



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8531st meeting

Tuesday, 21 May 2019, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Djani	(Indonesia)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
	China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Dominican Republic	Ms. Luna
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Sipaco Ribala
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Germany	Mr. Heusgen
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	South Africa	Mr. Ntsoane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Twenty-second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2019/352)

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2421 (2018) (S/2019/365)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Twenty-second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2019/352)

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2421 (2018) (S/2019/365)

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 Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq 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.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2019/416, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/352, which contains the twenty-second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013), and document S/2019/365, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2421 (2018).

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, France, Germany, Indonesia, Kuwait, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2470 (2019).

I now give the floor to Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert: I would like to begin by recounting my recent visit to a mass grave in the Samawah desert alongside President Barham Salih. That burial site is a stark reminder of Saddam Al-Hussein's horrific crimes against many people — his own people, in this case the Kurdish people. It was a deeply moving experience, underlining once again that Iraq's violent and lawless past still impacts its present. Yet it also made clear how extraordinary Iraq's transition is in this twenty-first century: from dictatorship to democracy. In order to truly take root democracy needs time, a great deal of time and much hard work.

We must recognize that the ongoing political infighting is a costly obstacle. A full year after national elections, ministerial appointments have yet to be made to the key posts: Interior, Defence, Justice and Education. Political parties have not yet shown themselves willing to compromise. However, it should be understood that political compromise is not a sign of weakness. In fact, it is a sign of political maturity and a requisite for resilience.

Slowly but surely, chairs, deputies and rapporteurs are now being selected for parliamentary committees. That is a critical hurdle to clear for parliamentary work to get under way. We are not there yet although it is indeed high time, as critical laws are still pending.

Turning to the negotiations on the formation of the Kurdish regional Government, I am pleased to report recent important progress. After 218 days of negotiations, an agreement on the formation of a new Kurdistan regional Government was signed on 5 May. Barring further problems, the new Government could be in place in June.

It is no secret that the Iraqi authorities, institutions, mechanisms and systems continue to struggle with deep-rooted problems, often hampering swift and robust responses from the Government to pressing needs, such as reconstruction, development and security. Those problems can be schematized as a range of individual interests and arguments, many of which arise from long-standing grievances and differences between communities, political parties, the federal Government and the Kurdistan regional Government. That all

becomes entrenched in the form of concealed private networks of power that operate independently, pursuing their own narrow objectives and goals. To a certain extent, that also explains why the many opportunities arising from so many reconciliation efforts are yet to be fully embraced.

With that in mind, it is also necessary to touch upon the scourge of corruption, pervasive at all levels in Iraq. Corruption takes money that should be spent on public services, placing it instead in private pockets. It also deters economic activity, hindering business development that would result in much-needed job creation. As I stated the last time I briefed the Security Council (see S/PV.8462), I am encouraged by the Government's obvious engagement on this issue. Prime Minister Adil Abd Al-Mahdi made it very clear in saying that corruption distorts the image of the State and its reputation, both locally and on the world stage. That is indeed very true, as it hampers not only Iraq's credibility but also its viability, responsiveness and effectiveness. Change will not happen overnight. It is therefore important to highlight the issue of corruption again and again. Achieving tangible results will be crucial in so many ways. Most importantly, it will revive public trust, which is essential for the further development of Iraq's democracy.

The hydrocarbon sector is the backbone of Iraq's economy, with vast oil potential yet to be explored. However, in order to attain that, significant challenges will need to be addressed. Also in that regard and in short, the common good should trump private or partisan interests, enabling the whole country to benefit. Accordingly, I look forward to renewed engagement on the critical hydrocarbon and revenue-sharing laws.

Another point is that Iraq can achieve its full potential only with the active political, social and economic participation of women and youth. Recently, we witnessed, organized and participated in a variety of women and youth events throughout the country. While they were meaningful experiences for all those involved, I would like to warn a little against change as mere window dressing. At the end of the day, it is all about translating excellent intentions into positive action. Regrettably, Iraq is yet to appoint its first female minister.

On a different note but of great relevance to women and girls is the anti-domestic-violence law, which is an issue that is both sensitive and important for Iraqis.

I would like to commend Iraq's leadership in taking important steps towards the enactment of the law. The law would fully protect the legal rights and shelter needs of all victims of domestic violence — and by all victims, I mean all victims, not only women and girls. I sincerely hope that legislators will proceed with a law in line with the Iraqi Constitution that prohibits all forms of violence and abuse within the family.

On an entirely separate and encouraging note, Baghdad is opening up. Very soon the Green Zone will no longer exist. Prime Minister Adil Abd Al-Mahdi has lived up to his promise from day one by removing T-walls and returning the city to its people. However, the security situation will continue to require close monitoring, not only in Baghdad but throughout the country. Attacks continue, as seen with recent blasts and suicide bombings. It is also very relevant in this context that the threat of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is still present. As a coalition representative recently said, ISIL is resurging. They rested, moved and are active.

In that regard, I am keenly aware of the importance of continued, wide-based international support to ensure that Iraq leaves its violent past behind and that it does not slip back into the turmoil from which it so recently emerged. In other words, a long-term approach is critical to prevent ISIL from regaining a strong foothold in Iraq.

Equally important is the issue of returning ISIL-fighters from Syria to Iraq, along with their families. The return of thousands upon thousands of people — Iraqis and non-Iraqis — raises not only significant security and capacity concerns, but also urgent human rights and humanitarian protection concerns. All that is not just an Iraqi problem. We know that certain States prefer to maintain a strategic distance with regard to their own nationals. But, once again, to be clear, that is not just an Iraqi problem. If poorly managed, the issue will impact us all in the region and far beyond. Moreover, if we do not manage that adequately, we risk creating a new breeding ground for the next generation of terrorists.

Another predominant security concern is the issue of armed actors operating outside State control, engaged in illegal or criminal activities and exerting economic and social influence throughout the country. Clearly, the activities of those actors undermine State authority. They affect vulnerable communities, they weaken the national economy and, sadly, they also

prevent the peaceful return of displaced persons. In my conversations with the Iraqi Government, I welcomed certain actions, such as the closing down of so-called illegal economic offices, but the road will certainly be long. It will therefore prove crucial to hold to account all armed actors involved in criminal enterprises or illegal activity.

More broadly, I welcome the Government's efforts with regard to security sector reform. However, much work remains to be done, and the reconfiguration of the national security architecture is particularly important. That notably includes the future positioning of the popular mobilization forces and the reform of the Peshmerga into a single, regional security force.

As we saw during last summer's protests in the south, Iraq's water shortages have the potential to ignite social unrest, which, if unchecked, can reverse any gains made. Although this past winter saw extensive rainfall, including widespread catastrophic flooding, simple reliance on generous rainfall is not a solid national water strategy. In an era of severe climate change, it is of the utmost importance to plan carefully for all weather extremes and, therefore, to develop a comprehensive programme of water collection and management, as well as to strengthen the country's infrastructure and better prepare for floods.

I am pleased to report that Iraq's leadership continues to reach out to international and regional counterparts, positioning itself as a reliable and capable partner. Indeed, Iraq could well be a stabilizing factor in a very turbulent region. Instead of an arena for conflict, Iraq could well offer a space for regional reconciliation, preparing the groundwork for a regional security dialogue. At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that Iraq faces serious challenges in preventing its territory from becoming the theatre for different competitions. To all those feeling challenged, placing a further burden on Iraq is truly the last thing that it needs.

On 29 April, the United Nations launched its 2019 humanitarian response plan in alignment with the humanitarian plans of Iraq. The needs remain substantial. Many displaced citizens continue to face serious obstacles to returning to their homes. Those include the lack of civil documentation, an unstable security situation owing, for example, to clashes between armed groups and checkpoint harassment, damaged and contaminated houses, inadequate basic

services and discrimination, among other factors. In other words, obstacles are varied, complex and interlinked, painfully resulting in stalled returns on the ground.

In addition to our humanitarian efforts, we continue to support post-ISIL stabilization and rehabilitation efforts in the worst-affected areas. Our Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) reached a major milestone by rehabilitating the first 1,000 out of the 15,000 houses in Mosul's Old City. That builds on previous successful housing work in Al-Anbar, where thousands upon thousands of houses have already been rehabilitated. In addition, FFS completed the rehabilitation of several structures, such as Mosul University, which currently hosts more than 20,000 students. A third major bridge in western Al-Anbar has also been restored, allowing more than 75,000 people to access essential services, such as hospitals and schools.

Allow me to now turn to the issue of missing Kuwaitis, third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. I would like to thank Member States of the Tripartite Commission for coming forward with satellite imagery that, in combination with witness testimonies, has been vital in identifying potential locations for missing Kuwaitis. After years of hard work by many, and on this occasion I would like to flag recent efforts, in particular by the Iraqi Ministry of Defence. I sincerely hope that we will be able to announce positive results soon. Obviously, it is important that Iraq continue its efforts, including the identification of the missing Kuwaiti national archives and other property. We all recognize their importance as an integral element of Kuwait's national heritage.

I would like to conclude by recalling my recent visit to Sinjar, which brings together many of the points I just made. In Sinjar, I saw the horrific destruction — the work of ISIL of almost five years ago. Unfortunately, little has changed since the liberation of Sinjar. Many people are still living in tents on the mountain to which they fled at the onset of the terror campaign. In August, the world will commemorate the horrific events of five years ago. But a single administration and the provision of security, as the very basis for the reconstruction of Sinjar, are yet to be realized. Frankly, continued failure to make it happen is a clear injustice. Iraqi leadership, both in Baghdad and Erbil, must now act with urgency and decisively.

Finally, the challenges for Iraq are manifold but, in all of those challenges, I would like to express once again our continued and strong commitment to assist and support wherever we can. President Barham Salih very recently stated that the situation in Iraq is not good. Iraqis deserve far better. However, the situation is improving. It will take time but, with great determination and concerted, decisive action, we will succeed. How right he is.

The President: I thank Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Hennis-Plasschaert for being with us today and for her helpful and comprehensive briefing.

Today's unanimous adoption of resolution 2470 (2019) to renew the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) once again underscores the strong and continued commitment of the international community to support stability, prosperity and security in Iraq. As the Government of Iraq transitions from a period of crisis to one of sustainable development and political stability, UNAMI will be essential to enhance those efforts. The transition is reflected clearly in this year's mandate renewal.

As Iraq begins a new chapter, efforts to stabilize areas liberated from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, address the plight of internally displaced persons and further integrate Iraq into the surrounding region must also be accelerated. Taken together, those efforts will help set Iraq on a path towards stability and prosperity. It is important, however, to note that the complexity of the challenges that UNAMI and Iraq will face moving forward is great. We encourage the Government of Iraq to fill the remaining vacancies in its Cabinet and focus on delivering basic services to the Iraqi people. Restoring key services, health care, education and infrastructure is an important place to start, as is addressing corruption and strengthening viable and responsive State institutions. Those are key components of Iraq's own national Government programme. The United States also encourages the Government of Iraq to rein in all armed groups under effective state control.

The Funding Facility for Stabilization of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is essential to stabilization, recovery and reconstruction efforts. For its part, in March the United States announced a \$100 million contribution to the Facility for stabilization efforts in Anbar. Other members of the international community should consider similar contributions. The Government of Iraq should also make good on its pledge to the programme or to projects from UNDP's Facility list.

This year's mandate once again underscores the importance of supporting UNAMI's efforts to help meet the needs of all Iraqis, including women, children and members of religious and ethnic minority groups. This is an area of particular interest to the United States. We continue to encourage UNAMI to work closely with the Government of Iraq to address the unique needs of these groups and individuals as part and parcel of the broader national and community-level dialogue needed in Iraq. We also encourage the Government of Iraq to ensure the successful reintegration of the children of alleged members of ISIS and the children of former captives. Many of those children are indeed victims, and we call on Iraq to offer them the same benefits afforded to refugees and IDPs.

Today's mandate renewal is another reminder of the constructive role that the United Nations can play around the world and especially in the Middle East. We look forward to Iraq's continuing to lead the way in playing a positive role in its region, and we thank the Special Representative and the entire UNAMI team for their continued excellent work.

Mr. Safronkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for her detailed and objective briefing. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), which she heads, is playing an important role in assisting the Iraqi authorities in dealing with a range of issues of national reconciliation and rebuilding the economy. Based on that, we supported resolution 2470 (2019), which extends UNAMI's mandate for another year.

The stability of Iraq has historically been very important to the entire Middle East, and strengthening it is in the interests of the entire international community. In that connection, we would like to note in particular that attempts to draw the country into an artificially stoked confrontation with regard to the Islamic Republic

of Iran are totally counterproductive, unacceptable and can only have a negative impact on the situation within Iraq and the region as a whole.

The escalation of the situation in the Persian Gulf should be halted immediately, while confrontation should give way to dialogue and negotiations aimed at overcoming the existing concerns. Iraq has the right to develop and build normal relations with all its neighbours. We welcome Baghdad's consistent policy in maintaining good-neighbourly relations with all its regional partners, including Iran, Syria and Saudi Arabia, of course. The recent inter-parliamentary conference held in Baghdad, which brought together representatives of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Jordan, Kuwait and Syria, was very significant in that regard. We see it as an excellent beginning that should be consistently developed further. We particularly want to point to the attitude and activity of the Iraqis and Kuwaitis in the work of restoring historical justice, particularly in dealing with the consequences of the first Gulf War as soon as possible. We welcome the progress in the work of closing the Iraq-Kuwait humanitarian dossier with regard to the investigation of the fate of missing Kuwaitis and Kuwaiti property. It gives us hope that the parties are working together on the issue as positively as possible. We are aware that the Government of Iraq has a great deal to do to consolidate positive momentum in this area.

The international community should work tirelessly to support the Iraqi leadership's efforts to restore the economy and develop the social and economic front generally. In that connection, we note the conference held under Kuwait's auspices in February 2018 on the reconstruction of Iraq. What is essential is consistent, focused work to overcome the differences among Iraq's various ethnic and religious components and strengthen the unity of the Iraqi people and the integrity of the State. We welcome the recent progress in restoring a mutual understanding between Baghdad and Erbil, which should be consolidated and developed.

We cannot allow yet another experiment, wherever it may originate, to undermine the significant progress that has been made, at considerable sacrifice, on the counter-terrorism front, especially since security challenges still remain. We want to see the threat from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and terrorism generally eliminated as soon as possible. We believe firmly that we can effectively combat that challenge only by coordinating our counter-terrorism efforts as

broadly as possible. We believe it is essential to ensure that all involved in fighting terrorism in Iraq respect the sovereignty of the Iraqi State and coordinate their efforts with the authorities in Baghdad. Action should correspond to the stated aims of combating terrorism and helping the Government of Iraq to stabilize the situation. Russia will continue to give both political and practical support to the efforts of the Iraqi leadership on the security front and in the long-term normalization of the situation in the country. Iraq and Russia have a long tradition of military and technical cooperation aimed at improving Iraq's defence capability and general potential, including its ability to counter terrorism. The Baghdad information centre is doing important work in combating terrorism and fostering regional security with the participation of Russia, Iraq, Iran and Syria.

We are expanding our mutually beneficial trade and economic ties, including in the areas of fuel and energy and humanitarian assistance. The most recent meeting of the Russian-Iraqi intergovernmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation was held in Baghdad at the end of April, and we will continue to develop that cooperation going forward. The latest contacts between Russia and Iraqi officials at senior and top levels in Moscow, Baghdad and other platforms have affirmed the similarity of our Governments' positions on many global and regional issues. Above all, we share the view that it is essential to resolve all crisis situations through dialogue, collective efforts and a policy of good-neighbourly relations, which Iraq has always maintained. We are open to cooperation on a similar basis with all interested regional and international partners. Our joint efforts would be significantly furthered by progress on building a Middle East architecture for security and cooperation. In our view the Russian initiative in that regard on the Persian Gulf has become even more relevant. We want to remind the Council once again that the Secretary-General has a mandate to work with regional parties to develop confidence-building and security measures in the region in accordance with resolution 598 (1987). It is essential that we finally implement that mandate.

In conclusion, we would like to commend the cooperation of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq with the country's authorities. I would like to assure Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert that she can continue to count on our support.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the unanimous renewal of the mandate of the

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for one year through resolution 2470 (2019). I would like to assure Special Representative Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert our full support and thank her for her very informative briefing.

I would like to focus on three points: first, the importance of building on the progress made by Iraq in recent months; secondly, the many challenges the country continues to face, which should not be underestimated; and, lastly, the importance of the ongoing and united support of international community.

Iraq has now entered a new phase of stabilization, which the Council must encourage in order to enable it to build on those gains. I would like to commend the progress made by Iraqi authorities more than a year after the announcement of the military victory against Da'esh. The elections have deepened the democratic process and ushered a new Government into power. That Government has developed an ambitious work programme to meet the needs of the Iraqi population, in particular as it pertains to public services and the fight against corruption. The Government is also focused on improving Baghdad's relations with the Kurdistan Regional Government. We again call for the continuation of dialogue within the framework of a united, federal and democratic Iraq. That positive momentum must be maintained. That is why we hope that an agreement can be quickly reached regarding the ministerial portfolios that remain vacant. Finalizing the Government is essential if it is to be able to fully meet the high expectations of its population in the post-Da'esh period. In view of the many challenges faced by Iraq, we believe that three priorities are essential.

The first priority is the fight against the terrorist threat, as the battle is not yet over despite the end of the so-called Da'esh caliphate. The continuing terrorist threat in Iraq and on the Syrian border should encourage us to be extremely vigilant.

The second priority is the humanitarian response, stabilization and reconstruction of the country, in particular in the areas regained from Da'esh. Stabilization and reconciliation efforts are essential to ensuring a lasting victory against the terrorist group and to promoting reconciliation among the various components of the Iraqi population. I welcome the fact that that point is underscored in resolution 2470 (2019), which we just adopted, in particular at the request of the Iraqi authorities. Special attention should be paid to the

plight of children — an issue on which an action plan between the United Nations and the Iraqi Government is being finalized. Equal importance must also be given to the meaningful participation at all levels of women and persons belonging to minority groups. The return of internally displaced persons, the continuation of the socioeconomic reforms announced by the Government and the fight against impunity, as well as holding the perpetrators of sexual violence to account, are also important areas on which progress is needed in order to promote reconciliation.

Lastly, the third priority concerns the regional agenda, which is essential to Iraq's stability. Recent developments in the region are of particular concern. France will continue to monitor developments closely and call for de-escalation. We hope that a regional dialogue will be established to address all of the many legitimate concerns in a peaceful manner. In that regard, I, too, welcome the balanced regional diplomacy by Iraqi authorities and their renewed commitment to dialogue.

To meet those challenges, the mobilization of the international community in support of Iraq is more necessary than ever. UNAMI's work in support of the Iraqi authorities at this critical juncture is essential. The Special Representative has our full support in the implementation of the three priorities set. We also support her ongoing work on the people and property reporting missing.

France will continue to give its full support to the Iraqi authorities, as President Macron reminded Prime Minister Adil Abd Al-Mahdi in Paris at the beginning of the month. France will continue its support in the area of security to combat the common threat posed by Da'esh. We will also continue to provide support in areas related to humanitarian, stabilization and reconstruction efforts, as shown by our commitment to the rehabilitation of Mosul. We will continue to support not only the reconstruction of Iraq — the purpose of the €1 billion reconstruction loan announced by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in February in Baghdad — but also the strengthening of its State institutions. We also call on the Iraqi authorities and all our partners to fully implement the commitments they made at the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, held in February 2018.

Lastly, in keeping with a principle that can be found in all of our support activities, France will continue to

work towards the inclusive and lasting reconciliation of all Iraqis. As such, we will be organizing another conference in the fall as a follow-up to the Paris Action Plan on the Victims of Ethnic and Religious Violence in the Middle East, which was launched in 2015.

Mr. Heusgen (Germany): First of all, I would like to welcome and thank Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, for her briefing. I would also like to thank her for her work and that of her team. From her statement today, it was clear to everyone that she is dedicated to the subject. We wish her good luck. We are very happy that the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) was unanimous. It shows that the Security Council is united in its support for the Special Representative and her work.

Germany continues to be a partner of Iraq on its very difficult path forward. I would also like to underline the progress that has been achieved. Germany has been a partner from the very beginning. Since 2014, we have spent approximately €1.7 billion on Iraq's stabilization and reconstruction. We will continue to be a partner in future.

With regard to the work of the Government, which is difficult enough, I would like to underline that, first and foremost, it is important that all of the remaining posts be filled. With respect to the priorities, I would like to echo the sentiments made by our American and French colleagues concerning the fight against corruption. That is key to ensuring that authorities gain the trust and confidence of the people. In the same vein, that also holds true for accountability for those who have committed crimes against humanity and other crimes, as that is very important for post-conflict reconciliation. Germany fully supports the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL and its Special Adviser, Karim Khan. In the various court cases and proceedings, it is important that international law be respected and standards met, as that is crucial in the fight against impunity. It is also important that no new crimes be committed in the fight against impunity.

Let me turn now to the positive developments. After the tension we all witnessed between Baghdad and Erbil, it is very good that the situation is now on the right track. Some issues were resolved. The internal customs checkpoints have been removed. The salary issue has been resolved. We therefore hope that relations

between Baghdad and Erbil are being normalized and that sustainable solutions can be found for outstanding issues. I would also like to praise UNAMI's contribution to Iraqi efforts to mitigate tensions in Kirkuk.

Iraq-Kuwait relations were also mentioned. There again, it is very good that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General follows and supports the efforts undertaken between the Kuwaiti and Iraqi Governments to pursue the process of reconciliation. The tripartite mechanism's activities are very welcome. The return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals, human remains and Kuwaiti property remain important so that reconciliation can be completed.

With regard to the issue of women and peace and security, we very much welcome the Special Representative's efforts to promote inclusiveness and the participation of women at all levels of decision-making. Her cooperation with the Women's Advisory Group on Reconciliation and Politics in Iraq is very important in developing priorities for their work. We constantly reiterate the importance of women being involved in decision-making. I would like to commend Iraq on its national action plan on women and peace and security. It is the first country in the region to adopt such a plan. I recall the Arria Formula meeting we held here four months ago, together with Peru and the United Kingdom. One can see that Iraq is a well-recognized example in the region and beyond. The country is now working on its second national action plan, and we welcome that. We hope that the second national action plan will enjoy the support of the new Government and that the means to ensure that the objectives set out in the plan can be achieved on the ground will be supplied. That requires an adequate budget. Germany again stands ready to support Iraq in the implementation of the plan.

We also encourage Iraq to continue its work on accountability regarding sexual violence in conflict and to adopt a survivor-centred approach in that regard. In resolution 2467 (2019), the Security Council spelled out in detail possible measures concerning how to strengthen legislation, enhance investigations and prosecute sexual violence in conflict. We encourage Iraqi efforts to reform the justice sector, using the examples provided in resolution 2467 (2019). We would also like to support the remarks made by the representative of the United States with regard to children born of sexual violence, and the importance of the work that has to be done in that regard.

My last point concerns climate insecurity. Iraq is one of the countries in the Middle East that is most severely affected by severe climate change-related security risks, such as prolonged heatwaves, increased rainfall variability and prolonged periods of drought. On 11 July 2018, Mr. Hassan Janabi, Minister for Water Resources of the Republic of Iraq, discussed in the Security Council (see S/PV.8307) the significant negative impact of climate change in terms of compounding the country's security challenges. He highlighted in particular the climate-intensified risks associated with the absence of regional and international frameworks for water sharing, which makes Iraq's security challenges even worse. Therefore, we would welcome UNAMI's support for a regional dialogue and approach — not only on energy, the environment, water and refugees but also on the adverse effects of climate change and ecological changes on the stability of the region. We emphasize the need for adequate risk-assessment and risk-management strategies by the Governments of the region and by the United Nations in relation to such adverse effects.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation commends Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), on her comprehensive briefing.

Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Iraq, which once again illustrates the convergence of views of the members of the Security Council and their continued support for the efforts to restore peace, security and stability in that country since the adoption of resolution 1770 (2007).

Côte d'Ivoire welcomes in particular the gradual improvement in the security situation in Iraq and the military defeat of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), thanks to the full backing of the Council. My country very much hopes that this unified dynamic will continue, with a view to determining appropriate collective responses to the remaining challenges to peace and security in Iraq.

To bear fruit, the efforts of the international community must resonate with the willingness and commitment of the Iraqi authorities to address, as soon as possible, persistent political, security and humanitarian challenges, with a view to strengthening the legitimacy and the effectiveness of State action. In that respect it is important that the question of the

formation of the Government be resolved as soon as possible. The Security Council must send a strong message to the Iraqi parties to that effect, so that they commit to agreements to permanently fill the remaining ministerial posts. A fully functioning Government will no doubt be one more step in the process of strengthening the national institutional framework and will accelerate the implementation of the governmental programme for the period 2018–2022, which is aimed at improving basic services and promoting reconstruction and economic development throughout the country.

Côte d'Ivoire fervently hopes that the commendable efforts of the international community will help restore the social fabric and strengthen Iraq's security institutions. On the other hand, the progress made in the normalization of the political situation must continue as outstanding issues in the relations between Baghdad and Erbil are resolved. They require bold compromises from both parties, including the promulgation of a national hydrocarbon law, the implementation of the relevant provisions of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution and the adoption of a law on revenue sharing. Côte d'Ivoire encourages the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government to respect their respective commitments following the adoption of the 2019 federal budget law.

On the humanitarian front, Côte d'Ivoire believes that special attention must be paid to the situation of the 1.75 million persons who have been displaced, almost 500,000 of whom live in camps and face difficulties related to access to livelihoods, social protection programmes and humanitarian assistance. Addressing the health and education needs of the most vulnerable segments of society, including women and children, should provide further impetus for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of displaced persons. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the continued strengthening of the strategic partnership between the Government and international partners, including the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union, through the Executive Committee for Recovery, Reconstruction and Development.

Echoing presidential statement S/PRST/2019/1, adopted on 19 February, my country encourages cooperation between the Iraqi and Kuwaiti authorities in order to diligently and definitively provide an answer to the question of missing Kuwaiti nationals and seized property, including the Kuwaiti national archives. Côte d'Ivoire remains convinced that a successful

conclusion of this dispute will strengthen trust between the two parties.

Regarding the massive human rights violations committed by the Islamic State between 2014 and 2017, including against the Yazidi ethnic minority of Sinjar, Côte d'Ivoire, which is committed to the principle of accountability, believes that those offences against human dignity cannot go unpunished. I therefore express the full support of Côte d'Ivoire for the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, which collects, stores and preserves evidence of ISIL's crimes in Iraq. Côte d'Ivoire encourages the Iraqi authorities to cooperate with the Team to ensure that it carries out its tasks successfully.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I express my sincere thanks and gratitude to Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert for her informative and comprehensive briefing at the beginning of this meeting.

We welcome the adoption of resolution 2470 (2019), on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), based on the request and desire of Iraq. It would be remiss of me not to commend UNAMI and its efforts throughout Iraq. The Mission is providing advice in support of national efforts led by the Iraqi Government to build a promising future for Iraq. That includes creating the necessary conditions for achieving security and stability and responding to the humanitarian needs of the brotherly Iraqi people, in addition to creating the necessary foundation for recovery and attaining sustainable development and reconstruction.

I stress that the State of Kuwait will continue its full support to, and cooperation with, UNAMI and the country team in order to carry out their tasks to the fullest. We believe that it is high time for Iraq to recover after the painful events it experienced during its fight against the terrorist group Da'esh. We reaffirm our solidarity with the leadership, the Government and the people of Iraq in their fight against that scourge. We underscore the importance of consolidating national unity and maintaining the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

We call upon all Member States that participated in the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq to fulfil their commitments undertaken during the Conference, especially those pertaining to the reconstruction of the regions that

were occupied by Da'esh. We look forward to the establishment of a follow-up mechanism, in cooperation and coordination with the Iraqi Government, to ensure the fulfilment of those commitments in order to alleviate its burden of fighting Da'esh and enable Iraq to realize its vision for the future towards building a new and unified Iraq.

Concerning the outstanding international commitments and the remaining humanitarian issues related to the missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and Kuwaiti property, including the national archives, we share the regret expressed by the Secretary-General in his latest report (S/2019/352) that 369 cases of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals remain unresolved and that no human remains have been exhumed since 2004. We call upon Iraq to continue its efforts in that regard so as to achieve tangible results on the ground. We hope that Iraq will continue its constructive cooperation within the framework of the Tripartite Commission and its technical committee, under the able leadership of the International Committee of the Red Cross, in order to resolve this humanitarian issue as required.

We commend the commitment of Security Council members to this issue, as they have kept this humanitarian issue on the agenda of the Council for many years. Council members are also following up on the implementation of the various commitments set in the relevant Security Council resolutions, especially those main commitments that remain outstanding.

We stress once again that the State of Kuwait will spare no effort in working to determine the fate of the missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals. We commend the commitment of the brotherly Republic of Iraq to fulfilling its international obligations towards the State of Kuwait. We are fully willing to provide assistance to accelerate the implementation of the obligations set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions. At the same time, we call upon the UNAMI to continue carrying out its mandate concerning missing persons and the return of property, including the national archives, in keeping with resolution 2107 (2013). The Kuwaiti property and national archives constitute a historical heritage for the State and the people of Kuwait. It is unfortunate that we have not received any information on the whereabouts of the national archives since the liberation of Kuwait in 1991.

In conclusion, both brotherly countries are keen to promote and develop their relations at all levels and in all domains. Against that backdrop, Kuwait hosted members of the Iraqi Government for two days during the seventh meeting of the Joint Kuwaiti-Iraqi high-level committee. We reached many understandings and agreements on all issues of common interest, thereby overcoming the circumstances that had prevented us in the past from achieving integration and convergence as two neighbourly countries and brotherly peoples that have historical relations based on good-neighbourliness.

Mr. Ntsoane (South Africa): We thank the Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, for her briefing. South Africa supports the mandate renewal of UNAMI in its current format, as it promotes the strengthening of the Government of Iraq and its subsequent electoral processes.

South Africa further calls for an inclusive Government that will bring together all of the diverse aspects of Iraqi society into governance structures. National reconciliation and unity in Iraq are vital in order to avert future challenges stemming from the fracturing of Government policies and actions. Peace and security are fundamental for Iraq to develop its infrastructure, grow its economy and provide basic services to all of its citizens. In this regard, South Africa supports the full consolidation of control of the Iraqi army over its territories, and continued support for the efforts of the Government to eradicate the threat posed by Da'esh.

South Africa would like to suggest the use of the Peacebuilding Commission to support the inclusive efforts of the Government, especially in institution-building and post-conflict and reconstruction development in Iraq. Alongside the report on missing Kuwaiti nationals (S/2019/352), South Africa would like to advocate for assistance and information on those of its citizens who went missing after 2003.

We also welcome the increased involvement of regional organizations in the political process and reaffirm their role in assisting the Government of Iraq in the reconstruction of the country. We further welcome the renewed cooperation and talks between the central Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan regional government and encourage both parties to continue to seek consensus on areas of concern. We also share the views of regional actors that the formation

of a Government in Iraq is an important step towards building a stronger and more balanced relationship among the countries in the Middle East region. In this regard, we welcome the summit recently held by Iraq, which brought together the countries of the region as part of broader efforts by Iraq in spearheading regional integration with its neighbours.

In conclusion, South Africa reiterates its support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, in line with the principles of the United Nations Charter, and will continue to support UNAMI in the implementation of its mandate. Furthermore, we continue to support the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant as part of UNAMI's mandate, and we emphasize the importance of the independence and impartiality of the mechanism, in accordance with the principles of the Charter, United Nations policies and best practices.

Mr. Sipaco Ribala (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes at the outset to thank Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), for her very detailed, clear and comprehensive report.

At our most recent meeting, held in February (see S/PV.8463), on the situation in Iraq, we expressed our warm congratulations to the Iraqi people, Government and political leaders, who, despite the setbacks, were able to successfully navigate the major political events of 2018, which led to the creation of a new Government, a process that is about to be completed.

We believe that this is the right direction to take and that the Iraqis should follow up as an important step forward towards full democracy, political stability and the creation of a sustainable and safe environment. We welcome the role of UNAMI throughout this process, as reflected in the continuing support it is providing to the local authorities in the various aspects of the process of the reconstruction of the Iraqi State.

However, in order to be more effective, before anything else the process of forming the Government must be finalized. To that end, all stakeholders must overcome their internal differences and fill the vacant Government department posts as quickly as possible. Here we hope that the Government will consider appointing women and minorities, who can also play an important role throughout this process.

We are also concerned that the delay in completing the formation of the Government could lead to neglecting the regular implementation of the governmental programme for 2018-2022, whose goal is to guide the Government's activities in response to generalized public concern regarding poor living conditions, the lack of basic services, unemployment and requirements for reconstruction.

We welcomed the announcement in March by Prime Minister Adil Abd Al-Mahdi regarding his Government's development of a comprehensive national anti-corruption strategy. We hope that the discussions in the Supreme Council for Combating Corruption on the challenges and priority areas for achieving greater transparency will produce results that can in practice be a true success and will gain public trust.

As brothers, politicians in Baghdad and Erbil must recognize and accept that dialogue is the normal channel for dealing with matters that relate to them, and that the commitments between them must be fulfilled voluntarily in order to promote trust. In that regard, we hope that the adoption of the 2019 federal budget law will not be problematic for their relations.

We welcome the initiative of the current Iraqi Government to strengthen relations with countries in its region for the sake of mutual political, economic and security benefits, which would help to promote not only the positioning of Iraq but also that of the other States. In that regard, we encourage all countries in the region to promote the development of good-neighbourly relations based on the fundamental principles of respect for the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States.

The Government of Iraq now faces the problem of taking in the large number of returning fighters from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and their families, including women and children. They all have different needs to be met. Obviously, the international community must support the Government in that arduous task. However, Member States must take responsibility for their own nationals and attempt to deal with them according to the law, such as through prosecution, rehabilitation or reintegration.

Finally, my delegation would like to encourage the Iraqi Government to strengthen cooperation with Kuwait and other States on the issue of missing Kuwaiti citizens and third-country nationals and the return of Kuwaiti property, including the national archives.

Ms. Luna (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert for her valuable briefing and the work she has been doing since her appointment, in December, as Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). We also thank the Permanent Mission of the United States for drafting and facilitating the recently adopted resolution 2470 (2019), on the renewal of UNAMI's mandate. We strongly support UNAMI's work to help Iraq achieve stability, development, peace and security in a sustainable manner.

First, we would like to commend the Iraqi authorities for last year's conduct of a democratic, transparent and peaceful electoral process, which included the participation of various sectors of the country, followed by a smooth transfer of power.

With regard to the political aspect, we regret that no agreement has been reached in Parliament on the election of the persons who would occupy leading ministry posts that remain vacant, which has delayed the full formation of the Cabinet and, in turn, the implementation of the Government programme. We appeal to political actors to reach the required consensus and take a decision with a view to setting up a Government with efficient institutions, and for those institutions to seek to ensure the security, prosperity and progress of their people.

We call for that political will to be extended, in turn, to the establishment of the Kurdistan Regional Government and to the implementation of the Iraqi reconstruction plan drawn up at the International Conference on the Reconstruction of Iraq, held in Kuwait.

Among the governmental measures taken by the Basra Provincial Council, we can highlight the implementation of various programmes on water and electricity services in order to address the water shortage that is negatively impacting the health of the population and the economy.

We hope that the Government will continue to develop inclusive policies where women have a significant role in decision-making in various aspects of society, including the management of public institutions. In that regard, we welcome the fact that four women were elected as chairpersons and four as deputies of committees of the Kurdistan Regional Parliament. Similarly, Iraq has adopted the first action plan on women and peace and security in the Middle

East, being the first country of the region to submit its report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on the participation of women and the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace negotiations, conflict prevention, peacekeeping operations and governance.

We also call for concrete action to ensure accountability and end impunity for grave human rights violations, such as exploitation and sexual violations, particularly those perpetrated against women and children, including those affiliated with the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). In addition, we call for the development and adoption of a plan of action with the United Nations to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by the popular mobilization forces. We also condemn the use of torture and coerced confessions of children and call for the investigation and prosecution of those responsible of such acts.

With regard to security, we highlight the successful efforts of the Iraqi Government and allied countries in combating terrorism and defeating ISIL. However, we note with concern that terrorism continues to pose a latent threat to the peace and security of citizens in various parts of the country. That is why security agencies must revitalize their current counter-terrorism mechanisms and strengthen border security measures. To that end, Iraq requires regional and international support and solidarity, as well as continued assistance from UNAMI in the areas of logistics and capacity-building. We cannot allow violent insurgency by any group, or the unspeakable acts committed by ISIL against the Iraqi people to be repeated.

On another note, with regard to the issue of unfinished business with Kuwait, we welcome the activities and meetings held with the authorities of the respective nations, as well as with representatives of UNAMI, to discuss ways forward concerning the search for prisoners and missing persons reported by Kuwait, and the return to Kuwait of human remains, assets and the national archives. We also note with satisfaction that the Iraqi Government returned to the Kuwaiti authorities, in accordance with resolution 2107 (2013), numerous objects of value, including thousands of books from the National Library of the State of Kuwait. That step demonstrates the willingness of the Iraqi Government to strengthen relations with a neighbouring country and comply with the provisions of the tripartite agreement on resolving outstanding issues that date back 28 years.

In reviewing the reports on the humanitarian situation in Iraq in the current context, we underscore the importance of continuing to meet the multiple needs of the millions of Iraqis who remain displaced and provide them with the conditions to gradually rebuild their lives in a voluntary, dignified and safe manner. In that connection, we stress the need to bolster the protection mechanisms for those populations, in particular women and children, who continue to be exposed to great risks. We are concerned about the impact of the conflict on the entrenchment of poverty and on national infrastructure, which poses great challenges to achieving sustainable development in the country.

Finally, we would like to express our solidarity with the Iraqi people and support them in their efforts to resume the course of their history towards stability, peace and prosperity. About 4.1 million people have returned to their homes following the end of the conflict, with the desire and determination to rebuild their communities. That is testament to the admirable level of resilience they possess and their firm resolve to rebuild the country and live in dignity.

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): I would like to begin by thanking Special Representative Hennis-Plasschaert for her very thoughtful and comprehensive briefing. I think today's unanimous adoption of resolution 2470 (2019), which renews the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), shows the strong support of the Security Council for her work and that of her Mission.

I think it is significant that this is our first Security Council meeting on Iraq since the liberation of the last of the Da'esh-held territory in the region. While it is only natural for us at the Security Council to tend at times to focus on the risks and the threats, I think that it is very important that we also reflect on the significant progress that has been made in Iraq to date, and also that we thank the Iraqi Government, the Iraqi security forces and the Iraqi people for the immense sacrifices that they have made in defeating Da'esh.

While a territorial defeat is a very important milestone, the path to reconciliation and stabilization will be long and complex. Erasing the ideology of Da'esh will take time and require our sustained and collective efforts. In that regard, we recognize the important role that UNAMI continues to play in supporting the Government of Iraq and its post-conflict recovery and stabilization efforts. Looking ahead, the immediate

focus must be on ensuring that the conditions that first gave rise to Da'esh do not re-emerge. In the near term, we believe that means focusing on three areas, namely, reconstruction, reconciliation and representation.

First, reconstruction and the provision of basic services are clearly essential for Iraq's long-term stability. We all heard the staggering figures mentioned today by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, with over 1.75 million Iraqis remaining displaced, unable or unwilling to return to their homes. The Government of Iraq, the United Nations and the international community should continue to work urgently to address that situation, including by recognizing and tackling underlying concerns and through the full implementation of the pledges made at the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, referred to earlier by the Russian Ambassador.

Ensuring that all Iraqi citizens are able to access civil documentation must also be a priority, especially for internally displaced children who face disruption to their education. Underpinning all of this is the need for strong State institutions and inclusive and representative Government. In that regard, we support Prime Minister Adil Abd Al-Mahdi's efforts to reach agreement in the Council of Representatives to fill the remaining four Cabinet positions and ensure the broadest possible representation of women and minorities in all levels of Government.

Secondly, as Iraq continues to rebuild following years of conflict, reconciliation at all levels of society must be front and centre — a point raised by the French Ambassador. In that regard, we welcome UNAMI's continued engagement with the Government of Iraq as it advances an inclusive political dialogue. We further welcome the important role that the United Nations plays in supporting an effective and accountable Iraqi security sector, one that is able to effectively counter the ongoing threat from Da'esh and provide security for all Iraqis.

Accountability is important too, as the representative of Germany highlighted, and we thank the Government of Iraq and the United Nations Assistance Mission for their ongoing support to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh, as it continues to carry out its vital work to ensure justice for survivors.

Thirdly, turning finally to representation, the United Kingdom welcomes the United Nations

Assistance Mission's focus on gender across all of its activities, including its work to promote the enactment of the anti-domestic-violence law. We strongly agree with Germany that women's protection and meaningful participation will support reconciliation and long-term stability. As we are approaching the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), next October, we will continue to support Iraq to ensure that its next national action plan on women and peace and security is budgeted, implemented in collaboration with civil society and coordinated at the local and national levels. We would welcome the opportunity to hear from more female civil society briefers in future Council meetings to learn from their experiences and expertise.

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in its commitment to, and its support for, the important work of UNAMI and for the people of Iraq as they work to build a more stable and prosperous future.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): At the outset, I would like to thank Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert for her comprehensive briefing. Let me reiterate our appreciation for the tremendous work that the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has been doing in assisting the Iraqi authorities. We welcome the extension of the Mission's mandate. It is vital that UNAMI continue to provide support to the Government of Iraq as it embarks upon implementing new programmes and strategies to overcome challenges and pave the way for sustainable peace and development.

Iraq has emerged from a period of turmoil and undertaken efforts to restore stability and prosperity in the country. The current phase is crucial and requires addressing persistent challenges by promoting electoral, economic, social and security-sector reforms, tackling corruption and building strong State institutions, as well as advancing stabilization and reconstruction. We would like to express our concern about the lack of progress on decisions related to the vacant ministerial positions. We therefore urge the political parties to ensure the swift completion of the Government-formation process and effectively address the public concerns.

We encourage the Iraqi authorities to concentrate their efforts on the delivery of basic public services and developing the means to meet the needs of all Iraqis, including women, youth and members of all religious and ethnic groups, by accelerating the implementation of the 2018-2022 governmental programme. We also encourage the Iraqi authorities to ensure effective and

inclusive governance and live up to their commitments to guarantee the equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making structures.

The issue of social protection for vulnerable groups requires special attention. In our view, it is vital to increase efforts to prevent violence against women and girls and implement effective response measures that would ensure protection for the victims of gender-based violence, including through the full implementation of Iraq's national action plan on women and peace and security. We are also concerned about the situation for children, in particular those detained on national-security-related charges for perceived affiliation with armed groups. Those children must be treated primarily as victims. We urge Iraq to guarantee UNAMI's access to detained children, develop non-judicial measures as alternatives to prosecution and detention and ensure the reintegration of children formerly associated with armed groups.

The stabilization of the country will also entail promoting national reconciliation, including by assisting with the voluntary, dignified and safe return of internally displaced persons, their local integration or resettlement. It is vital that internally displaced persons be treated in a non-discriminatory manner irrespective of their perceived affiliation and that they be provided with the assistance they require.

We wish to express our concerns that the ongoing tensions in the Gulf may negatively influence the security situation in Iraq and further destabilize the country. At the same time, we appreciate Iraq's balanced policy with regard to its neighbours in the region.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the need to support Iraq in its efforts to restore stability after years of conflict, in full respect for its unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is paramount to preserve the security of Iraq through the de-escalation of tensions.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the President for convening today's meeting and Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert for her enlightening briefing. We welcome the valuable work she is doing with her United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) team.

Peru is closely following the progress made towards fully forming of the Government of Iraq as well as the valuable efforts of its political class to find points of convergence through dialogue and compromise. We

especially hope that the completion of that process will lead to an increase in women's participation in political life, which will undoubtedly contribute to the ongoing process of national reconciliation.

Other challenges include the urgent need to provide better services to the public, rebuild basic infrastructure and reactivate the economy. To achieve that, the Government programme for the period 2018-2020 must be implemented, the impact of which will be strengthened upon the full completion of the process of establishing the various Government agencies.

Along those lines, we welcome the progress made in the fight against corruption by developing a national strategy against that scourge, as well as the priority that Parliament has given to fighting it. That momentum should be harnessed for greater efforts to promote the rule of law and strengthen the people's trust in their authorities.

The international community's support is key in all those phases, including its contribution to development aid, the promotion of investment and the monitoring of the actions of the remnants of Da'esh, which continue to constitute pockets of destabilization, including global accountability for acts that may constitute atrocity crimes.

In that regard, we underscore the progress made in the past six months by the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, in coordination with UNAMI. We commend the Team's efforts to engage in dialogue with religious communities within Iraq, such as the Yazidis in Sinjar and Christians in Mosul. We also encourage the Investigative Team to redouble its efforts to consolidate its operational capacity to allow for the appropriate use of evidentiary material in domestic jurisdictions.

Another positive development, in our view, is the rapprochement of Iraq with its neighbours in order to bolster cooperation and consensus initiatives that enable a regional space free of conflict and in support of sustainable peacebuilding.

However, Peru reiterates its concern about the extremely vulnerable situation that the 1.75 million internally displaced persons are facing. According to the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/365), they are hesitant to return to their areas of origin in the short

term. That represents a challenge that the Government must immediately address.

We stress the importance that UNAMI has to play on the various fronts of its mandate. We underscore its support for the development of an operational plan for the provincial council elections, as well as its work as an observer in trials and investigative hearings to ensure due process and respect for human rights, thanks to the collaboration of the Supreme Judicial Council of Iraq.

Lastly, we would like to highlight the Mission's efforts to locate and identify missing Kuwaiti persons and property, given the willingness of the Iraqi Government and Kuwait's continued support for that process.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytsverve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert for her briefing. We are pleased that the Security Council has unanimously adopted resolution 2470 (2019), on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), which we fully support. Iraq is at a critical juncture. Much progress has been made, as our British colleague mentioned, but there are still many challenges, in a context that remains difficult at the security level, given the significant threat that Da'esh continues to pose.

At the outset, Belgium supports the speedy formation of a federal Government. We encourage the various parties to support a common vision for the country and to find compromise. In that particular context, the establishment of strong State institutions is essential to meet the challenges.

We support the Iraqi Government in its reconstruction, economic development and reform efforts with a view to fostering the private sector's participation. We also welcome the Iraqi Government's strong commitment to the fight against corruption. However, economic reconstruction alone will not be enough.

We commend the Government's efforts, together with the international community, to clear explosive ordnance in order for the stabilization and reconstruction operations to continue, as well as to enable families to return to their communities and resume their lives. Moreover, at a time when Iraq must look to the future, reconciliation is of paramount importance. That can be achieved only by including all sectors of Iraqi society and the various communities.

We support UNAMI's important mission to promote justice, the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reforms and strengthen the protection of children. We encourage the Government to make greater efforts to address the issue of the right of every detainee to a fair trial, particularly children and minors. We also encourage the Iraqi Government to develop an action plan on children and armed conflict, with the support of UNAMI and the United Nations country team, which is already working towards that goal, together with the Government.

Lastly, we support Iraq's efforts to open up to neighbouring countries, with a view to strengthening bilateral and regional relations based on the fundamental principles of respect for sovereign equality and territorial integrity.

Mr. Yao Shaojun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for her briefing. We also welcome the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2470 (2019), which reflects the Council's important support for the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Iraqi Government.

China acknowledges UNAMI's effective execution of its mandate and its important role in supporting the Iraqi Government in promoting inclusive political dialogue, national reconciliation and reconstruction, among other things. We appreciate the host country's close cooperation with UNAMI, which has yielded positive results. The Council's extension of UNAMI's mandate for one year is significant. The international community should continue to support UNAMI in carrying out its work as mandated.

The Government and the people of Iraq have recently been properly addressing both internal and external challenges, achieving positive outcomes in the fight against terrorism, gradually restoring security and stability and steadily pushing its economic reconstruction forward. China commends those steps. China welcomes the Iraqi Government's policy of openness and friendly relations towards its neighbours. We appreciate that the Government has formulated its 2018-2020 national programme and a comprehensive national anti-corruption strategy.

We furthermore commend that the Government is striving to resolve the outstanding issues that exist between the central Government and the Kurdistan

Regional Government through dialogue, consultations, the removal of internal customs checkpoints and the resumption of salary payments to the civil servants of the Kurdistan Government. The country is at a crucial moment in consolidating its counter-terrorism results, achieving peace and security and advancing its national reconstruction. I would like to make the following points.

First, we should support Iraq in continuing to fight terrorism and strengthening results in that regard. The country has made immense sacrifices in the international fight against terrorism. It is still threatened by terrorist remnants. It needs the support of all sides for the repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families. The international community should fully respect the sovereignty of Iraq and its jurisdiction and support Iraq in its efforts to bring terrorists to justice, in accordance with the relevant domestic laws, and to curb the return and spread of terrorist forces and activities. We support the efforts of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, in close consultation with the Iraqi Government, to actively carry out its work based on its mandate.

Secondly, we should actively promote the economic recovery and accelerated reconstruction of Iraq. Development is essential to ensuring the achievement of peace. The Government should focus on developing infrastructure, promoting economic reconstruction and progress, enhance its capacity to provide public services and improve the living standards of the population, including internally displaced persons. The international community should honour its pledges by continuing to provide support and assistance to Iraq, helping to ease its humanitarian situation, assisting in its economic recovery and creating a favourable environment for its reconstruction.

Thirdly, we should continue to support inclusive political dialogue and the national reconciliation process in Iraq. The international community should respect the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and promote inclusiveness, reconciliation and harmonious coexistence among all Iraqi parties in line with the fundamental interests and development needs of all Iraqis. It also has a positive influence on regional peace and stability.

China supports any effort that helps to maintain peace and stability and to combat terrorism in Iraq. We will continue to provide humanitarian and economic assistance to the country and our efforts to improve the humanitarian situation. We will actively participate in Iraq's economic reconstruction and help it to achieve peace, stability and development.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Indonesia.

I would first like to thank Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). I will focus on three points.

First, on UNAMI's work, we are pleased to join Council members in welcoming the adoption of resolution 2470 (2019) on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. I would like to thank the Iraqi delegation for the excellent cooperation, as well as the United States of America, as the penholder, for its work on the resolution. We applaud the essential work done by UNAMI, which, I believe, is perceived positively in various areas of Iraqi society. We extend our thanks to Special Representative Hennis-Plasschaert and the entire UNAMI team for their continued excellent work. We also commend the good cooperation between the Government of Iraq and UNAMI.

The resolution adopted today not only renews but also improves the mandate of UNAMI. It shows the unity of the Council in assisting Iraq to achieve political stability and sustainable development. A strong UNAMI with the capacity to assist the people and the Government of Iraq in addressing the complex challenges is more relevant than ever, and we look forward to the full implementation of its mandate.

Secondly, on developments in the country, Indonesia commends Iraq on the formation of the new Government and looks forward to the appointment of the remaining ministerial positions. The swift and effective completion of the formation of the Iraq Government is an essential prerequisite for the new Government to gain the trust and support of the people. The stability of Iraq is important not only for its people but also for the region as a whole. We need to continue to support Iraq's reconciliation and development efforts. We support efforts to strengthen Iraq's State institutions and the acceleration of the Government programme

for 2018 to 2020 to improve the basic services and promote reconstruction and economic development throughout Iraq.

It is incumbent upon us as the international community to support Iraq in its endeavours. Like others, we welcome the Government's announcement of its development of a comprehensive national anti-corruption strategy as well as Parliament's priority to fight against corruption, as also mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/365).

Thirdly, on the issue of security challenges, we took note of Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert's briefing with regard to the issue of returning fighters of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and their families, which must be managed in the right way, in particular with respect to women and children. The issue of rehabilitation and reintegration is certainly not an easy task. Nevertheless, efforts should be undertaken so as not to create a resurgence of radicalism and a new breed of terrorism. We commend the tireless work of the Iraqi security forces for their continued search for the remnants of ISIL, which threaten the security of the entire population and hinder the ongoing process. We believe that there is a need for a comprehensive approach to addressing the security challenges and ensuring durable peace. In that regard, enhanced international and regional cooperation is critical.

Lastly, the issue of humanitarian assistance should also be our priority. Issues of the return of internally displaced persons, socioeconomic development and the achievement of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals are important.

At this stage, Iraq needs all the support and help of its brothers and sisters in the United Nations. Rest assured of Indonesia's commitment in support of Iraq's stability, development and lasting peace.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate the Republic of Indonesia on its assumption of the Security Council presidency in a wise manner for this month. We also thank the Federal Republic of Germany for its efforts during its presidency last month. I would like to welcome the briefing by Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head

of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), whose presence has been noteworthy from the beginning of her mandate.

My Government welcomes the adoption of resolution 2470 (2019) to renew the UNAMI mandate for another year. We appreciate the support provided by the United States of America and other Member States on the Security Council, as well as the collective efforts and cooperation with which the negotiations on the renewal were carried out. We also express our gratitude to all members of the Security Council for their support for the resolution.

My country's Government had submitted a request to extend the mandate in order to meet the requisite needs of all its citizens, which the United Nations can help Iraq to fulfil, while maintaining the main responsibilities and tasks of the Mission. That is what happened with the adoption of resolution 2421 (2018), in which the mandate was simplified and the text itself was reduced in accordance with Iraq's needs at that time (see S/PV.8285).

My country's Government hopes to work closely with UNAMI to meet Iraq's needs in the upcoming phase. We encourage the Mission to coordinate closely with other United Nations agencies in Iraq, including the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, in order to ensure coordination and achieve progress in humanitarian work, reconstruction and development at the local, Government and national levels.

Despite the incomplete formation of the Cabinet, my country's Government, which was formed based on the independence and competence of its members, is now able to implement its programme. There has been progress on many issues, which are now being followed up on, including in the areas of security, the military, culture, the economy, social and human rights, as well as opening up to neighbouring countries and States in the region. Our efforts include the following.

First, we are safeguarding the gains made by the Iraqi people with regard to security and stability, proceeding with reconstruction projects, consolidating unity and meeting needs by promoting service provision, development and economic prosperity. The situation is evolving positively at all levels in Iraq. When the security situation improves, the political situation also improves, which is related to the current consensus in Iraq. If not for the cooperation shown by everyone, we

would not have defeated terrorism. We stand ready to preserve that consensus, which reflects the political unity in the country, including with regard to relations between Baghdad and Erbil, which today are better than ever and continue to be marked by cooperation.

Second, Iraq is experiencing security and stability, especially in the liberated governorates. Security forces have almost reopened all the roads in Baghdad that had been closed since 2003, including in the Green Zone.

Third, the three presidencies and the Minister for Foreign Affairs have been eagerly working to translate the close relations between Iraq, its neighbouring States and countries of the region into opportunities and practical programmes. We have also reached understandings based on common interests to set up joint projects that will strengthen the economy and promote investment in agriculture and industry and generate large-scale job creation. Iraq will spare no effort to promote security and stability in the region. In an environment marked by rising tensions in our region, we adhere to a policy of positive neutrality. We have based that policy on our national security goals of consolidating and maintaining the gains made in the war against the Da'esh terrorist gangs.

Fourth, the number of displaced persons from areas once controlled by the Da'esh terrorist gangs has decreased from nearly 5 million to 1.8 million. The number of returnees to Nineveh governorate has reached approximately 1.4 million, followed by Al-Anbar governorate with 1.2 million returnees, while approximately 534,000 people have returned to Salahadin governorate.

Fifth, at the initiative of the President of the Republic, the Council of Representatives is working on the adoption of a law on Yazidi female survivors, aimed at compensating them materially and morally as well as ensuring their rehabilitation and providing them with a secure and dignified life. In addition, it will take all the steps necessary to reintegrate survivors into society and rebuild infrastructure in their regions. The Council of Representatives is also working on the adoption of a law on combating domestic violence, which will provide full legal protection for all victims of domestic violence. The law is in line with the Iraqi Constitution, which prohibits all forms of violence and abuse within the family, as well as in line with international human rights standards.

Sixth, cooperation continues with the United Nations, in particular UNICEF and the country task force on monitoring and reporting, in order to develop a joint action plan to safeguard the rights of children who have been affected by terrorist acts. Moreover, we are cooperating with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict to implement the action plan that was launched in 2018.

Seventh, efforts are under way to mitigate the effects of climate change through the use of national and international resources that guarantee food and water security, both of which are priorities for my Government, owing to the impact of climate change on both.

My Government is fully aware that much remains to be done in order to meet the aspirations of the Iraqi people. They aspire to achieve political reform, stability, security and putting an end to corruption, which Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert termed "private networks". They also aspire to end illegal earning activities, while providing equitable economic opportunities for all.

Despite the defeat of Da'esh's terrorist gangs in Iraq and Syria, the threat they pose remains. My Government is working to combat their abhorrent ideology through a comprehensive approach encompassing security, ideology, development and legislation aspects. We are working tirelessly to facilitate the prosecution of Da'esh criminal terrorists and issue legal sentences against them for their crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes perpetrated in Iraq.

With regard to my Government's efforts to counter terrorism, we have submitted a request to the Office of Counter-Terrorism for assistance from the United Nations programme related to prohibiting the travel of foreign terrorists, with the aim of building Iraqi State institutions and enabling them to overcome the challenges and difficulties that Iraq has faced pertaining to the collection of data and identification of foreign travellers entering Iraq. Coordination involving that request is still under way.

We have also adopted a strategy to combat violent extremism leading to terrorism in order to eliminate extremism and hatred, so as to lead to a society that believes in coexistence, moderation and tolerance. We urge all friendly and allied countries to develop new legal systems to prosecute returning foreign terrorist fighters. If a practical solution is not found, the Da'esh

terrorist group could re-establish its capabilities, undo the status quo and launch large-scale terrorist attacks throughout the world.

My Government also focused on developing Kuwaiti-Iraqi relations during the period under consideration. With the goal of overcoming obstacles emanating from the past, we have built bridges and communicated with our brothers in Kuwait to strengthen relations between the two countries. In that context, meetings of the seventh session of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti Joint Committee were held on 12 and 13 May. We reviewed cooperation between the two sides in all areas, in particular with regard to promoting the economic and development spheres. We also agreed to solve many pending issues in the context of bilateral relations between our two countries. Prime Minister Adil Abd Al-Mahdi will visit the sisterly State of Kuwait tomorrow.

Iraq welcomes presidential statement S/PRST/2019/1, on prisoners, missing persons and the return of the Kuwaiti property. Our delegation worked side by side with our brothers in the Kuwaiti delegation to draft the statement, which demonstrates that Iraq is committed to the implementation of resolution 2107 (2013). We attach great importance to the search for missing Kuwaitis and third-country nationals and to the return of their remains to their countries, as well as the recovery of missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives.

In that context, a mass grave has been discovered in the city of Samawah, with human remains having undergone preliminary tests. We have shared the results with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the competent Kuwaiti authorities. We hope those results will be positive.

In conclusion, we highly value the role of the United Nations in supporting Iraq in all areas, particularly with regard to displaced persons, projects to support women and children in liberated and affected areas and ensuring basic services, health care, education and reconstruction. My country's Government is committed to providing good working conditions for the UNAMI and to ensuring cooperation with it by all the relevant Iraqi authorities. We also look forward to continued support for Iraq from sisterly, friendly and allied countries in the upcoming recovery and reconstruction phase. We again thank Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert and her team for their commitment to cooperating with my country's Government in carrying out UNAMI's mandate in order to serve the interests and needs of Iraq. We wish them every success in their endeavours.

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 5.05 p.m.