

## UN chief voices concern over 'potentially destabilizing effects' of Kurdish referendum

25 September 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres voiced concern about the “potentially destabilizing effects” of today’s referendum in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

“The Secretary-General respects the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Iraq and considers that all outstanding issues between the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government should be resolved through structured dialogue and constructive compromise,” his Spokesman, Stéphane Dujarric, said in a [statement](#).

“The Secretary-General expects that United Nations-mandated activities across Iraq, including in the Kurdistan region, will be allowed to continue unhindered.”

Last week, both Mr. Guterres and the Security Council voiced their concern that the referendum was scheduled to be held amid ongoing operations to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da’esh) – in which Kurdish forces have played a critical role.

The referendum could also detract from efforts to ensure the safe, voluntary return of over three million refugees and internally displaced persons, they noted.