

# Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on the Kurdistan Regional Government's intention to hold a referendum on independence from Iraq

In a statement the Foreign Secretary said,

We note the announcement by the government of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq regarding a referendum on independence. We understand the aspirations of the Kurdish people and continue to support them politically, culturally and economically within Iraq. But a referendum at this time will distract from the more urgent priorities of defeating Daesh, stabilising liberated areas and addressing the long-term political issues that led to Daesh's rise. Any referendum or political process towards independence must be agreed with the Government of Iraq in Baghdad. Unilateral moves towards independence would not be in the interests of the people of Kurdistan Region, Iraq or of wider regional stability.

The UK supports a stable, democratic and unified Iraq, one that is able to provide the security, jobs and healthcare and education all Iraqis want and deserve. We urge all parties to engage in dialogue to deliver a better future for their people on the basis of the Iraqi Constitution.

## **Further information**

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