

Time for Iraq's political leaders to resolve the current impasse and begin delivering for the Iraqi people

Thank you Mr. President, and let me start by commending the tireless efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq and of the Special Representative in difficult circumstances.

We'd like to make four points today.

First, the UK offers our deepest condolences for the deaths and casualties caused by the violence in the International Zone in Baghdad on the 29th and 30th of August. As the Special Representative said, the country stood on the brink of chaos. We cannot allow violence to destabilise the political process.

We urge Iraq's leaders to work together urgently in the coming weeks to find a peaceful, inclusive solution to the political crisis. The political impasse has gone on too long. This will enable Iraq to address and tackle the considerable challenges faced by its people, from ensuring the country's long term security, to tackling climate change, delivering urgent economic reform, and reconstructing the areas of the country liberated from the control of Da'esh.

Second, the UK condemns in the strongest terms Iran's indiscriminate missile attack on Kurdish towns on the 28th of September, which led to the loss of innocent lives and damaged civilian infrastructure. These attacks are a violation of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and are wholly unacceptable. They demonstrate a repeated pattern of destabilising activity in the region by Iran. We stand with the Kurdistan Regional Government in condemning these attacks and continue to support the security of Iraq, including the Kurdistan region.

Third, we need to manage carefully the humanitarian risks. We welcome the efforts by the FAO and the WFP to support food production and sustainable resource management. We urge regional neighbours to engage with the government of Iraq on water shortages. The UK is also working with UNDP to support the government of Iraq in dealing with the worst effects of climate change, including providing support on the governance of water resources.

Finally, we welcome the Special Representative's update on missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property. We note the progress made on the identification of burial sites, including in Najaf, and we urge continued progress on this file.

Mr President, the fundamental point is this: As the Special Representative has said, Iraq's political leaders must step up their efforts to resolve the current impasse and begin delivering for the Iraqi people. And as a Council,

we must be united in encouraging progress on this.

Thank you.