, it looks forward to the implementation of the review mechanism contained in the Constitution after the December elections. The Council believes this offers an important opportunity for the Iraqis to forge a broader consensus on the future of their country and will assist the creation of an inclusive political system. The EU stands ready to support actively in these important efforts. The Council also welcomes the Arab League's suggestion to work with Iraq in holding a National Dialogue Conference.
3. The Council stresses the importance the EU attaches to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and encourages all members of the international community to support the consolidation of democracy in Iraq. The Council welcomes the visit by Amr Moussa, the Secretary General of the Arab League, to Iraq on 20-24 October. The Council encourages Iraq's neighbours and other countries in the region to re-establish or strengthen diplomatic relations with Iraq at the earliest possibility. It strongly urges regional states, in particular Syria, to support the political process in Iraq, including by co-operating with Iraq to prevent cross-border transit and support for terrorists and insurgents.
4. The Council looks forward to the elections planned for December and urges all Iraqis across the country to participate in them. It encourages the IECI to continue its excellent work in preparing for the December elections, with the support of the UN and including the contribution made by the EU. The EU will provide support to the monitoring process for the December elections, including through supporting the work of domestic election observers.
5. The Council condemns the terrorist acts, murders and hostage-takings which have been committed in Iraq. The Council deplores the campaign of terrorist violence in Iraq which is prolonging the suffering of the Iraqi people and hampering political progress and reconstruction.
6. The Council welcomes the signature of the Joint EU-Iraq Political Declaration during the EU-Iraq Ministerial Troika meeting in New York on 21 September. The Declaration and the regular political dialogue which will now be taken forward under it represent an important step towards closer partnership between the EU and Iraq. In this regard, the Council welcomes the EU Political Directors Troika visit to Baghdad on 24-26 October, during which the first formal dialogue meeting was held.
7. The Council welcomes the improvement in the human rights situation since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime and condemns the atrocities committed by terrorists since then. The Council emphasises the importance of full respect for human rights in Iraq. It underlines the EU's strong opposition to the use of the death penalty. It notes with concern recent reports, including by the UN, of human rights violations by the Iraqi Security Forces. It urges the Iraqi Transitional Government to address all allegations of human rights abuses in a decisive and transparent manner. The EU stands ready to offer further support in this area, noting the contributions already being made by the Member States and the Commission to strengthening human rights and the Rule of Law in Iraq.

8. The Council commends the ongoing work of the EU's Rule of Law mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX), and the training it is providing for over 700 Iraqi judicial, police and prison personnel. The Council notes the ITG's request to extend the mission beyond the end of its current mandate and to expand the scope of the training provided, and invites relevant Council bodies to consider this. The Council reiterates its support for the Commission's preparations to undertake complementary work in this field.
9. The Council reaffirms the EU's continuing support to the reconstruction of Iraq. The Council welcomes the Commission's ongoing work to assist in capacity building in Iraq's administration and institutions as well as the provision of further assistance in the field of basic services. The Council notes the progress towards the establishment of a Commission office in Baghdad. The Council welcomes the establishment of the Sector Working Groups by the ITG, with the support of the UN, and notes the positive contribution they are making to the co-ordination of donor activity. The Council notes the leading role being played by the EU in the Rule of Law Sector Working Group.
10. The Council reaffirms the importance of creating the conditions for socio-economic development that can benefit all Iraqis. To this end, it welcomes that the process of Iraq's WTO accession is underway and looks forward to the establishment of contractual trade and co-operation relations between the EU and Iraq."

## 2006

30-31/01/06

"The Council welcomes the announcement by the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq of the provisional results of Iraq's 15 December 2005 elections with a broad scope of participation and high turnout.

The Council pays tribute to the courage of the Iraqi people, who voted in impressive numbers despite difficult and challenging circumstances. It congratulates the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) together with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq on the efficient running of the elections. The European Union was pleased to support these elections and welcomes that the IECI has taken note of suggestions for improvement in view of future elections.

The election results, coming against the background of large participation from all of Iraq's communities, reflect a very serious commitment by the Iraqi people to democracy and the establishment of democratic institutions. They provide a clear working agenda for the new government to overcome remaining divisions within Iraq.

The Council encourages the swift formation of a new constitutionally elected and truly representative government taking into account the need for inclusiveness and a broad participation by all relevant political groupings dedicated to reaching their goals by peaceful and democratic means. Such an inclusive government will represent another important step towards reconciliation and consensus in Iraq, thereby continuing the building of a secure, stable, unified and prosperous Iraq.

The European Union reaffirms its readiness to support the Iraqi people in broadening further the consensus on the future of their country, including through a thorough and transparent review of the Constitution. The EU calls upon the international community to provide support for the new Iraqi Government and the Council of Representatives. To this end the Council strongly supports efforts by the Arab League to convene a conference of national accord in early 2006. The Council remains committed to supporting Iraq's political transition and its economic and social reconstruction. It recalls the support it is already bringing through EU's Integrated Rule of Law Mission (EUJUST LEX), as well as through support to the political process and to improving the delivery of basic services. It also remains committed to holding a regular political dialogue with Iraq in accordance with the Joint EU-Iraq Declaration and to entering into contractual relations with Iraq."

27/02/06

"The Council condemns the criminal bombing of the Holy Shrine of Ali Al-Hadi and Hassan Al-Askari in Samarra aimed at provoking sectarian strife. It condemns the subsequent retaliatory acts, including attacks on religious sites. The Council deeply regrets the resulting loss of life. The Council condemns all acts undermining the political process.

The European Union strongly supports calls by Iraqi political and religious leaders for restraint and non-retaliation and urges Iraq to come together in a spirit of dialogue and mutual respect. The Council expresses its full support for the efforts of the UN in promoting inter-communal dialogue and national dialogue. It welcomes the initiative by the League of Arab States to hold a second conference on national reconciliation with participation of all Iraqi communities.

The Council underlines that recent developments in Iraq highlight the urgent need for the formation of a government of national unity and urges all political leaders in the country to match the courage of the Iraqi people, who voted for them in impressive numbers at the elections on 15 December 2005. This display of trust by the Iraqi people in a democratic system deserves to be met by the formation of a government of national unity which will work for the political and economic reconstruction of Iraq in a spirit of reconciliation."

15/05/06

"The Council warmly welcomes progress made in Iraq towards forming a government of national unity. It congratulates President Jalal Talabani, the Vice-presidents Adel Abdel Mahdi and Tariq Al-Hashemi, the President of the Council of Representatives, Mr Mahmoud Al-Mashhadani, and his deputies Khalid Al-Attayah and Aref Tayfour upon their election. Likewise, it congratulates Mr Nouri Al-Maliki upon his nomination as Prime Minister.

The EU reiterates its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. It firmly believes that a government of national unity is essential to enhance the stability of the country and encourages all political groupings to continue working together towards the formation of such an inclusive government as soon as possible. In this context the Council reiterates its support for a process of national reconciliation including efforts by the UN in this area and the initiative by the League of Arab States to organise a conference on national accord.

The EU is ready to engage actively with the new government in order to achieve a secure, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq. In this regard the EU looks forward to discuss concrete measures to enhance EU-Iraq relations based on Iraqi priorities in the new government's programme and on shared values. The EU equally stands ready to strengthen EU-Iraq relations through continuing the political dialogue at all levels in accordance with the EU-Iraq Joint Declaration on Political Dialogue of 21 September 2005 and to negotiate an EU-Iraq Trade and Co-operation Agreement. Community assistance will be provided through the newly adopted assistance programme for 2006 to the following areas: improvement of basic services, good governance and furthering democracy. In response to Iraqi needs and requests, the Council is prepared to extend the activities of the Integrated Rule of Law Mission, EUJUST LEX, beyond its current mandate."

#### 15/06/06 EUROPEAN COUNCIL

The European Council welcomes the formation of the new Iraqi national unity government on 20 May, now completed with the appointment of Ministers for Defence, the Interior and National Security. This is a major and important step continuing the transformation of Iraq into a democratic country. The European Union reiterates its strong condemnation of terrorist acts and deplores the continuing campaign of violence against the Iraqi people and their constitutionally elected government. It calls on all Iraqi citizens to avoid sectarian strife and refrain from using violence, prolonging the suffering of the Iraqi people. The European Union stands ready to renew its engagement with the new Iraqi government and Iraqi citizens in their efforts to bring peace, stability and prosperity to an independent and sovereign Iraq.

The European Council welcomes the new government's programme for its commitment to upholding the rule of law, promoting national unity and reconciliation, protecting and developing Iraq's resources and using them for the benefit of all the Iraqi people.

The European Union looks forward to rapid and early political dialogue with the new government.

The European Council welcomes the Commission Communication and the joint letter from SG/HR Solana and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner. The European Council looks forward to pursuing enhanced engagement with the new government at all relevant levels. For example, it is the EU's intention to support Iraq in the following areas:

- Endorse a model of democratic government that overcomes divisions, e.g. through support for national reconciliation and the constitutional review process in close cooperation with the UN. In this context, the European Council welcomed the United Nations Multi-Party Dialogue on the Iraqi bill of rights in Vienna from 6 to 8 June.
- Contribute towards the rule of law and a culture of respect for human rights, e.g. through Community assistance in these areas. In this context, the European Council notes the agreement to extend the Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq, EUJUST LEX, for another 18 months after the expiration of the current mandate in response to Iraqi needs and requests.
- Support national and regional authorities in improving the delivery of basic services and in promoting job creation.
- Support Iraq's economic recovery and prosperity, e.g. by launching the negotiations for a Trade and Cooperation Agreement and by commencing a technical dialogue on energy.
- Promote the development of an effective and transparent administrative framework.
- Step up its presence in Iraq through the imminent appointment of the Head of the European

Commission Delegation in Iraq.

The European Council encourages enhanced international engagement and underlines the EU's willingness to continue supporting the UN's role in Iraq.

15/09/06

- "1. The EU welcomes the progress made in developing the International Compact with Iraq since the launch of the Compact process on 27 July 2006. It appreciates the efforts of the Iraqi government in preparing the draft outline for the Compact, which was presented at the meeting of the Preparatory Group of the Compact in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on 10 September 2006.
2. The EU confirms its support for the purpose of the Compact, which is to bring together the international community to support Iraq in achieving its National Vision of building a "secure, unified, federal and democratic nation, founded on the principles of freedom and equality, and providing peace and prosperity for its people".
3. The EU reaffirms its readiness to participate actively in the Compact process, and encourages Iraq to further develop a balanced Compact in all its dimensions through an inclusive consultative process at the national, regional and international levels. Domestic consensus-building will assist in ensuring that the Compact responds to the needs of the Iraqi people, and help to secure commitment to its implementation by the Iraqi government and throughout Iraqi society.
4. The EU underlines the importance it attaches to Iraqi ownership and inclusiveness of the Compact process, and to the broad involvement of the international community, including the active participation of Iraq's neighbours and partners in the region. Furthermore the EU stresses the importance of ensuring coordination with existing reconstruction assistance, notably the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI). The EU continues to support the central role of the UN as co-chair of the Preparatory Group of the Compact and as advisor to Iraq. It encourages the Executive Committee of the Compact to ensure transparency in the process of developing all aspects of the Compact, as a means to achieving full support of the Iraqi people and of the international community.
5. The EU looks forward to further discussions with the Iraqi government and other partners during the ministerial meetings on the Compact in New York and Singapore on 18 September 2006 and beyond."

## 2007

23/04/07

- "1. The Council reaffirms its support to a secure, stable, democratic, prosperous, and unified Iraq and reiterates its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. It reiterates its support for the democratically elected Government of Iraq and for its efforts to restore public order, promote national reconciliation and rule of law, further economic reconstruction and engage Iraq's neighbouring states and the International Community.

2. The Council condemns in the strongest terms all forms of violence against the Iraqi population, including acts of terrorism, politically motivated or sectarian attacks, and forced displacement. It expresses its deep concern about the humanitarian and human rights situation in parts of Iraq, in particular the situation of internally displaced persons and of Iraqi refugees abroad and urges the government of Iraq to meet its responsibilities towards them. It notes the continued efforts of the multinational force to participate in humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in accordance with the mandate renewed by UNSCR 1723.
3. The Council encourages the Government of Iraq to intensify its efforts towards national reconciliation. It hopes that substantial progress will be made on the review of deBaathification and on the disbandment of militias, as well as against terrorism, and that appropriate measures will be taken to promote full inclusiveness. It urges all political and social groups in Iraq to pursue their demands through peaceful means and within Iraq's democratic institutions. The Council believes that fundamental decisions such as on the constitutional review, the federalism law and the status of Kirkuk, must be taken in a spirit of sincere dialogue and consensus-building if they are to serve as the basis for a peaceful and prosperous future for Iraq.
4. The Council welcomes the initiative to convene a conference of Iraq's neighbouring states with international participation in Sharm El Sheikh on 4 May, 2007. The international community, and in particular the States in the region, have a responsibility to support and promote the difficult process of national reconciliation and stabilization in Iraq, and to prevent outside interference that could undermine this process. The Council expresses its hope that the planned conference give rise to a long-term process of regional confidence building through dialogue and co-operation. The EU stands ready to actively contribute to this endeavour.
5. The Council reiterates its support for the International Compact with Iraq (ICI) and warmly welcomes the launching of the Compact at a ministerial conference in Sharm El Sheikh on 3 May, 2007. It appreciates the ambitious benchmarks set by the Government of Iraq for its economic, political, security and social reform strategies and encourages Iraq to pursue these targets with all determination. Progress towards those targets will help to further enhance the EU's engagement with Iraq. The Council reaffirms its strong support for a central role of the UN in Iraq, especially in the political, human rights and humanitarian sectors, and in facilitating international support to Iraq.
6. The Council warmly welcomes the opening of negotiations for a Trade and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq and hopes for a timely continuation of these negotiations.
7. The EU will continue to work with the Government of Iraq to better align its assistance with the priorities laid down in the ICI. The Council welcomes the decisions by the Donor Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) at its meeting in Istanbul on 21 March, 2007 to assign the co-chairmanship to Iraq and Italy so as to better reflect Iraqi ownership and enhance donor visibility and to review IRFFI's terms of reference in order to align them with Iraqi priorities. This review should enable IRFFI to act as an important channel for international financial support for Iraq within the framework of the ICI.

8. The Council acknowledges the need to address the humanitarian needs of internally displaced people in Iraq and refugees in the region. It recognises the serious difficulties of effectively delivering humanitarian aid in Iraq given the security situation. The Council encourages the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian agencies to assist the government of Iraq in this respect and welcomes efforts to provide protection and assistance in neighbouring countries. The Council welcomes the international attention to the Iraqi displacement situation afforded by the International Conference on Addressing the Humanitarian Needs of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons inside Iraq and in Neighbouring Countries in Geneva on 17/18 April 2007. The Council stresses the need to improve conditions for channelling international support to that end. The Council recognises the solidarity shown by Iraq's neighbouring countries, in particular Jordan and Syria, towards the plight of Iraqi refugees and stresses the importance of furthering the dialogue with countries in the region to create conditions for an appropriate assistance strategy.
9. The Council calls for a comprehensive approach towards the dire situation of refugees in Iraq and in the neighbouring regions. The Council also underlines the importance of ensuring that those seeking safety do not fall into the hands of traffickers and smugglers."

14/05/07

- "1. The Council warmly welcomes the fact that the Iraq conferences in Sharm El Sheikh took place successfully on 3 and 4 May 2007 with very broad international participation. It congratulates all parties that have worked hard to make the conferences a success, in particular Egypt as the host country. The results of the conferences are encouraging and hopefully will contribute to an improvement of the situation in Iraq.
2. The Council commends the Iraqi Government for the ambitious commitments it has made in the "International Compact with Iraq", which was endorsed on 3 May, to promote reforms in the political, security, economic and social fields. The implementation of these commitments will be central in developing co-operation between Iraq and all its international partners. Progress towards these targets will help to further enhance the EU's engagement with Iraq. The Council underlines its appreciation for the UN's continued assistance to Iraq including in the Compact process.
3. The Council welcomes the Ministerial conference of Iraq's Neighbouring Countries with international participation, including the EU. The international community, and in particular the States in the region, have a responsibility to support and promote the difficult process of national reconciliation and stabilisation in Iraq, and to prevent outside interference that could undermine this process. The Council expresses its hope that the conference give rise to a long-term process of regional confidence building through dialogue and co-operation. It underlines in this context the importance of an effective and result-oriented follow-up mechanism, including the early convening of the agreed working groups on security, refugees and energy. The European Union is ready to assist and provide expertise in this process."

15/10/07

"1. Iraq remains a central challenge for the international community. As a major global player, the Council reaffirms the EU's support to a secure, stable, democratic, prosperous and unified Iraq and reiterates its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq.

2. The EU will continue to play a major role in supporting the Iraqi government in its work to bring stability, security and prosperity to all of its citizens, including through practical assistance. The EU is committed to enhancing its political engagement with Iraq and with its neighbours, as well as supporting the UN and other international actors in their efforts.

3. The Council warmly welcomes the unanimous adoption on 10 August 2007 of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1770, renewing and extending the mandate of UNAMI. The Council reaffirms its strong support to the central role of the UN in Iraq. In this connection it congratulates Mr. Staffan de Mistura on his appointment as the Secretary General's Special Representative for Iraq and Head of UNAMI and assures him of EU's support in leading UNAMI's work in Iraq to implement the new mandate. This mandate is of utmost importance for the stabilisation of Iraq. In addition to UNAMI's existing mandate in areas such as political dialogue, national reconciliation, economic reform, human rights and the Rule of Law, UNSCR 1770 adds important new fields: notably to advise, support and assist the Government of Iraq in areas such as facilitating the regional dialogue within the framework of the neighbouring countries process, implementing the International Compact with Iraq and strengthening donor coordination including with the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI). The EU is actively engaged in many of these areas and will continue to work closely with the UN. However, further improvement of the security situation will be an essential element in the effective implementation of the UNAMI mandate.

4. The Council trusts that, based on its mandate, UNAMI will continue to contribute to engaging all members of the democratic institutions in Iraq to participate actively and responsibly in an inclusive political process. It calls upon relevant Iraqi institutions to advance in the nomination of governorate election officers on the basis of rules that are in conformity with international best practice for a transparent, inclusive, independent and impartial process. Fundamental decisions regarding the achieving of national reconciliation must be taken in a spirit of sincere dialogue and consensus-building if they are to serve as the basis for a peaceful and prosperous future for Iraq.

5. The Council welcomes the support by the participants at the High Level Meeting on Iraq in New York, on 22 September, for a broader UN role and for the International Compact with Iraq.

6. The Council strongly encourages the Government of Iraq together with all parties to make substantial political progress on the promotion of national reconciliation, which is the key to sustained improvements in security, and to curb the deterioration of the humanitarian conditions in Iraq which has resulted in an estimated 2.2 million internally displaced persons. The Council recognises the heavy burden borne by neighbouring countries, particularly Jordan and Syria, urges the Iraqi Government to undertake appropriate measures to assist Iraqi refugees and those displaced within the country and assures that the EU will continue to play its part. Rapid humanitarian action is required by the international community and the Iraqi Government if the evolving humanitarian crisis is to be contained. The EU recalls the important role of UNHCR, ICRC, IOM, supported by

Member States and Community instruments (including ECHO), as well as the need for strong support to the UN/OCHA Strategic Framework for Humanitarian Action in Iraq.

7. The Council calls upon the Iraqi authorities to take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of the civilian population. In this respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Iraqis, including women and persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities, should be protected and promoted. The EU stands ready to continue its support to the Iraqi authorities in the fields of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

8. The Council welcomes the Ministerial Conference of Iraq's Neighbouring Countries to be held in Istanbul in early November. The Council underlines that the dialogue and cooperation between Iraq and its neighbours is crucial to achieve the stabilisation of the region and a peaceful and prosperous future for Iraq. It encourages Iraq and its neighbours to build on the progress made by the working groups on energy, refugees and security. The European Union reiterates its offer to assist and provide expertise in this process. In this connection it welcomes the proposal by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon during the meeting on Iraq in New York on 22 September 2007 to create a support mechanism based in Baghdad to enhance regional dialogue. In the regional process as well as in bilateral relations, the EU encourages all neighbouring countries to play a constructive role in contributing to peace and stability in Iraq.

9. The Council reiterates its strong support to the International Compact with Iraq. It believes that the implementation of the ambitious programme set out in the Compact with Iraq demands strong Iraqi leadership and ownership and requires inclusiveness of the Compact process, broad involvement of the international community and active participation of Iraq's neighbours and partners in the region. Efficient co-ordination of donor efforts is of utmost importance. The Council reaffirms EU's readiness to continue developing a close cooperation and partnership with Iraq - also through the IRFFI - in accordance with the priorities indicated in the International Compact and Iraq's National Development Strategy.

10. The Council looks forward to work on this agenda being taken forward with renewed energy and vigour and to further discussions.

11. The Council strongly condemns the attack on 3 October on the Polish ambassador to Iraq, Edward Pietrzyk, which killed at least two people and seriously wounded the ambassador, who is representing the EU Presidency in Iraq."

19-20/11/07

1. The Council warmly welcomes the attendance of Foreign Minister of Iraq, H E Hoshiyar Zebari, and the opportunity to enhance the political engagement of the EU with Iraq and to reiterate the commitments made by the EU to support Iraq. Following discussions with FM Zebari and taking into account the views of the Government of Iraq, the Council, recalling its current actions, agreed that the EU should work closely with the UN to further identify and deliver support for it to fulfil its role as set out in UNSCR 1770; identify further contributions to help alleviate the humanitarian situation in Iraq and the region; identify and take opportunities to provide further human rights support; and assist the Iraqi authorities in meeting their responsibilities

in accordance with the International Compact with Iraq (ICI) and identify and provide further support.

2. The EU welcomes the holding of the Expanded Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq in Istanbul on 2 - 3 November 2007. The Council underlines the importance of continuing the dialogue and co-operation between Iraq and its neighbours and notes with satisfaction that the next Ministerial Conference will be held in Kuwait. It recalls that constructive engagement of Iraq's neighbours and partners in the region remains essential to achieve peace and stability in Iraq and in the region as a whole and encourages all partners in the region to live up to the commitments made in the Final Communiqué of the Istanbul meeting. The EU remains ready to offer its support in this endeavour.
3. The Council emphasises the obligation of neighbouring countries to contribute to the political stabilisation of Iraq, whose territorial integrity should be preserved. It encourages the Government of Iraq to undertake all necessary measures to promote stability through an effective national reconciliation process.
4. The Council welcomes the decision by the Government of Iraq to form an "ad-hoc expanded neighbours support mechanism" to deal with substantive, technical and organizational issues concerning this process and the endorsement of this decision by the Ministerial Conference in Istanbul. The Council expects the Neighbours process, and in particular this support mechanism, to result in concrete steps forward, and emphasises the crucial role of constructive relations between Iraq and its neighbours at the political and technical level.
5. The Council emphasizes the importance of the essential input and recommendations provided by the three working groups on energy, security and refugees and internally displaced persons, which were established by the Expanded Ministerial Conference on 4 May in Sharm El Sheikh. It notes with satisfaction the decision by the Ministerial Conference of Istanbul to convene the next sessions of these groups and calls for those meetings to be held as soon as possible. It encourages all neighbouring countries to participate constructively in this work and reiterates its readiness to participate, assist and provide expertise to these working groups.
6. The Council recalls the obligation of the Government of Iraq, its neighbouring countries and the international community, as expressed in Istanbul, to protect and assist displaced Iraqis by addressing their immediate and foreseeable needs and ensure their safety. It calls upon the Iraqi Government to assist vulnerable groups, including refugees and internally displaced persons and to promote the protection of human rights. The EU reiterates that it stands ready to support the Iraqi authorities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms, underlining the need to protect the rights of all Iraqis, including those of women and persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities. The Council calls upon the Iraqi Government to suspend the practice of the death penalty as a step towards abolition. The EU especially welcomes work of UNAMI in the field of human rights and calls upon all relevant parties to support UNAMI in this endeavour. The EU will continue to identify in a concerted way possibilities for further assistance to the Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries and internally displaced persons. It recalls the commitment made by participants in the

Istanbul Conference to deliver assistance in coordination with the Government of Iraq also by contributing to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI).

7. The Council is encouraged by and considers of utmost importance the continued dialogue and co-operation between Iraq and Turkey on the combat of terrorism. It calls on the Iraqi Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government to take the appropriate measures to ensure respect for the Turkish border and guarantee that the Iraqi territory is not used for violent action against its neighbours.

## **2008**

**26/05/08**

- "1. The EU reaffirms its support to a secure, stable, democratic, prosperous and unified Iraq and reiterates its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq, where human rights are respected. It underlines its support for the central role of UN/UNAMI in Iraq and strongly encourages continued close cooperation between UNAMI and the Iraqi authorities on the implementation of UNSCR 1770.
2. The Council welcomes the visit to Brussels by Prime Minister Maliki and members of his government on 16 - 17 April and the opportunity to enhance the EU's political engagement with Iraq.
3. The Council welcomes the Expanded Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq in Kuwait on 22 April 2008 and underlines the importance of dialogue and co-operation between Iraq, its neighbours and regional partners. Constructive engagement of Iraq's neighbours and partners in the region remains essential to achieve peace and stability in Iraq and in the region as a whole. The Council encourages all neighbours and partners in the region to live up to the commitments made in the Final Communiqué of the Kuwait meeting and to strengthen their representation in Baghdad. The EU stands ready to support the neighbouring countries process and to provide its expertise where participants deem this helpful.
4. The Council also looks forward to the First Annual Review Conference of the International Compact with Iraq (ICI) in Stockholm, Sweden, on 29 May 2008. An EU Member State hosting the Annual Review Conference is a reflection of the EU's commitment to its partnership with Iraq. The Council urges strong Iraqi leadership and ownership in the implementation of the ICI, Iraqi sector wide inclusiveness and broad involvement of the international community including Iraq's neighbours and partners in the region. It also commends the progress made so far on economic aspects of the ICI, the passage of the Justice and Reconciliation, Amnesty, Provincial Powers Laws and the budget.

It encourages the Government of Iraq to make further progress in the political process and in national reconciliation. The EU will continue to develop a close co-operation and partnership with Iraq in accordance with the priorities indicated in the

ICI and will do its utmost to assist Iraq in the implementation of the ICI together with the international community.

5. The Council underlines the importance of national reconciliation and welcomes initiatives of all parties to meet this end, including the 15-point statement issued by the Iraqi Political Committee for National Security. The EU encourages all parties to strengthen work in this area, consolidating the rule of law and national reconciliation.
6. The Council welcomes political agreement to hold provincial elections before the end of 2008 and strongly encourages the Government of Iraq and the Council of Representatives to adopt the necessary legislation and provide the funding in support of those elections. It also strongly encourages agreement on the hydrocarbon law as another important contribution towards national reconciliation. It expresses strong hope that the Constitutional Review Committee will be able to contribute to resolving outstanding issues. It welcomes the commitment of Iraq's political leaders to a government of national unity leading to further progress on the legislative and reform programme. It commends efforts made by the UN and others in solving issues related to the disputed internal boundaries.
7. The Council recalls that further improvements in the security situation in Iraq are central to the Government of Iraq's efforts to build a stable and prosperous state. It condemns all acts of terrorism in all its forms in Iraq and calls for the immediate cessation of all such acts. It supports the Iraqi Government's increasing efforts in combating terrorism and sectarian violence and to disarm militia forces.
8. The Council expresses concern about the displaced Iraqis inside Iraq and Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries, in particular in Jordan and Syria. It recalls the obligation of the Government of Iraq and the international community, as expressed at the Expanded Neighbours Ministerial Conferences, to protect and assist displaced Iraqis inside Iraq and in neighbouring countries by addressing their immediate and foreseeable needs and ensure their safety. It strongly encourages the Iraqi Government to use its resources to help neighbouring countries to cope with the additional burden of refugees.
9. The Council expresses concern about the human rights situation in Iraq, and supports the work of the UNAMI in this field. The Council reiterates that it is essential for the Government of Iraq to protect and promote the human rights of all Iraqis, paying special attention to vulnerable groups such as children, women and persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities. Increased respect for human rights is essential to achieve reconciliation between Iraq's communities and sustain improvements in the security situation. The promotion and protection of human rights in Iraq will also greatly benefit from strengthening of the rule of law in general, including by ensuring the neutrality and inclusiveness of the Iraqi judiciary and security forces. The Council calls upon the Iraqi Government to suspend the practice of the death penalty as a step towards abolition.
10. The Council recalls its strong commitment to Iraq as reflected in the priorities set out by the GAERC on 19-20 November 2007 for future assistance to Iraq. Taking into account the €829 million already committed by the European Community in reconstruction and humanitarian support since 2003, the additional substantial

contributions from EU Member States, and the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, the EU:

- commits to provide further assistance to basic services and to strengthen Iraqi institutions and capacities to unlock Iraq's own resources;
- welcomes the substantial progress on the negotiations on the Trade and Cooperation Agreement and states its determination to conclude negotiations as soon as possible, thereby establishing the first contractual relationship between the EU and Iraq;
- aims to enhance energy co-operation in the mutual interest of the EU and Iraq;
- notes the significant diplomatic EU presence in Baghdad, including the EC Delegation, and expresses intentions for further strengthening the EU presence;
- looks forward to enhancing the current political dialogue at ministerial and senior official level with Iraq, including through regular meetings, and building on the mutual desire to take such a dialogue forward;
- underlines the importance of establishing a system of rule of law and a culture respecting human rights, welcomes the Commission's programme supporting the rule of law and justice sector and stresses the important role that the EUJUST LEX has played to this end;
- underlines its readiness to consider ways to build on the significant contribution of EUJUST LEX when its mandate comes to an end;
- will explore possibilities to provide further expert assistance to the secretariat of the International Compact;
- accepts the invitation to the EU, including the Commission, to participate in the three Expanded Neighbouring Countries of Iraq working groups on refugees, energy and security cooperation and coordination;
- commits to provide further contributions to help alleviate the humanitarian situation of displaced Iraqis inside Iraq and Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries in particular in Jordan and Syria;
- welcomes support from the Community budget provided already for the preparations for local elections scheduled to be held before the end of the year."