

# Delivering free and fair elections, combatting terrorism and building back better in Iraq

- UK underlines importance of free, fair and credible elections in Iraq in October.
- UK reiterates support for the Government of Iraq's work "to combat terrorism and to implement crucial economic reform".

Remarks by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at Security Council briefing on UNAMI, 16 February 2021

The UK welcomes the work of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq and the work of SRSB Hennis-Plasschaert, and thanks the Deputy SRSB Walpole for her service.

Iraq is at a critical juncture. It is essential that the elections in October are free, fair, and credible. Our commitment to the democratic process in Iraq remains steadfast and we look forward to further discussions on how the UN can support the elections following Iraq's request for UN observation.

Iraq faces an economic crisis: increased unemployment, poverty and food insecurity. The Government of Iraq's proposals for economic reform are welcome. We now call on all parties to put aside their differences and agree a sustainable budget that allows Iraq to build back better from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Last month's devastating attack in Baghdad demonstrates the importance of the ongoing work of the Global Coalition to defeat Daesh in close partnership with the Iraq Security Forces. We also condemn last night's attack on coalition forces and civilians in Erbil.

We are deeply troubled by the short notice and uncoordinated closure of camps for Internally Displaced Persons. We urge the Government of Iraq to coordinate with the UN to ensure that all returns are safe, dignified and voluntary.

We welcome the Government of Iraq's continued efforts to strengthen relations with regional neighbours. We continue to reiterate the importance of dialogue and cooperation between Iraq and Turkey to combat terrorism, ensure regional security, and protect civilians. We commend the shared commitment of the Iraqi and Kuwaiti Governments to make progress on the file of missing Kuwaiti persons and property pursuant to Security Council resolution 2107 (2013).

The United Kingdom continues to support the Government of Iraq as it seeks to deliver free, fair and inclusive elections, to combat terrorism and to

implement crucial economic reform.