



Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

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6875th meeting

Thursday, 29 November 2012, 11 a.m.

New York

President: Mr. Vinay Kumar. (India)

Members:

Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
China	Mr. Tian Lin
Colombia	Mr. Osorio
France	Mr. Briens
Germany	Mr. Wittig
Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
Russian Federation	Mr. Ilichev
South Africa	Mr. Laher
Togo	Mr. M'Beou
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
United States of America	Mr. Cenzler

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

First report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2061 (2012)
(S/2012/848)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

First report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2061 (2012) (S/2012/848)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/848, which contains the first report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2061 (2012).

I now give the floor to Mr. Kobler.

Mr. Kobler: I am honoured to present to the Council today the first report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/848) pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 2061 (2012) on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). I shall also brief Council members on the most recent developments in Iraq.

As 2012 draws to a close, it is pertinent to take stock of the progress Iraq has made during the past 12 months. During that time, Iraq has made committed efforts to enforce law and order following the withdrawal of United States forces. Reclaiming its rightful place at the diplomatic table, it successfully hosted the twenty-third Arab Summit in Baghdad in April. And in May, it hosted talks between Iran and the permanent members of the Council plus Germany.

In terms of strengthening State institutions, the Human Rights Commission was established in April and a new Board of Commissioners of the Independent High Electoral Commission was elected in September. The latter resulted in agreement on a date for Governorate Council elections in April next year. This progress, however, is endangered by two factors:

first, the stalemate between Iraq's political leaders; and secondly, developments in the region.

I regret to report to the Council that strained relations between Iraq's political leaders have endured throughout the year. One manifestation of this is the Arab-Kurdish rift. The lack of trust arises from a number of pending issues of contention, including power-sharing, security and tense relations between the Central Government and the region of Kurdistan. The resulting political deadlock is preventing the progress and reform necessary to consolidate Iraq's transition. Attempts to defuse the stalemate have most recently focused on a package of political reforms that appears to be stalled.

The Government of Iraq's decision to establish the Tigris operations command responsible for overall security in Kirkuk, Salahadin and Diyala governorates was heavily criticized by members of the Kurdistan Regional Government. A military standoff ensued, incorporating the armed forces of the respective Governments. The militarization of the situation has resulted in the regrettable death of one civilian. I should like to take this opportunity to call on the parties to exercise all due restraint at this time of increased tensions. I count on the political leadership of Iraq to resolve its differences through political dialogue and in accordance with the constitution.

In that regard, I welcome the recent efforts of Parliament Speaker Usama al-Nujaifi. I also welcome the convening of a meeting between the Iraqi Army and the Peshmerga at the technical level earlier this week in Baghdad. It is a step in the right direction. I encourage both sides to keep the door of dialogue open and to implement the understandings reached. UNAMI stands ready to facilitate any possible agreement that would de-escalate the situation and promote confidence among the various communities .

Over the past few days, dozens of Iraqi security personnel and civilians, including worshipers, have been killed and many other dozens injured in Baghdad, Kirkuk, Karbala and Fallujah. Extremists use the political differences of the leaders to ignite either sectarian or ethnic violence and tensions in Iraq. Immediate resolution and compromise on the part of all political leaders should be the response to these attempts.

The tense political standoff is thus testing Iraq's internal fault lines. August and September were the

deadliest months in the past two years. A particularly atrocious series of attacks on 27 October targeted pilgrims during the holy Eid al-Adha observance. Left unaddressed, the political impasse will leave Iraq vulnerable to the second threat to its stability — namely, the spillover from violence in the wider region.

Iraq finds itself in an increasingly unstable regional environment generated by the Syrian civil war. The Syrian conflict has exposed a complex web of interconnected and conflicting interests that threatens to engulf the region in violent conflict. With no immediate solution to the crisis in sight, there are real risks of spillover, violence and destabilization.

At the domestic level, the conflict across Iraq's border in Syria has had a significant humanitarian impact on Iraq. The crisis has also impacts had an impact on Iraq's relations with its neighbours. Iraq's relationship with Turkey has also grown increasingly tense in recent months, with an escalation in the rhetoric exchanged on both sides. The divergent positions between Iraq and other States in the region on how to address the Syrian crisis have also further strained their relations.

Within this challenging context, however, it is possible to identify opportunities for UNAMI to continue to assist Iraq's transition process. Indeed, notwithstanding the lack of progress between Iraq's political leaders in resolving their differences, Iraq's expectations of UNAMI continue to grow. UNAMI's assistance, pursuant to its Council mandate, is focusing on two priority tracks: advancing national reconciliation and dialogue, and tackling regional issues.

Since my last briefing to the Council (see S/PV.6747), UNAMI has continued to encourage political leaders to engage in inclusive dialogue to resolve their differences, in the spirit and framework of the Constitution. I have continued to conduct frequent visits to Erbil and Sulaymaniyah to promote such dialogue. I have also conducted intensive discussions both in Baghdad and Kirkuk, focusing on the holding of the long-overdue governorate council elections in Kirkuk.

UNAMI's support to the Council of Representatives, on the basis of sustained facilitation and technical advice, contributed to the selection of the new Board of Commissioners of the Independent High Electoral Commission in September. A proficient and genuinely independent Commission Board is essential at this juncture, as Iraq prepares for nationwide governorate

council elections on 20 April next year and legislative elections in 2014.

During Iraq's busy electoral calendar ahead, the stakes will be high, not only for Iraq's political leaders competing for electoral support, but also for the consolidation of Iraq's transition. The elections must be conducted credibly. Working with the new Board of Commissioners, UNAMI will continue to coordinate United Nations support for the development of a sustainable, self-reliant and professional Independent High Electoral Commission.

UNAMI also continues to facilitate political dialogue between representatives of all components in the disputed areas. UNAMI is working to facilitate consensus amongst the components of Kirkuk in view of the provincial council elections in the governorate. It has established an informal forum for dialogue with the political representatives of Kirkuk's components, with proposals in each of the following four main areas: power-sharing, determining the date of elections, security arrangements, and the review of the voter registry. So far, there has been no agreement on conducting the elections for Kirkuk provincial council, which have not taken place since 2005 due to differences on the voter registry. Elections in Kirkuk could be a stabilizing factor throughout the governorate.

Whilst relations between Baghdad and Erbil have deteriorated in some ways during Iraq's political stalemate, as highlighted in the Secretary-General's report, there is also some cause for optimism. In particular, the agreement reached to resume official oil exports from the Kurdistan region and the steps to adopt a hydrocarbons use and management framework deserve encouragement and support.

Legislation on the management of hydrocarbons and revenue-sharing has been blocked for a number of years. It has become a major source of tension between the central and Kurdistan regional Governments, and a hindrance to overall socioeconomic progress. The approval of such legislation would significantly advance the resolution of the question of the disputed internal boundaries, since a large number of unexplored oilfields lie within these areas. It would also contribute significantly to improving relations between Baghdad and Erbil.

UNAMI is also strengthening its efforts to support Iraq's legislative agenda, as mandated by the Iraqi Constitution. In addition to the hydrocarbons

legislation, we are continuing to provide technical advice and assistance on the establishment of the Federation Council, the reform of the judicial system, and the adoption of laws on minority communities and political parties.

At the regional level, Iraq continues its re-emergence onto the international stage. Earlier this year, Iraq demonstrated renewed commitment to meeting its remaining obligations under Chapter VII of the Charter and to improving its bilateral relations with Kuwait. However, progress will depend upon the restoration of confidence between both sides. Over the past few months, I stepped up my engagement with Iraq and Kuwait to see how the United Nations could best facilitate the resolution of outstanding issues in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. In that context, I recently held high-level meetings in Iraq and Kuwait in which I was encouraged by the strong commitment that both Prime Minister Al-Maliki and the Amir of Kuwait expressed to normalizing relations between their two countries. I very much hope that they will now be able to move quickly. They can count on the United Nations in that regard.

I am happy to report to the Council today that I spoke to Foreign Minister Zebari this morning. He informed me that, first, his Government had today nominated the names for the technical team of the border maintenance project and that, secondly, the Government would start immediately to update the list of farmers entitled to compensation. A meeting with the farmers will take place as soon as possible. I welcome those steps and call on the Government of Iraq to initiate work on the border maintenance project without further delay.

I also appeal to the Government of Iraq to continue to demonstrate the goodwill necessary to fulfil Iraq's other outstanding obligations, in particular with regard to missing persons and property. The commitment of Iraq to fulfil those obligations will be conducive to the normalization of relations between the two countries. I also equally call on the Government of Kuwait to continue to act in a spirit of flexibility and reciprocity, as reflected earlier this year by the important reciprocal visits of the Amir to Baghdad and the Prime Minister to Kuwait.

On a different note, I remain fully committed to continue to work with both Governments to resolve bilateral issues, at their request. I am hopeful that

agreement between Kuwait and Iraq on the cancelation of pending lawsuits against Iraqi Airways and on navigational rights in the Khor Abdullah waterway will facilitate improved relations between the two neighbours.

Iraq is a rich country, in both natural and human resources. But I am concerned by the investment climate, the impact of Iraq's red tape and the role of the public sector. Iraq's State apparatus continues to be affected by corruption and capacity shortfalls, which undermine governance and limit the delivery of services. That is exacerbating discontent, in a context where natural resources are abundant and the public's expectations for better standards of living remain partly unfulfilled.

In support of Iraq's efforts to build its institutions to provide good governance and the rule of law, UNAMI and its partners in the United Nations country team intend to increase their efforts to strengthen the independence and capacity of State institutions, including the Federal Supreme Court, the Independent High Commission for Human Rights and the Ministry of Human Rights.

UNAMI and the country team continue their efforts to strengthen the High Commission for Human Rights, which has yet to become fully operational, as well as the Ministry of Human Rights and civil society organizations. Those are key partners in monitoring the implementation of the National Action Plan on Human Rights — a milestone document that represents the Government's commitment to implement recommendations from the universal periodic review process under the auspices of the Human Rights Council.

To date this year, 123 people have been executed in Iraq, 53 of them since July. The latest executions were carried out on 11 November, when 11 convicts were executed, including one Egyptian. I continue to reiterate the Secretary-General's call in his report for the Government of Iraq to consider a moratorium on all executions, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

As I indicated to the Council in my last briefing, UNAMI will continue its close partnership with the country team, with a particular focus on three key areas with important political, developmental and governance implications, namely, youth, women and the environment.

Youth is a critical, but neglected, demographic in Iraq. The National Development Plan and the current development assistance framework highlight the importance of investing in youth. Despite that, indicators point to high education dropout rates, while Iraqi youths continue to suffer from an unemployment rate of almost 20 per cent and low levels of civic participation and engagement. To address those worrying trends, I have established a youth advisory group and appointed two young Iraqi youth ambassadors to strengthen United Nations advocacy, including through social and media outreach activities.

To generate and mobilize the Government's commitment, we are also promoting youth-orientated initiatives, including a youth parliament and a national human development report on youth for 2012, led by the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Programme, which has included a consultation process with 1,800 youths in all governorates.

We will also sustain our efforts to promote gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women. For example, we are supporting access to justice for women, as well as training police officers to provide legal assistance to women survivors of gender-based violence.

The exploitation of the environment and natural resources has far-reaching implications for the future of Iraq, which encompass political, security and developmental priorities. In particular, the generation of harmful dust storms continues to increase, bringing with them associated health hazards and hampering economic activity. UNAMI and the country team continue to work closely together on that important issue. I have attended several meetings to promote regional approaches to such transboundary issues, and I am actively working with the Government of Iraq and the United Nations Environment Programme to hold a symposium on dust storms in southern Iraq in early 2013.

Complementary efforts by UNAMI and the country team have ensured a timely and effective response to the humanitarian dimension in Iraq of the ongoing conflict in Syria, including a range of protection and relief activities. The flow of refugees has already exceeded projected numbers. As of 26 November, there were more than 50,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq. In addition, almost 55,000 Iraqis have returned from Syria since

18 July. We anticipate that the influx will continue, thereby swelling the numbers of those displaced.

The United Nations is working closely with the Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration to respond to the situation. The humanitarian country team continues to monitor the situation, and coordinates regularly with partners and Government authorities to ensure preparedness and an efficient and timely response. It has developed contingency plans in-line with the United Nations Syria regional refugee response plan, which are continuously updated in response to emerging developments. Efforts are also taking place to ensure that camps are fully equipped and prepared for the coming winter and that necessary equipment is distributed to refugees and returnees, such as blankets, kerosene and prefabricated structures instead of tents.

I also call on the Government of Iraq to reopen the Al-Qaim crossing point so that vulnerable people in need of protection be able to leave Syria.

Only 30 per cent of the third refugee response plan is covered, and many refugees continue to pour into Iraq on a daily basis. I therefore appeal to all Member States to step up and cover the remaining 70 per cent of the plan.

Finally, I wish to emphasize that Camp Hurriya was only meant to be an interim facility. As the process is now well in progress, I should like to take this opportunity to reiterate the Secretary-General's appeal to Member States to offer resettlement opportunities to former residents of Camp Ashraf. Without such an undertaking, there can be no sustainable solution for the residents. Currently, only 100 residents remain in Camp New Iraq, while more than 3,100 residents have been peacefully transferred to Camp Hurriya, near Baghdad. The Government of Iraq insists on closing Camp Ashraf in the next few days. It has requested that the last 100 residents to be relocated to Camp Hurriya. For obvious reasons, UNAMI cannot be directly involved in negotiations on the Camp Ashraf property. My colleagues and I, however, have spared no efforts over the past weeks to facilitate meetings between various merchants and the Government of Iraq.

Regretably, to date those efforts have been unsuccessful, leading to a stalemate over the past weeks. The Government of Iraq considers that stalemate as an attempt by the residents to delay the relocation of the remaining 100 persons. The Government of Iraq's patience is therefore wearing thin. I call on the residents

of Camp Ashraf to cooperate with the Government of Iraq on solving all outstanding questions related to property. We have already come a long way. I also call upon the Government of Iraq to continue the peaceful relocation of the residents, as stipulated in the memorandum of understanding, to demonstrate restraint and to be as flexible as possible when it comes to resolving property-related issues.

The United Nations monitors in Camp Hurriya monitor the human rights and humanitarian situation of the residents on a daily basis. However, they are often denied access to certain areas of the camp by the residents. That hinders the performance of their duties. They are working hard in an impartial manner under very difficult circumstances. They have my full confidence. I urge the residents to engage constructively with the Government of Iraq and the United Nations so that Camp New Iraq can be closed peacefully and efforts can focus on the residents' resettlement to third countries.

In conclusion, in the face of the many challenges ahead that I outlined earlier in my briefing, it is imperative that Iraq stay the course to complete its transition to an inclusive democracy, provide stability and prosperity for its people and exercise a positive influence in the region.

With the support of Member States, UNAMI will continue to assist the people and Government of Iraq in those truly worthy endeavours. I regret to say that the substantial cut of \$30 million to UNAMI's budget next year will require that we do more with less.

I know that I can continue to count on UNAMI's dedicated staff to work on members' behalf towards those goals. I would particularly thank the Government of Iraq for its cooperation during this year. I look forward to another year of good cooperation in 2013. Last but not least, I thank the Security Council for its continued support throughout the year.

The President: I thank Mr. Kobler for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq): Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you and your country, Mr. President, on India's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to extend my thanks to the previous Security Council President, the Permanent Representative of Guatemala, for his efforts during the month of October. I would also like to thank

Mr. Martin Kobler, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, and his team in Baghdad and New York for their tireless efforts to assist the Government and people of Iraq.

Having reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, contained in document S/2012/848, I would like to put forward the following comments.

On the political and security situation, Iraq has made significant progress in its endeavour to establish a democratic and federal State on solid foundations. In the past few months, the political parties and blocs have conducted talks and meetings to achieve political reform, in line with the requirements for the next stage in Iraq, and to reach a united national position to ensure the success of the upcoming national meeting. Despite the differences in opinion on how to hold that meeting, all political parties agreed on the need to solve the political crisis within the framework of the Constitution.

In that context, the President of Iraq, Mr. Jalal Talabani, continued his efforts to bring together political rivals and to bring together the positions of the different political blocs. In the same context, on 22 October, the Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Nuri al-Maliki, welcomed a delegation comprised of representatives of the political parties in the Kurdistan region and another led by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government to discuss the elements of the reform paper presented by the National Alliance.

In the context of efforts to solve the political stalemate, on Wednesday, 21 November, the Prime Minister met the Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Oyama Al-Nujafi. They discussed the internal situation, the latest developments and the efforts of the Speaker, who had been commissioned by the heads of the political blocs to solve the problems with the Kurdistan Regional Government. The Prime Minister stressed the importance of avoiding the language of threats and war because Iraqis have passed that stage and should not return to it. He also stressed the need to return to the 2009 agreement regarding the responsibility of managing security in the ethnically mixed areas. That agreement calls for establishing joint checkpoints consisting of the Iraqi army and the Kurdish Peshmerga forces to reassure all Iraqi citizens and that the management of those checkpoints should be under the supervision of the Federal Government.

With regard to efforts to strengthen relations between the executive and legislative authorities in the country, the Prime Minister met the Speaker of the Council of Representatives on 3 November. They agreed to promote cooperation between the legislative and executive authorities to support the Government's efforts in accelerating the reconstruction process.

Despite the steady improvement in the security situation, Iraq still suffers from terrorist attacks targeting Iraqi citizens. That led the Government to increase the capabilities of its security forces through the continuation of its disarmament plans to enhance the security and sovereignty of Iraq in the face of all internal and external threats. The Government also worked on modernizing its security plans to confront terrorist attempts to disturb peace and stability. Security forces have arrested several groups that were involved in committing terrorist attacks, kidnappings and assassinations using silencers and targeting citizens and members of the security forces. At the beginning of this week, the Ministry of Defence announced that the military intelligence had arrested two groups of terrorists linked to Al-Qaida. The first is called the financing group and has been involved in kidnappings for ransom. The second group consists of assassination squads using silencers.

After the tensions in the city of Tuz in Kirkuk on 16 November, which resulted in one Iraqi citizen killed and 11 others injured, a solution was reached within 48 hours with an agreement between the Ministry of Defence and the Kurdish Peshmerga forces to withdraw all militants that entered the area in order to avoid similar incidents.

Furthermore, technical meetings were held in Baghdad on 26 November to put an end to the tension. The two parties also discussed possible ways to de-escalate the recent tension.

After lengthy discussions, the Iraqi Parliament agreed on the number of new members of the Independent High Electoral Commission in Iraq. The voting for nine new members of the Commission took place between 19 and 27 September, ensuring balanced representation for the different components of Iraqi society.

In continuation of the democracy-building process that has been under way in Iraq since 2003, all requirements necessary to hold the next elections for all provincial councils have been met and the date of

the elections has been set for 20 April. Iraq is currently witnessing increased political activities among all political blocs to prepare the lists, entities and coalitions that will participate in those elections.

Regarding developments relating to the residents of Camp New Iraq, formerly Camp Ashraf, more than 3,000 members of the Mujahedin e-Khalq organization were transferred peacefully to Camp Hurriya. Approximately 200 residents remain in Camp Ashraf to deal with logistical issues and the liquidation of the organization's possessions in the camp. In that connection, I would like to express my Government's position and the need to find a sustainable solution to the problem through resettling the camp's residents in other countries, as stated in the memorandum of understanding signed with the United Nations in 2011.

On the social situation, in the framework of efforts to promote the political and legal awareness of Iraqi citizens, Iraq signed an agreement with the United States Agency for International Development on 4 October, aimed at increasing the level of public awareness about legal protections available to vulnerable groups, including the disabled, widows, orphans and children. The agreement is also aimed at establishing laws and regulations to protect those vulnerable groups and to involve non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and Iraqi citizens in the legislative process.

In an important step forward in the development of the Ministries of Education and Higher Education towards more institutional work and towards advancing the educational process in Iraq to meet modern international standards, a strategic national document for education and higher education in Iraq was adopted for the period 2012-2022. The document assesses the situation of the education and higher education sectors in Iraq and identifies current weaknesses. The document sets out a policy to face the shortcomings by creating a healthy environment meeting current scientific, educational and technological developments and practices in the world.

On the economic situation, the Government realizes Iraq's important and vital role in ensuring the stability and security of international oil markets, given their effect on world economic prosperity and the urgency of ending the recession caused by the international financial crisis. From that perspective, Iraq is moving forward to implement its plans to increase oil and gas

production and to improve its hydrocarbon capabilities. These steps will generate the revenue necessary to support reconstruction and social and economic development, raise the standard of living for citizens, and promote political stability in Iraq. In addition, it will promote stability in the energy market and lead Iraq to play a new international role, assuming responsibilities commensurate with its actual capabilities.

Based on those initiatives, the positive results of Iraq's energy policy of increasing oil production to the highest level possible to meet the growing global demand have started to appear. For the first time in years, in August Iraq became the second-largest exporting country among the countries of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.

In the context of efforts to develop the Iraqi oil industry, the Ministry of Oil announced on 30 August the beginning of preparations for the fifth round of contracts for gas fields to meet the needs of domestic markets and to operate the power plants. It also has become mandatory for contracted companies to produce the natural gas associated with oil production and not to waste it through flaring, as they had done for the past 80 years, causing billions of dollars in losses.

Iraq is aiming to increase its refining capability to 750,000 barrels per day by establishing four new refineries in Karbala, Kirkuk, Maysan and Dhi Qar provinces. In that context, on 21 October the Ministry of Oil launched the Nasiriyah Integrated Project to develop the Nasiriyah field, which has a proven reserve of more than 4 billion barrels, and to construct and operate a new refinery with the capacity to refine 300,000 barrels per day.

In the context of the tireless efforts made by the Iraqi Government to solve our electricity shortages, two new power plants were inaugurated, in Karbala and Babil provinces, with a production capacity of 250 megawatts each. On 10 October, the Minister of Electricity announced that the electricity shortage problem will be solved by the end of 2013. That will be an important achievement, with vast implications for all other service sectors. It is worth mentioning that Iraq is currently producing more than 8,000 megawatts, which is around triple the amount produced by the national electric grid in 2003.

In a unique event, the International Energy Agency published a special report about the future outlook of energy in Iraq, during a ceremony under the auspices

of the Iraqi Council of Ministers on 10 October. The ceremony was attended by Mr. Hussain Al-Shahristani, Deputy Prime Minister for Energy Issues; Special Representative of the Secretary-General Martin Kobler; Ms. Fatih Birol, Chief Economist at the International Energy Agency; a number of Iraq parliamentarians, the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, and representatives of companies.

The report affirms that current contracts between Iraq and international companies call for a steady increase in oil production close to five times the current level of 3 million barrels per day. It also mentions that the 9 million barrels per day production level required by those contracts will represent the highest sustainable increase in production in the history of the global oil industry. With that increase, Iraq will become the largest contributor to growth in international supply, producing approximately 45 per cent of global growth. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that optimizing exploitation of oil resources will permit an increase in Iraq's general budget to about \$500 billion.

Relations between Iraq and Kuwait relations have witnessed positive developments and concrete steps towards Iraq's fulfilling its remaining international obligations and settling unresolved issues related to resolutions under Chapter VII resulting from Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Those steps will lay the foundations for cooperation between the two countries. In that context, the Iraqi Government has made tireless efforts to maintain the momentum achieved in repairing relations between the two countries since the beginning of this year.

On 27 November, Minister of Foreign Affairs Hoshyar Zebari met in Baghdad with Ambassador of the State of Kuwait Ali Al-Momen. During the meeting, the two discussed mechanisms to implement the arrangements and bilateral understandings that led to the meeting between an Iraqi delegation headed by Iraqi Vice-President Khudair al-Khuzai and a Kuwaiti delegation headed by the Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheik Jaber Al Mubarak Al Sabah. At the meeting, the two sides agreed to settle the issue of Kuwaiti Airlines after reaching an agreement on a financial settlement. That decision, once implemented, will lift all restrictions and complications associated with rebuilding Iraqi Airways and restore its freedom to purchase new airplanes to re-establish its fleet.

On another note, from 18 to 20 September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs republished an

advertisement related to Kuwaiti property and missing Kuwaitis on the Ministry's website and in several Iraqi daily newspapers. The advertisements called on Iraqi citizens to come forward and provide information regarding missing Kuwaitis and property and documents belonging to the State of Kuwait.

In further positive steps, on 1 October a contract was signed with an engineering and surveying company to complete the maintenance of border pillars between the two countries. Also, on 18 October Iraq announced its agreement with Kuwait on having an international oil company manage joint oil fields between the two countries. The Iraqi Cabinet approved on 27 November a draft law on the ratification of the agreement establishing a joint commission for cooperation between the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait.

In addition to those positive developments, the Prime Minister of Kuwait is expected to visit Iraq in December. The two sides hope that the visit will result in resolving all outstanding issues and launch a new era in Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations based on mutual respect and common interests.

As Mr. Kobler mentioned, the Iraqi Government took the necessary steps to name technical representatives to join the United Nations team in order to start the third stage of maintenance of the borders pillars between Iraq and Kuwait. In addition, the competent Iraqi authorities started the final checking of the list of Iraqi farmers affected by the demarcation of the borders between Iraq and Kuwait.

At the regional and international levels, Iraq is still working to regain its proper position in the international community. Iraq was elected to the Executive Board of the World Food Programme in Rome in September, and to the position of Vice-President of the Executive Office of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, which is a body of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi.

As part of Iraq's continuous commitment to its international obligations, the Council of Representatives took the following decisions in the past four months. It joined the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions; ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions of 2008; ratified the Arab Anti-Corruption Convention; joined the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism; ratified the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement

of the International Atomic Energy Agency; ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; and issued Law No.48 of 2012, regarding the establishment of a national monitoring authority on banning nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Iraq participated in the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Tehran on 25 August, through a delegation headed by Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. During the summit, Iraq announced its complete alignment with the uprising of Arab nations since its first spark in Tunisia to achieve freedom, democracy and justice and that a State based on citizenship is the only choice in modern State-building.

Iraq also pointed to the dangerous phenomenon of taking a stance based on sectarian calculations in dealing with sensitive issues relating to peoples and countries of the region. Iraq strongly warned all concerned parties that if a sectarian war erupted, the peoples and countries of the region would be at a dangerous junction and that their interests would be affected in ways not seen even in the worst situations that have occurred since the First World War.

Iraq participated in the third Arab-Latin American summit held in Lima on 2 October, with a delegation headed by Hoshyar Zebari, Foreign Minister of Iraq. The Foreign Minister delivered a statement at the opening meeting, on behalf of the presidency of the Arab summit, in which he pointed to three regional issues that had been discussed at the Baghdad Arab summit, namely, the issue of Palestine, the situation in Syria and the issue of nuclear disarmament in the Middle East.

During the work of the Golden Table conference held at the Russian Foreign Ministry on 9 October, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki pointed out that the new Iraq constitutes a break from the old Iraq and that the current Iraq is seeking friendship, not enemies, among all peoples and countries of the world. In harmony with that principle, we have adopted an open-door policy and a quest for common interests in our foreign policy. We have established Iraq's defence and military strategies in accordance with that policy. We are determined that our forces will be defensive forces, and we will strive to equip them with all necessary weapons for defensive and deterrence purposes.

Foreign Minister Zebari met on 26 November with the non-resident Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Iraq, Mr. Fahd al-Zaid, and they agreed on the

importance of the complete normalization of relations between the two countries. The two sides stressed the importance of ratifying a prisoner exchange agreement and seeking a common cooperation mechanism.

The Government of Iraq also decided to give Jordan 100,000 barrels of oil as a gift to our neighbourly country to help solve the fuel shortage crisis that has caused problems there. This is an indication that prosperity in Iraq will benefit the Iraqi people and other friendly nations.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Iraq's commitment to its international obligations and my Government's appreciation of the role played by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, especially the efforts of Mr. Martin Kobler and the Mission team, for the support they are providing at the request of the Iraqi Government.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.