



# Security Council

Fifty-ninth year

*Provisional***5033**<sup>rd</sup> meetingTuesday, 14 September 2004, 10.20 a.m.  
New York

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo . . . . .	(Spain)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria . . . . .	Mr. Baali
	Angola . . . . .	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Benin . . . . .	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil . . . . .	Mr. Sardenberg
	Chile . . . . .	Mr. Muñoz
	China . . . . .	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France . . . . .	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany . . . . .	Mr. Pleuger
	Pakistan . . . . .	Mr. Akram
	Philippines . . . . .	Mr. Baja
	Romania . . . . .	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Denisov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Danforth

## Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 30 of resolution  
1546 (2004) (S/2004/710)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

## **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

## **The situation between Iraq and Kuwait**

### **Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 30 of resolution 1546 (2004) (S/2004/710)**

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Iraq, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Istrabadi (Iraq) took a seat at the Council table.*

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 30 of resolution 1546 (2004), document S/2004/710.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, and by Mr. John Danforth, representative of the United States of America, on behalf of the multinational force.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq.

**Mr. Qazi:** I am honoured to brief the Council for the first time since my appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General. My predecessor, the late Sergio Vieira de Mello, did so just over a year ago. In paying tribute to his memory, I intend for him and his colleagues who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the service of the people of Iraq to be an inspiration and a standard for my team and myself. I am indeed profoundly gratified and privileged to have been given this opportunity and responsibility to implement the mandate of the United Nations, as circumstances permit, in Iraq.

I am here today to introduce the first report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 30 of Security Council resolution 1546 (2004) (S/2004/710). This report is intended to provide Council members with an update on United Nations activities in Iraq since the Secretary-General's last report of 5 August 2004 (S/2004/625). It focuses on our priority tasks set forth in resolution 1546 (2004), particularly with regard to the National Conference and preparations for the elections scheduled for January 2005. It also provides an update on security arrangements for the United Nations presence in Iraq. The report is in large part self-explanatory, and I will therefore limit myself to a few brief observations.

The tragic human dimension of the current situation in Iraq was brought home to all of us today, with almost 50 people losing their lives to yet another bombing. I condemn such acts of violence, whose primary victims are innocent civilians. It is a sign of the resurgence of the vicious circle of violence that is halting the process of rebuilding the country. Improving the security situation is a collective responsibility that we all share.

I arrived along with members of my team in Baghdad on 13 August 2004, on the eve of the National Conference. During the 13 days that I spent in Baghdad, I had meetings with the Iraqi Government and political leadership, prominent members of civil society and representatives of the diplomatic community. The return to Iraq of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the international staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has been warmly

welcomed. I would, in particular, like to take this opportunity to thank the Iraqi Interim Government for its hospitality and support. I would also like to thank the multinational force for its support.

The National Conference, which took place from 15 to 18 August 2004 against the backdrop of the Najaf crisis, provided me with a unique introduction to the diversity and complexity of the Iraqi political landscape. I was made aware of both the extraordinary potential of Iraqi society and the serious challenges that the country must overcome in order to realize its potential.

Along with the President, the Prime Minister and the Vice-President of Iraq, I had the honour of addressing the inaugural session of the National Conference on behalf of the Secretary-General. I urged the delegates to the Conference to avail themselves of the opportunity to elect a representative Interim National Council that would help broaden and strengthen the political process and would enable their country to successfully make the transition to a constitutional democracy in accordance with the schedule indicated by resolution 1546 (2004).

Prior to my arrival, the United Nations, in consultation with the Preparatory Committee for the National Conference, had encouraged broad participation in the Conference and advised on a number of important issues, including procedures for preparation, the conduct of proceedings, the agenda and the public information campaign. It was emphasized that the Interim National Council to be elected by the Conference needed to be as inclusive, diverse and representative as possible for it to be credible and effective in preparing for the national elections scheduled to take place by 31 January 2005 at the latest.

Despite the undoubted shortcomings of the National Conference, the distractions of the Najaf crisis and the very adverse security environment in which the Conference took place, the convening of the National Conference and the election of the Interim National Council must be adjudged a qualified success and a first step towards a more participatory, pluralistic and inclusive polity than Iraq has previously experienced. While the Conference was attended by more than a thousand delegates — including 70 parties that collectively added up to a significant portion of the Iraqi political spectrum — the fact is that a number of

civic groups, small parties and independents felt excluded. Some significant political groups chose not to attend. Inducing them to participate in the political and electoral process should become a matter of high priority for the Iraqi Government.

This will not be an easy undertaking, as the recent violence in Najaf and Kufa and the current violence in Baghdad, Falluja, Ramadi, Samarra, Mosul, etc., amply demonstrate. The transition process is fragile. Serious differences within Iraqi society have yet to be politically and effectively addressed. The transfer of sovereignty to the Interim Government has not been accompanied by an improvement in the security situation. That is the central challenge facing Iraq today. The main victims of the violence in Iraq are Iraqi civilians. The climate of fear remains entrenched.

Ultimately, this situation can only be politically resolved. That fact places a great burden of responsibility on all parties. Neither national reconciliation nor specific political programmes can be successfully pursued through an excessive reliance on the threat or use of force. All the parties and movements in Iraq must take care not to lose sight of their shared interest in a united, independent, prosperous, stable, secure and peaceful Iraq. Only then will they appreciate their respective stakes in politically addressing their differences in a spirit of compromise, however intractable those differences may appear today. The Interim Government and the Interim Council have a primary responsibility in that regard. They are working in that direction, but they will need all the assistance and encouragement they can get.

In the brief period before the planned elections, the political process will have to be further broadened to include those parties and movements that have so far, for one reason or another, tended to stay away or have allowed themselves to be tempted by the path of violence instead of pursuing dialogue and accommodation. Only then can the political process begin to embrace the full range of aspirations that define the politics of Iraq and deliver the peace and security dividend so dearly yearned for by the people of Iraq. As Special Representative of the Secretary-General, I shall be ready to contribute to any facilitating role that the United Nations is able to play in the political and electoral process in Iraq, as well as to the humanitarian, reconstruction and development aspects of UNAMI's mandate.

The transitional process will require all parties to share a transcending national vision, including agreement on benchmarks and the end objectives of the process. The next benchmark in the Iraqi transition process will be the elections. As should be clear, the electoral process will be an Iraqi process, conducted by Iraqis for Iraqis. It cannot be anything else. The Iraqi people have the right to expect — and do expect — the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, the Interim Government and National Council to fulfil their shared responsibility to enable them to fully and securely participate in credible and fair elections as currently scheduled. In that regard, the Iraqi Government will have the responsibility to ensure the independence and financial autonomy of the Iraqi Electoral Commission. This is crucial to enabling the Commission to discharge its electoral responsibilities to the Iraqi people.

UNAMI is committed to actively assist and support the Iraqi Electoral Commission in administering, conducting and monitoring a fair and credible Iraqi electoral process. The extent and scale of UNAMI activity in that regard will necessarily be determined by prevailing circumstances, including the security environment. UNAMI will not run or administer the Iraqi elections. Iraq is a sovereign country with a sovereign Government and an independent Electoral Commission. But UNAMI has a mandate from the Security Council and, accordingly, a responsibility to the Iraqi people to render a leading role in giving advice and providing technical support, training and funding to the Iraqi Electoral Commission, which has the exclusive authority to organize and conduct the elections. The electoral component of UNAMI is already assisting the Iraqi Electoral Commission in preparing for national and other elections that are scheduled to take place simultaneously by 31 January 2005. Within the prevailing circumstances, UNAMI will extend its assistance and support to the Commission to the best of its ability and with the utmost responsibility.

Similarly, UNAMI continues to facilitate a sustained effort, from both inside and outside Iraq, to support the coordination efforts of the Iraqi authorities in capacity-building, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development. UNAMI is also liaising with Iraqi authorities, civil society and others to promote human rights and the rule of law, as well as developing its efforts for informing the Iraqi public on the transitional process. Here I wish to pay tribute to

the dedication of the UNAMI staff in Iraq and in the region, particularly our national staff, who continue to work under very difficult conditions.

All these activities reflect the need for a comprehensive long-term approach to rebuilding Iraq — including politically and in terms of security, law and order, socio-economic development and rights empowerment. To succeed, Iraq will need the continued support of the international community, and I look forward to a constructive outcome of the next donors meeting, to be held in Tokyo in October. The ongoing regional dialogue and cooperation between Iraq and its neighbours is also encouraging. The development of Iraq is as much in the interest of the region as the development of the region is in the interest of Iraq.

With the deployment of UNAMI to Baghdad, the Blue Flag is once more flying in Iraq, albeit, necessarily, in the Green, or International, Zone. Iraqi expectations of UNAMI are high. For many Iraqis, UNAMI involvement with the political and electoral processes is a *sine qua non* for their credibility and effectiveness.

There is much work to be done. However, the current security environment is far from conducive to the deployment of UNAMI international staff to Iraq, except in minimal numbers. It also largely confines UNAMI's movements to the International, or Green, Zone, which limits UNAMI's ability to interact with a sufficiently wide range of the Iraqi political spectrum. A light footprint is, however, unavoidable. At all times security must be the overriding guiding principle for determining the number of international staff that can be deployed in Iraq. That is why it will be essential for the Iraqis to own their political process.

As I am Head of UNAMI and Designated Official for the security of mission personnel, both national and international, security has to be my paramount, if not exclusive, concern and obligation. It has to be the key operating principle. Here I wish to thank the Iraqi authorities and the multinational force for the protection currently provided to us on an interim basis. It is crucial that the necessary logistical and security arrangements for our operations be finalized as soon as possible. The United Nations is making every effort to support the efforts of the multinational force in this regard, as well as to generate UNAMI's own internal security capacity.

It is important, however, that the distinct entity of the multinational force mandated by the Council to provide security for our presence in Iraq should be identified or deployed immediately prior to the deployment of UNAMI guard units. The need for a clear and unambiguous legal basis for obtaining and deploying guards units for the protection of United Nations facilities in Iraq is emphasized in paragraph 30 of the Secretary-General's report (S/2004/710). The Secretary-General intends to write to the Security Council on this matter shortly, and I would like to urge the Council to consider that letter at its earliest convenience.

Let me conclude, Mr. President, by noting that Iraq's transitional process is compressed within a rather short period of time. A number of timelines have to be met between now and national elections under an approved constitution by the end of next year. The international community must do everything possible to assist the Iraqis. Every effort must be made to improve the security environment, as an acceptable security environment is necessary for political progress. But equally, an inclusive, sustained and proactive political process, involving dialogue, mutual accommodation and a willingness to compromise, will improve the chances for a significant reduction in violence and improvement in the security environment.

My brief introductory stay in Baghdad has convinced me that the people of Iraq desperately want peace and to be masters in their own country. They have the talent and the will to peaceably persevere on the path towards those objectives. They see an effective role for the United Nations in that process as critical to the realization of their hopes. They appreciate that despite an adverse security situation the United Nations returned to Baghdad. Accordingly, while necessarily constrained by the overriding consideration of security, it will be my effort as Special Representative of the Secretary-General not to disappoint Iraqi expectations. UNAMI will do everything possible to support the Iraqi Government and people in their efforts for the political and economic reconstruction of their country.

In discharging my tasks in Iraq, I am very conscious that I am advancing on the path established by Lakhdar Brahimi, with the able assistance of Jamal Benomar. Mr. Brahimi's sagacity has been critical in promoting the necessary political process for restoring normalcy in Iraq.

In the months ahead, the continued support of the Security Council will be of vital importance to maintain Iraq's transition by building on the work done so far. I look forward to a continuous process of consultation and interaction with the Council as we move forward with the implementation of resolution 1546 (2004). I also look forward to working closely with the Iraqi Interim Government and National Council, Iraqi political parties and movements, Iraqi business leaders, non-governmental organizations, professional associations and civil society and human rights advocacy groups, as well as with the neighbouring, regional and donor countries, to help provide an enabling environment for Iraq's political and development process.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. Qazi, for the comprehensive briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. John Danforth, representative of the United States of America, who will speak on behalf of the multinational force.

**Mr. Danforth** (United States of America): I want to thank Special Representative Qazi for his very persuasive report, and beyond that for the commendable job that he and his colleagues are doing for the people of Iraq.

I am pleased to report to the Security Council on the efforts and progress of the multinational force, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1546 (2004). The activities that I will discuss demonstrate that the multinational force, working closely with the Iraqi Interim Government, remains committed to a secure, stable, and democratic Iraq. Today I will report on four broad areas. First, I will discuss the current security situation in Iraq. Secondly, I will discuss the status of the Multinational Force's (MNF) joint effort with the Iraqi Interim Government to build and deploy Iraq's security forces. Thirdly, I will report on the status of efforts to rebuild the infrastructure of Iraq. Finally, I will discuss our hopes and expectations regarding the future involvement of the United Nations in the rebuilding of Iraq.

My remarks today will provide a summary, but we have also distributed a longer written report and it is posted on our web site. It will also be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2004/730.

With regard to the security situation, let me address the terrible events of the last 24 hours before I go into details of the last three months. Those events bring to the fore what will be a theme in my remarks. The security situation is fragile, attacks are persistent, and lives continue to be lost. There are setbacks and we have to acknowledge them. But that only strengthens our resolve.

The MNF consists of forces from over 30 countries. Countries other than the United States contribute approximately 23,000 personnel. Working closely with Iraqi Security Forces, those brave men and women have performed with admirable professionalism in their efforts to improve the security situation in Iraq.

In the two weeks following the assumption of responsibility and authority by the fully sovereign and independent Iraqi Interim Government on 28 June 2004, there was a large drop in acts of violence against MNF operations. However, in the weeks that followed, insurgents and terrorists increased their attacks against Government officials, civilian contractors, foreign nationals, and the Iraqi people. As we all know, the anti-Iraqi forces resorted to horrific tactics against civilians. In August, largely as a result of Moqtada al-Sadr's illegal Mahdi militia resuming its insurrection in Najaf and the Al Thawra neighbourhood in Baghdad, attacks on the MNF increased as well.

To respond to these open challenges to the Iraqi Government, the MNF has employed new counter-insurgency tactics and continues to train and deploy Iraqi security forces. The key to defeating the insurgents and terrorists, who are tenacious and remain determined to undermine the Iraqi Government, is to continue training and deploying Iraqi forces at an accelerated pace. In its endeavours, the MNF coordinates closely with the Iraqi Interim Government.

Concerning the security forces, let me turn to the status of the MNF's joint efforts with the Government to develop Iraqi security forces. The Iraqi security forces fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defense or the Ministry of Interior. Forces under the Ministry of Defense are the Iraqi Army, including the Iraqi National Guard, the Intervention Force, the Special Operations Force, the Iraqi Air Force and the Coastal Defense Force. As of 10 September, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense had over 231,000 Iraqi security forces either on duty or in training. Iraqi security

forces falling under the Ministry of the Interior's jurisdiction also have a crucial role in national security. Those forces include the Iraqi Police Service, the Civil Intervention Force and the Department of Border Enforcement.

The Iraqi Police now number over 86,000. We are currently training the civil intervention force, an emergency response force, and a dignitary protection force. The goal is to have 135,000 well-equipped, highly motivated police when training efforts are complete. The Department of Border Enforcement has hired over 14,000 border police — with a goal of hiring 32,000. In addition to the forces from the Ministries of Defense and the Interior, the other Ministries are guarded by the Facilities Protection Service, which has nearly 74,000 personnel on duty.

Much work remains to be done and the insurgents have proven persistent in their attacks against the Iraqi Interim Government, their security forces, the Iraqi people, and all those seeking to assist and rebuild the new Iraq. Developing competent leadership for those forces is a top priority, and sometimes has been a challenge.

We are currently focused on assisting the Iraqi Government in its efforts to instil a sense of responsibility and professionalism in the Iraqi forces, and we are optimistic that we are achieving good results. The Iraqi National Guard, for example, has performed especially well in recent weeks — fighting bravely against insurgent activities. The performance of the Iraqi Police has also improved markedly since April. But there is still a lot of work ahead.

As to infrastructure development, a stable, peaceful Iraq requires more than well-trained and well-equipped security and police forces. It also requires the development of a new infrastructure and the creation of economic opportunity for the Iraqi people. To that end, forces assigned to the MNF, especially civil affairs personnel, have worked to restore essential services to the Iraqi people. For example, engineering units have helped to restore power to pre-conflict levels throughout Iraq, although the events of yesterday indicate that maintaining those basic services continues to be a challenge. They have repaired numerous bridges, ports, roads, and railroads. They have constructed schools, hospitals, post offices and other public buildings. Medical units have developed children's vaccination programmes. Civil affairs

personnel work daily with the Iraqis to help them form the structures needed to build a democratic society. The MNF will also be available to provide security for the upcoming Iraqi elections.

With reference to the role of the United Nations, while we see real progress in the efforts of the MNF to provide the means for a free, stable Iraq, I must state candidly that great challenges remain. We believe that the United Nations will be an important part of the efforts to meet those challenges. Security Council resolution 1546 (2004) endows the United Nations with a leading role to advise and assist the Iraqis in preparing and holding national elections. The Transitional Administrative Law requires the elections to be held no later than January 2005. Let there be no doubt: we are committed to that timetable.

Resolution 1546 (2004) also notes the creation of a distinct entity under the unified command of the MNF that is dedicated to providing security to the United Nations in Iraq. I think I speak for all Member Nations when I say that the horror and sorrow of the attack of 19 August 2003 are still very much with us. With the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Iraq, Mr. Qazi, and his staff of 35 dedicated people now on the ground in Iraq, I can state that the United States and the MNF remain committed to working with the international community to ensure that the security needs of the United Nations are met. But that effort merits international support if it is to be successful. The United States strongly urges that Member States contribute to the future of Iraq by providing financial assistance and troops to provide security for the United Nations in Iraq.

Time is of the essence, particularly as we look to the upcoming elections, which are to take place no later than 31 January 2005. Working together, we will help the Iraqi Government ensure that the people of Iraq reach this important milestone.

The assumption of governing authority by the Iraqi Interim Government marked the beginning of a new era for the people of Iraq. However, while the new Government is widely supported by the public, the transfer did not mean an end to the challenges that face us. Well-armed insurgents and terrorists remained determined to assassinate leaders, take hostages and attack the multinational force and Iraqi forces. Only the rule of law, backed by well-trained Iraqi forces, supported by a thriving infrastructure and economy and

energized by a free and fair elections process, can defeat those who wish to destabilize the country.

We look forward to increased United Nations activities in Iraq, especially those that will promote the democratic process. You can rest assured that the multinational force remains committed to working with the Iraqi people and the United Nations to make that possible.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ambassador Danforth for the comprehensive information that he has provided.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

**Mr. Al-Istrabadi** (Iraq): At the outset, I should like to take this opportunity, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to commend your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for his efforts last month. I thank each of the members of the Security Council for allowing me the great privilege of addressing the Council today.

Since I last sat here on 8 June 2004, I can say that we have made genuine progress in re-integrating Iraq into the community of nations. Despite an unprecedented rise in terrorist violence, whose aim was to impede the transfer of authority to a sovereign Government, such a Government took office ahead of the schedule set by the Law of Administration of the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period (TAL). Pursuant to the annex to the TAL, a national conference was held in August, and an Interim National Assembly has been formed. Today, its government is truly the most representative in Iraq's history, not merely in terms of ethnic or confessional make-up, but — equally importantly — in terms of the broad range of political ideologies and beliefs held by its members. It is truly a Government of national unity. While there are difficulties — of which this Council is aware — we are, brick by brick, rebuilding a cohesive Iraqi State based upon the consent of the governed.

A principal function of the interim Government is to provide for elections, as required by the TAL and affirmed in resolution 1546 (2004). As in the past, terrorists are determined to frustrate this progress. As Iraqis meet each landmark date — and particularly as we approach and hold elections — the terrorists know that, increasingly, their days are numbered. They are

now working, in a frenzy, therefore, to delay elections. How else do we explain the most recent violence, particularly events such as the barbarous bombings of Christian churches on a Sunday evening, while men, women and children were in the very act of worshipping God? I must also note the events that took place today. This is not the first time that those who are attempting to participate in rebuilding the security infrastructure of Iraq have been targeted. Just as the efforts to dissuade Iraqis from participating in forming the security structures have failed in the past, I am convinced that they will fail today, as well.

It is, no doubt, those events which the Secretary-General contemplates in his report, whose most consistent theme is the extant security situation. Those events, recalled in light of the heinous murder of Sergio Vieira de Mello — a man I had the privilege of getting to know and to whom Iraq will long owe a debt of gratitude — are no doubt factors in the apparent reticence of the United Nations and some countries to engage fully in Iraq. Yet keeping the United Nations and the world out of Iraq is one of the tactical goals of the terrorists — and they have, unfortunately, already met with some success in that respect.

It is a fact that Iraq needs the technical support of the United Nations in order to hold elections. We know that. The United Nations knows that. The countries represented at this table and beyond know that. And so do the terrorists. They are determined, at any cost, to prevent that vital assistance from going forward. They must not succeed.

It is also a fact that the number of United Nations workers now in Iraq is inadequate. The Secretary-General notes that the total number of United Nations employees has been limited to 35. Yet for the United Nations to have adequate teams of elections experts in Iraq, it must increase that number. More is needed on a going-forward basis than the administrative expertise provided up to this point, however invaluable it has been. The daunting job now begins, for instance, of doing the fieldwork to set up registration sites and to register voters. Iraq's sons and daughters, scattered in diaspora for too long, desperately and universally wish to participate in these elections. Countless other such issues in need of discussion and solution exist, and the expertise of the United Nations in resolving these issues is indispensable. There is simply no other place for us to turn; no one does a better job than the United Nations of assisting in organizing credible, honest

elections in emerging democracies. Here, I must commend Ambassador Qazi for his efforts in Iraq in the time that he has been there.

We understand the concern for security, however. We have appealed to the United Nations, as a body, fully to engage in Iraq. And we appeal to the world community to do the same — for Iraq needs you, as well. In the brief time since I assumed my responsibilities here in New York, I have been heartened to learn that several countries have agreed either to provide security forces to protect United Nations workers or to provide funding for such operations. We are grateful to those States, but more is needed. We urge other countries to pledge forces and funds to assist in securing the safety of United Nations workers in Iraq. Security is, of course, the ultimate responsibility and duty of the Iraqi Government — a fact affirmed in resolution 1546 (2004). Recognizing the exigencies, Iraq has turned to the multinational force to assist in these vital responsibilities. But the multinational force is now engaged in activities far different than the security forces about which I am speaking. The purpose and function of this force, as we see it, would be, in the first instance, to provide protection for United Nations workers as they engage in the essential activities of assisting Iraqis in holding true, fair and clean elections throughout Iraq, perhaps for the first time in our history.

Let me say a word about the political process in Iraq in the light of the security situation. We are determined to rebuild our country. We are determined never again to be subject to government by coercion and oppression. We are determined never again to be ruled against our will by men who came to power without our consent. It is to that end that our Government has announced a two-track approach to the current violence. On the one hand, we are determined that no one will achieve political ascendancy — much less legitimacy — through force of arms. Those determined to impose themselves on Iraq's polity through violence in order to return us to tyranny will find Iraqis ready to join the battle to prevent their doing so.

On the other hand, we encourage those individuals and movements who are willing to lay down their arms and abide by the rule of law and by the terms set forth by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi to enter the political process, to engage Iraq's electorate and to abide by the results of forthcoming elections.



The Prime Minister has been in dialogue with groups that have hitherto not entered the political process. We are hopeful that many will chose to join us in rebuilding Iraq, rather than continuing to obstruct the effort.

Allow me one final observation, Mr. President. Although peace has not yet obtained throughout Iraq — due mostly to the intervention of foreign religious militants and extremists and remnants of the previous regime — Euro-American pundits who predicted inter-ethnic or inter-confessional strife in post-war Iraq have been proven wrong. Whatever other problems Iraqis may now be experiencing, a civil war like that in the former Yugoslavia is not one of them. Unchastened by their prior error, many of those same pundits now call for the de facto dissolution of the country along ethnic and confessional lines. They were wrong before, and they are wrong now.

It is significant that no Iraqi today calls for the dismemberment of Iraq. We are united in our determination to forge a federal, democratic and

unified Iraq. We need the help of every Member State and of the Organization to achieve these goals. The consequences of failure are too great — not only for Iraqis but for the region and, indeed, the world. No one sitting at this table needs to be reminded of the strategic significance of Iraq and the dangers such a failure would pose. With the help of the United Nations and of those generous Member States who join the process, we pledge to strive to vindicate our goal of building the Iraq I have described. We are confident of success.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Iraq for his kind words addressed to the presidency and the Council members.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.*