

Speech: “Until Iraq is free from the terrible scourge of Daesh, families will continue to be subjected to horrific violence...”

Thank you Mr. President, and thank you, Special Representative Kubis for your briefing this morning.

Your Mission is carrying out an important function at a critical time for Iraq, supporting the Government as it seeks to spread stability and security across the country.

At the outset, I want to commend the brave men and women of the Iraqi Security Forces. Thanks to their bravery and sacrifice, Daesh now controls less than 12 square kilometres of territory in Iraq. Soon it will be none; Mosul will be liberated, and Daesh’s so called Caliphate will have been brought to an end.

But as the Secretary-General makes clear in his report, until that happens, until Iraq is free from the terrible scourge of Daesh, families will continue to be subjected to horrific violence at the hands of these fanatics. So we cannot relent in our efforts; we must do everything we can to help them.

The United Kingdom commends Prime Minister Abadi for putting the protection of civilians at the heart of Iraq’s military operations. It is critical that the Iraqi security forces continue to do so throughout the final and most difficult stages.

The United Kingdom is playing its part. As well as supporting the Iraqi security forces through the Global Coalition against Daesh, we have contributed almost \$220 million in lifesaving aid to vulnerable displaced families across Iraq, and the UK has pledged almost \$12.5 million to support the UN’s Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilisation, to support newly liberated areas. We encourage other donors to contribute to the Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq.

The conflict has had a disproportionate impact on women and girls. That is why we are also providing \$1.2 million to help implement the Iraqi National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

As Daesh’s Caliphate comes to an end, Iraq will need political reconciliation and reform. The UK welcomes the efforts of Iraq’s political leaders to promote national reconciliation, and we urge UNAMI to continue to support this. We also welcome the support Iraq’s neighbours have provided in this time of need and encourage them to continue their solidarity and friendship.

Mr. President,

As this Council knows too well, security and stability will count for little without accountability. That's why the UK launched, along with Iraq and Belgium, a global push to bring Daesh to justice. As we have said before, time is of the essence; we must start gathering evidence of their crimes before it is lost. Newly liberated areas hold a wealth of evidence against Daesh that the international community must help Iraq collect and preserve. The UK has been working closely with the Government of Iraq and international partners to achieve this.

I welcome the discussions we have had with the Government of Iraq on this issue, and the recent, and significant, statement by Prime Minister Abadi calling at the end of March for "the UN Security Council to issue a resolution to prosecute Daesh's crimes against civilians". This was delivered during the Secretary-General's visit to Baghdad. We believe the UK's proposal is the clear way forward for the Council to answer Prime Minister Abadi's call. We look forward to working with our Iraqi colleagues so that the proposal can be finalized as soon as possible. As the global community works together to defeat Daesh, we must work together to hold them to account.

Mr. President,

As the Council lead on resolution 2107, the UK welcomes the Secretary-General's latest report on the issue of missing Kuwaiti persons and property. Unfortunately, despite the strengthening of bilateral relations between Iraq and Kuwait, there has been no progress on returning Kuwaiti property this year. I want to extend our support to all parties in their efforts to achieve tangible progress in the next year.

Because ultimately, Mr. President, we all want to see a stable, secure, prosperous and unified Iraq. The UK stands ready to work with the Government of Iraq and our international partners to build the better future all Iraqis want and deserve.

UNAMI will play a critical role in this effort. On behalf of the United Kingdom, I thank the Special Representative and his staff for their work at such a significant point in Iraq's history.

Thank you.