



SUMMARY

Through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), established in 2003, the United Nations, guided by successive Security Council resolutions, has worked to assist the Government and people of Iraq through efforts to promote dialogue, assistance in the holding of two national elections and a referendum, support to the drafting of the Iraqi constitution, contributing to the coordination of humanitarian assistance and promoting the protection of human rights. By adopting resolution 1770 (2007) on 10 August, the Council extended and strengthened UNAMI's mandate in Iraq, and recommends an expanded role in the country in support of the efforts of the Iraqi people and Government to strengthen governmental institutions, promote political dialogue and, engage neighboring, assist vulnerable groups, including refugees and internally displaced persons, and promote the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reforms. Currently, UNAMI is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq (SRSG), Ashraf Qazi. He succeeded the late Sergio Vieira de Mello who was among 22 UN staff members killed by a suicide bomb attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003. This attack led to a re-location of UN international staff from Iraq. The SRSG will be succeeded by Staffan de Mistura, who was designated to assume his responsibilities in Baghdad starting the first week of November 2007.

It should be noted that UN staff began returning, under heightened security, in April 2004. Currently there are nearly 300 UN international staff and nearly 400 national staff serving in Iraq, Kuwait and Jordan. In welcoming the opportunity to enhance support for Iraq under Resolution 1770 (2007), Secretary General Ban Ki-moon emphasized that staff security will remain a paramount concern.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Security Council extends UNAMI mandate

The Security Council on 10 August 2007 renewed and strengthened the mandate of UNAMI in Resolution 1770 (2007). The Secretary-General in a statement welcoming the decision of the Council stressed that the United Nations was deeply committed to helping the people of Iraq, and said he was "pleased to have the opportunity to now enhance, where possible, our contributions in crucial areas such as national reconciliation, regional dialogue, humanitarian assistance and human rights."

He also noted that while the United Nations looks forward to working in close partnership with the leaders and people of Iraq, "a peaceful and prosperous future is for Iraqis themselves to create, with the international community lending support to their efforts." The Secretary-General paid tribute to the brave men and women who continue to serve the United Nations in Iraq and stressed that "as we move forward, their safety and security will remain a paramount concern."

Iraq Compact Review

The United Nations on 20 July hosted a meeting in New York to review the first annual progress report (<http://www.uniraq.org/ici/ICI%202007%20Mid%20Year%20progress%20Report.pdf>) of the International Compact with Iraq, a comprehensive programme of reforms and investments to be carried out by the Government of Iraq over five years, with the support of the international community.

The report noted progress toward establishing unified security forces, legislative actions and the UN-supported constitutional review process, but also stressed the need for continued support from the international community. The Compact was launched by Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Kamel al-Maliki and United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in Sharm el-Sheikh on 3 May 2007.

MANDATE

The Security Council by resolution 1770 (2007) extended the duration of UNAMI for another 12 months and broadened the mission's mandate to advise, support and assist "as circumstances permit" the people and the Government of Iraq on:

- ◆ advancing their inclusive, political dialogue and national reconciliation;
- ◆ developing processes for holding elections and referenda;
- ◆ reviewing the Constitution and the implementation of constitutional provisions, as well as on developing processes to resolve disputed internal boundaries;
- ◆ facilitating regional dialogue, including on issues of border security, energy, and refugees;
- ◆ planning, funding and implementing reintegration programmes;
- ◆ planning for the conduct of a comprehensive census.

The mission is also tasked "as circumstances permit" to promote, support, and facilitate, in coordination with the Government of Iraq:

- ◆ the safe, orderly, and voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons, and the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance;
- ◆ the implementation of the International Compact with Iraq, including coordination with donors and international financial institutions;
- ◆ the coordination and implementation of programmes to improve Iraq's capacity to provide essential services for its people and continue active donor coordination of critical reconstruction and assistance programmes through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI);
- ◆ economic reform, capacity building and the conditions for sustainable development, including through coordination with national and regional organizations and, as appropriate, civil society, donors, and the international financial institutions;
- ◆ the development of effective civil, social and essential services, including training and conferences in Iraq when possible.

The mission is further mandated to promote the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform in order to strengthen the rule of law in Iraq.

The previous mandate of UNAMI, under Security Council resolution 1546 (2004), focused on: assisting with the holding of elections; promoting national dialogue and consensus-building on the drafting of a national constitution; advising the Government of Iraq in the development of effective civil and social services; contributing to the coordination and delivery of reconstruction, development, and humanitarian assistance; promoting the protection of human rights, national reconciliation, and judicial and legal reform in order to strengthen the rule of law in Iraq; advising and assisting the Government of Iraq on planning for the eventual conduct of a comprehensive census.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ◆ The UN assisted in the formation of the first functional and democratically-elected Iraqi parliament in 40 years.
- ◆ The UN helped draft the 2005 Iraqi Constitution.
- ◆ The UN helped organize the successful implementation of two rounds of general elections and a national referendum on the Constitution.
- ◆ UNAMI assisted planning the legislative agenda of the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) and observed the selection process of the nine Commissioners by the Council of Representatives (COR). UNAMI continues to provide technical assistance to IHEC.
- ◆ The UN has provided support to the government of Iraq in delivering basic social services in health, education, water and sanitation and employment as well as in raising awareness of human rights.
- ◆ The UN has facilitated an enhanced partnership with the international community in support of the country's transition through both the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) and the International Compact with Iraq (ICI).

CONSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

- ◆ The Office of Constitutional Support (OCS) is currently focused on the provision of technical support and assistance to the Constitutional Review Committee of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, within the formal review process of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution. In particular, OCS has provided the Constitutional Review Committee with a set of recommendations on potential amendments to specific areas of the Constitution, including federalism/fiscal federalism (wealth sharing), the judiciary, the Federation Council or upper house, independent institutions and human rights.
- ◆ In early 2007, OCS organized and led a series of study tours and multiparty dialogues for the benefit of members of the Constitutional Review Committee, with the assistance and support of the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS).
- ◆ Prior to beginning its deliberations on the Constitution, members of the Committee visited Spain, Germany and Malaysia, to gain a comparative perspective of federalism. They also discussed the future of the Iraqi judiciary in Cairo, as well as federalism and fiscal federalism in Dubai.

UN CLUSTER APPROACH

Some 16 UN agencies, funds and offices constitute the UN Country Team. To ensure integrated strategic planning, the agencies participate in the seven clusters addressing the following sectors:

- A. Agriculture, Food Security, Environment and Natural Resources Management;
- B. Education and Culture;
- C. Governance and Human Development;
- D. Health and Nutrition;
- E. Infrastructure Rehabilitation;
- F. Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Durable Solutions;
- G. Support to the Electoral Process.

The Clusters are responsible for the review and endorsement of projects to ensure they are in keeping with the National Development Strategy. Projects are then submitted for review and approval by the Iraq Strategic Review Board. In light of the current humanitarian crisis, which UNAMI reported in May “requires immediate recognition and support,” the Cluster mechanism is being reviewed to determine how it might be adapted or integrated into the humanitarian coordination requirements.

FUNDING

The Madrid Conference, held in October 2003, initiated the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI). To date, more than \$1.2 billion has been deposited by 25 countries into the two Iraq Trust Funds that constitute IRFFI, i.e. the UN Development Group (UNDG) Iraq Trust Fund and the World Bank Iraq Trust Fund.

The IRFFI is strongly linked to the National Development Strategy, and therefore is primarily intended to fund reconstruction and development initiatives. A humanitarian funding mechanism is being devised to ensure a well-resourced response potential for the UN and its partners. An initial \$500,000 is required to activate the new fund.

PROJECTS AND IMPLEMENTATION CONSTRAINTS

The projects implemented by participating UN organizations with funding through the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund (ITF) are based on the joint UN/World Bank Needs Assessment and emerging Iraqi priorities and plans, as indicated in the National Development Strategy and the International Compact with Iraq. The UN, in consultation with the Iraqi authorities, has developed a Joint UN-Iraq Strategic Assistance Plan, as well as the recently endorsed Joint Priority Action Plan which has been designed to illustrate the UN’s support to the International Compact with Iraq. All ITF-funded projects pass through the Iraqi Strategic Review Board.

As of September 2007 a total of 152 projects have been approved, for more than \$1 billion. Total actual disbursements amount to approximately \$648 million, representing 63% of total approved funds, while total commitments amount to about \$765 million, representing 74% of approved funds.

Security represents the greatest implementation constraint, limiting access to areas of need and requiring the UN to use a remote management mechanism to implement activities. Reliance on national and international NGO partners is also part of and key to our mechanism, which has had the secondary effect of strengthening civil society capacity in Iraq.

HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION AND RESPONSE

UNAMI has provided capacity building and support to the Government of Iraq on humanitarian issues over the past 24 months, including the secondment of advisors to the Prime Minister’s Office, as well as advocacy through human rights reports and other public documents. Recently, the UN and its partners developed the Strategic Framework for Humanitarian Action in Iraq, which has been fully endorsed by

the Government of Iraq as well as by the international humanitarian community. The process of developing the operational plan is underway. The Strategic Framework seeks to address the growing humanitarian crisis, in which eight million Iraqis are in need of humanitarian assistance. Of those eight million, four million Iraqis have left their homes and more than two million are now refugees in neighboring countries.

In the past 24 months, UNAMI has disbursed more than \$1.3 million in small grants through NGO partners, providing food and non-food items, emergency health supplies, water and sanitation, educational materials, and shelter to IDPs throughout the country.

In 2007, \$600,000 in humanitarian assistance has been programmed, with an additional \$660,000 in expenditures planned should funding be available.

The UN and its operational partners continued to face increasing challenges that have profound consequences on Iraqi civilians. The appalling security situation remains a major obstacle facing many people. The provision of basic services has been compromised by insecurity, population movements, brain drain and a breakdown in the public service infrastructure and systems. Serious problems with water quality and sewage treatment caused the outbreak of cholera on 26 August in the Kurdish region. According to reports, thousands of cases of diarrhea (not necessarily related to cholera) and 10 confirmed cholera deaths were registered. The outbreak has also spread to Erbil Governorate, resulting in thousands more. Of the cases reported, 30% were children under five years of age. To address the situation, the United Nations Country Team implemented and advocated for increased coordination among the various national and international stakeholders to bring about effective public health interventions and assist with the development of accurate epidemiological profiles. Additionally, UN agencies have been providing technical advice and kits containing antibiotics and other supplies to help combat the outbreak. They also provided assistance to the health authorities for risk assessment, strengthening the surveillance system and improving coordination through a multi-sectoral operations room in health, water and environment in the provincial ministry of health.

Refugees in the region

Tackling and addressing the situation of IDPs and Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries is also a challenging task to the various stakeholders. In this regard, UNAMI supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the preparation for the first meeting of neighboring countries on refugees, convened on 26 July in Amman. The purpose of the meeting was to examine ways to ease up the burden on the host countries, particularly Jordan and Syria, in having two million Iraqi refugees. Participants agreed to consolidate objectives and establish working groups in the various key sectors (health, education, economic impacts and protection) under the auspices of a tripartite arrangement, where the UN is the observer and liaison between the host governments and Iraq.

UN agencies are providing food and other assistance to refugees in the region. The UN has sent about 10,000 text messages on mobile phones to inform Iraqi refugees in Syria of the international food distribution program which has begun in September.

UNHCR and the World Food Program will initially distribute enough rations to feed 33,000 Iraqis in Syria and about 50,000 by the end of the year. The UN agencies have pledged about \$4.14 million to provide food for the next four months to Iraqi refugees.

On 27 July, the UN launched a \$129 million appeal to ensure that tens of thousands of children who have fled Iraq will be able to continue their education. UNHCR and UNICEF are supporting host governments such as Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon in providing schooling for hundreds of thousands of school-age Iraqi refugees during the 2007-8 school year, 250,000 of them are in Syria alone.

The two UN agencies have also established an Emergency Education Taskforce to tackle the issues preventing Iraqi refugees from receiving schooling. By the end of this year, UNHCR expects to have given more than \$20 million to the Syrian Ministry of Education.

UNHCR plans to offer transportation to other schools with space, temporary classrooms and extra funding to pay teachers' salaries for school with double-shift systems to aid overwhelmed by applications from Iraqi children.

On 29 July, the World Health Organization (WHO) convened a meeting of health officials from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Syria in Damascus, to plan ways to deliver health care to Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries. Under the health component, UNHCR and its partners, particularly the Red Crescent Societies, will focus on the immediate provision of medical care, rehabilitation of hospitals, the opening of clinics, capacity building for medical staff and provision of new medical equipment, including at least 11 ambulances in Syria.

Families and Communities

Iraqi families and communities continue to suffer from conflict. For example, the devastation caused by the bombing, of 14 August in Sinjar of Northern Iraq, was horrendous leaving 430 persons dead, more than 500 wounded and approximately 500 homes destroyed. In this regard, UNAMI's response entailed the coordination efforts of all UN agencies through its offices in Baghdad, Erbil and Amman. Together with federal and regional authorities, including international organizations and NGOs, UNAMI sought to strengthen the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the victims of this atrocious attack. Through this UNAMI ensured that UN humanitarian assistance had been distributed. Additionally, UNAMI expressed concern over the shelling of areas in Northern Iraq that have created panic among civilians and caused damage.

For further information, please call UNAMI Information Office at: +964 7901 931 281, Via HQ NY: +1914 822 7252 or +964 7901 940 146; or contact Arikat@un.org or jamalr@un.org; or visit UNAMI's website: www.uniraq.org