

Speech: Effective Governance in Iraq

Thank you Mr President. First, let me join others in thanking SRSK Kubis both for his report and for all the work he has done over the last three years and nine months as SRSK in Iraq. We are grateful for your leadership of UNAMI and also for the significant contribution you have made to Iraq during this pivotal period in its history. We look forward to welcoming your successor Jeanine Hennis-Plaaschaert in December and to working with her to build on all the progress that you have made.

Mr President, like the Netherlands, today I would like to touch on three issues: government formation, accountability, and the question of missing Kuwaiti persons and property.

First, the United Kingdom joins other Council members in congratulating Iraq on the conclusion of the 2018 electoral process. Our congratulations go especially to President Barham Salih, Prime Minister Abdul Medhi, and Speaker Mohammed al-Halbousi and to the Kurdistan Democratic Party following the Kurdistan region parliamentary elections. We welcome the formation of the cabinet that is well underway and encourage the appointment of the remaining cabinet members in an inclusive manner within constitutional timelines. However, like Poland and the Netherlands and others, we do share the disappointment in a lack of female members in those appointed to the cabinet to date and we would encourage the Iraqi government in its efforts to address this issue and promote the participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making in Iraq.

Once the government has been fully formed the United Kingdom looks forward to working with it to support it as it tackles the challenges that Iraq faces, that the SRSK has outlined for us today. These include: promoting effective governance; security sector reform and economic reform; social protection from vulnerable groups, including internally displaced people; and improvement in the business environment. Recent events that the SRSK has highlighted, particularly in southern Iraq, demonstrate the importance of providing basic services, including water and electricity for all Iraqis.

Mr President, women have a vital role to play in all of the areas that I've just mentioned, as well as in national reconciliation efforts. We note the encouraging progress in this regard. In particular we welcome the introduction of the Inter-Agency Gender-Based Violence Standard Operating Procedures in Southern Iraq which will provide essential support services for survivors of gender-based violence, and the United Kingdom encourages the incoming government to ensure the full implementation of Iraq's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Mr President, several speakers this morning have spoken about the importance of accountability in Iraq. The scale of the challenges facing the new Iraqi government are clear. For example, the recent discovery of over 200 mass grave sites demonstrates the importance of achieving justice for the victims of Da'esh crimes in Iraq. These graves must be protected to ensure that the

evidence can be properly collected and stored. The United Kingdom welcomes the continued strong support from both the government of Iraq and UNAMI for the important work of the UN investigative team for Da'esh accountability. I would also like to extend my own congratulations to Nadia Murad for her well-deserved Nobel Peace Prize. Efforts must continue to locate those still missing following their brutal kidnapping by Da'esh.

Mr President, thirdly and finally, the United Kingdom would like to thank the Secretary-General for his latest report on Security Council Resolution 2107 on the issue of missing Kuwaiti persons and property. The UK welcomes UNAMI's ongoing support on this important file. We hope that the new government of Iraq will make progress on locating and identifying missing Kuwaiti persons and property. In this regard, the United Kingdom welcomes the visit by the Iraqi president to Kuwait on 12 November 2018 and in particular the transfer that took place of one instalment of retrieved Kuwaiti property. It's very important that this chapter of Iraq and Kuwait's history can be closed and relations between these two neighbours further strengthened.

Thank you.