

Press Releases: Deputy Secretary John J. Sullivan's Lunch With Religious Leaders

Readout
Office of the Spokesperson

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The below is attributable to Spokesperson Heather Nauert:

In Baghdad on October 14, Deputy Secretary Sullivan participated in a working lunch with Iraqi religious leaders. The Deputy Secretary was accompanied by U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Doug Silliman, Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Major General Ricky Waddell, National Security Council Director for Iraq Matthew Zais, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Near Eastern Affairs Andrew Peek.

The Deputy Secretary underlined that the United States is deeply committed to assisting persecuted religious groups, including Christian and Yazidi communities in Iraq who suffered genocide at the hands of ISIS. He emphasized the United States' view that ensuring people of all beliefs have a secure future in Iraq is integral to the region's stability and peace.

The United States has provided nearly \$1 billion since FY 2017 in development and security assistance in Iraq, of which nearly \$300 million is specifically prioritized in geographic regions with concentrations of religious component communities, such as the Ninewa Plains. A significant amount of that funding is also benefitting displaced and other conflict-affected populations in Northern Iraq, an area that hosts the majority of the country's displaced ethnic and religious minorities.

The Deputy Secretary of State reaffirmed the U.S. government's commitment to continued support for religious and ethnic minority communities in Iraq.

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