

UNAMI Herald

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On a visit to Baghdad, Guterres affirms UN will never forget sacrifices of its staff killed in Canal Hotel attack



Baghdad, 18 May 2025 - The United Nations will never forget the staff members killed nearly 23 years ago

in the attack on its headquarters in Iraq, the Secretary-General said in the capital on Sunday.

António Guterres was speaking during a wreath-laying ceremony at a memorial in Baghdad to honour the victims of the 19 August 2003 Canal Hotel bombing - the worst terrorist attack in UN history.

Twenty-two people were killed, including the then UN Special Representative for Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello. More than 100 others were injured, and several survivors attended the ceremony.

The Secretary-General was in Baghdad to attend the League of Arab States Summit, held on Saturday. He also met with senior Iraqi officials, including Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani. During talks on Sunday, they discussed developments in Iraq and the region, as well as the remaining period of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

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SRSG Al Hassan: “UN is committed to supporting free, fair and transparent election with the participation of all Iraqis”

New York, 10 June 2025 - The top UN official in Iraq reiterated his confidence in the resilience of the country’s people, and the determination of their leaders, in a briefing to the Security Council on Tuesday.

“Iraq is a nation of profound history, strength, potential, and pride. By working together, Iraqis can continue to make meaningful strides towards stability, prosperity and human rights for all,” said Special Representative Mohamed Al Hassan, who also heads the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

He provided updates on political, human rights and other developments over the past six months, and the Mission’s ongoing support to the authorities as it prepares to leave at the end of the year.

UNAMI was established in 2003 and works to advance inclusive political dialogue as well as reconciliation at the national and community levels,



among other mandated tasks.

At the outset, Mr. Hassan commended the Iraqi Government for providing humanitarian aid to people in Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen and Syria, and for supporting the new peace initiative between Türkiye and the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, a militant group known as PKK.

He said Iraq is well on the way to fresh parliamentary elections set for 11 November, and the Independent

High Electoral Commission (IHEC) is making notable progress towards polling day, with UNAMI’s technical support.

Although voter registration should conclude in the coming days, and nearly three-quarters of all voters have completed biometric registration, challenges and logistical concerns remain.

Full story on page 6.



In this edition ...

United Nations entities and the Permanent Committee on Support for Women's Political Participation discuss support to Iraqi women's participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections

Baghdad, 29 May 2025 – Supporting Iraqi women's participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections and ways for the United Nations in Iraq to provide technical assistance was the focus of a meeting today between representatives of United Nations entities and the Permanent Committee on Support for Women's Political Participation.

More on page 8.

Strengthening Iraq's efforts against terrorist crimes

Baghdad, 08 May 2025 – The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), in close collaboration with the National Security Advisory (NSA) and the National Center for International Judicial Cooperation (NCIJC), held a three-day workshop in Baghdad for the NCIJC aimed at strengthening the integration of human rights and international humanitarian law in Iraq's counter-terrorism efforts.

More on page 13.

UNESCO and the Iraqi Security Media Cell celebrate World Press Freedom Day: artificial intelligence and its impact on the future of journalism

Baghdad, 04 May 2025 - UNESCO Iraq Office, in partnership with the Security Media Committee, commemorated World Press Freedom Day through a high-level discussion session held in Baghdad. The session focused on this year's global theme launched by UNESCO: "Reporting in the Brave New World – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media"

More on page 16.

Strengthening the financial sector's capacity to support green growth and decent jobs in Iraq

Erbil, 15 May 2025 (ILO News) – As part of broader efforts to promote a just transition to a green economy and expand decent work opportunities in Iraq, the International Labour Organization (ILO), with funding from Italy through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) and in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) and the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI), conducted a five-day training workshop in Erbil from 11 to 15 May 2025. *More on page 25.*

RC Isaczai: "The UN remains a committed partner in your efforts to ensure that water becomes a source of economic opportunities, prosperity, and sustainability for all Iraqis."

Baghdad, 24 May 2025 - At the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference, UN Resident Coordinator Ghulam Isaczai reaffirmed the UN's strong partnership with the Government of Iraq and full support for its water agenda - calling for stronger governance, climate-resilient solutions, and regional cooperation. These efforts align with national plans, international commitments, and the SDGs - especially SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation.

More on page 58.

International Trade Centre inaugurates second agricultural aggregation hub in Hamidat, Iraq

Mosul/Geneva, 04 May 2025 – The International Trade Centre (ITC), in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the World Food Programme (WFP), yesterday inaugurated an agricultural aggregation hub in Hamidat district, Ninewa Governorate.

More on page 32.

Iraq and World Health Organization celebrate World Health Day 2025 with the launch of the National Strategy for the Health of Women, Children, and Adolescents

Baghdad, 24 April 2025 - In celebration of World Health Day 2025, the World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with Iraq's Ministry of Health, organized a high-level event to highlight progress in public health and promote a shared vision for the future. Held under the theme "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures," the event brought together senior government officials, UN agencies, donor partners, and members of the diplomatic community.

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In the UNAMI Herald articles are sorted according to the topic and in a chronological order.

On a visit to Baghdad, Guterres affirms UN will never forget sacrifices of its staff killed in Canal Hotel attack

Baghdad, 18 May 2025 - The United Nations will never forget the staff members killed nearly 23 years ago in the attack on its headquarters in Iraq, the Secretary-General said in the capital on Sunday.

António Guterres was speaking during a wreath-laying ceremony at a memorial in Baghdad to honour the victims of the 19 August 2003 Canal Hotel bombing - the worst terrorist attack in UN history.

Twenty-two people were killed, including the then UN Special Representative for Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello. More than 100 others were injured, and several survivors attended the ceremony.

Families still mourning

Mr. Guterres told the audience that “22 years is a long time, but we will never forget the colleagues who were killed that day in the bombing at the Canal Hotel.”

These staff members “were sons, daughters, mothers, fathers and friends who are, to this day, mourned by those they knew and loved,” he said.

“We will always remember their leader, Sergio Vieira de Mello, who was also killed in the attack. We will stand with the survivors whose lives were changed forever,” he added.

“And we will remember the courageous colleagues and others who rushed to help on that terrible day, and in the days and weeks after — showing us the very best of the humanitarian spirit.”

A tribute and reminder

Mr. Guterres said the memorial stands as a tribute to their lives and their contributions to the people of



Iraq. It also serves as a reminder of how far the country has come since 2003.

He noted that the women and men of the United Nations have worked tirelessly together with the brave and resilient people of Iraq to support their quest for stability, development and peace.

He stressed that above all, the memorial is “a clear reminder of the vital work that our organization does around the world — and the dangers our people face in carrying out that work.”

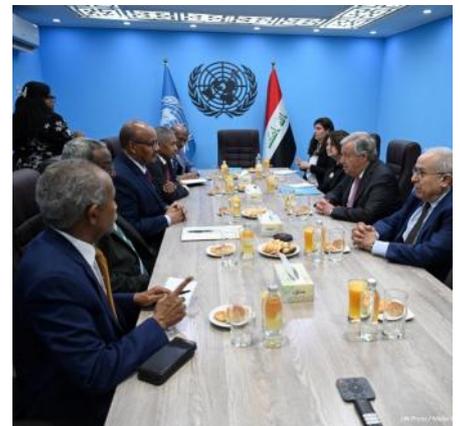
Remembering humanitarians worldwide

Five years after the attack the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution designating 19 August as World Humanitarian Day.

This date “has been forever transformed from a day of unimaginable horror and tragedy here in Iraq into a global day of solemn remembrance for all humanitarians — inside and outside

the organization,” Mr. Guterres said.

“Their bravery, dedication, and belief that a better future is possible will always inspire us. And like those whose lives were lost on 19 August 2003, their sacrifices and contributions to our world — and to our vital cause of peace — will never be forgotten.”



Meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister

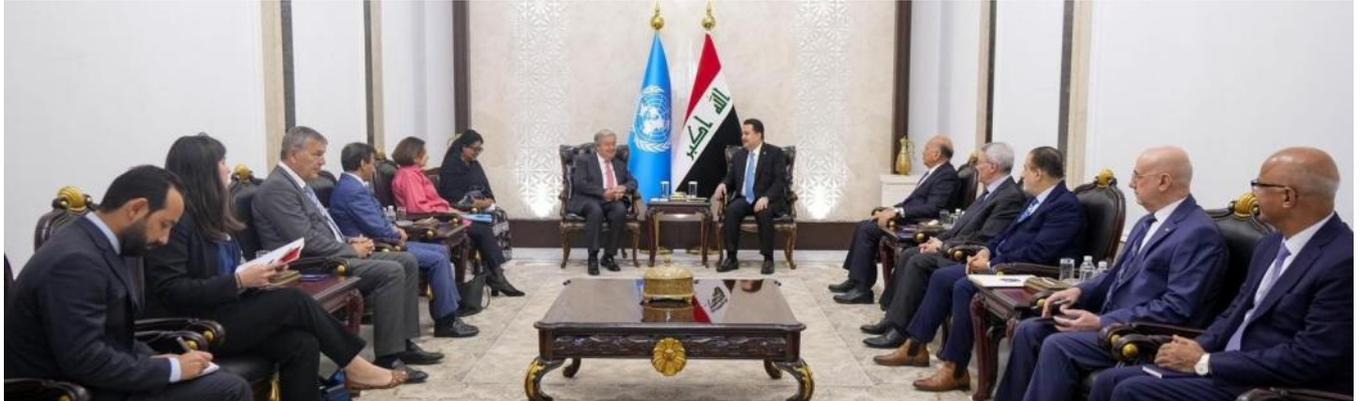
The Secretary-General was in Baghdad to attend the League of Arab States Summit, held on Saturday. He also met with senior Iraqi officials, including Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani.

During talks on Sunday, they discussed developments in Iraq and the region, as well as the remaining period of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The Secretary-General reaffirmed that the UN remains fully committed to continuing to support the Government and people of Iraq following the Mission's departure.

UNAMI has been in the country since 2003 and is working to conclude its mandate by the end of the year.



Readout of the Secretary-General's meeting with H.E. Mr. Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq



Baghdad, 18 May 2025 - The Secretary-General met with H.E. Mr. Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq. They discussed developments in Iraq and the region.

They also discussed the remaining period of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The Secretary-General reaffirmed that the United Nations remains fully committed to continuing to support the

Government and people of Iraq following the departure of UNAMI.

Photos courtesy of the Media Office of the Prime Minister.

At Arab League Summit, Guterres reiterates call for Gaza ceasefire

Baghdad, 17 May 2025 - The UN Secretary-General renewed his call for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and upheld the need for a two-State solution between Israelis and Palestinians, in a speech on Saturday to the League of Arab States Summit in Baghdad.

António Guterres told leaders meeting in the Iraqi capital that “the region and the world face trials and tests on all fronts,” starting with the situation in Gaza.

He reiterated that neither the atrocious 7 October 2023 terror attacks by Hamas nor the collective punishment of the Palestinian people can be justified.

Permanent ceasefire now

“We need a permanent ceasefire, now. The unconditional release of all hostages, now. And the free flow of humanitarian aid ending the blockade, now,” he said.

The Secretary-General expressed alarm over reports that Israel plans to expand ground operations in Gaza and stressed that the UN “will not participate in any so-called aid operation that does not adhere to international law and the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality.”

He again called for full support for UN Palestine refugee agency UNRWA, including funding.

Two-State solution at risk

The UN chief rejected the repeated displacement of the Gaza population, as well as any suggestion of forced



displacement outside Gaza, and urged leaders to remain focused on the terrible situation in the occupied West Bank.

“Let’s be clear,” he said. “Annexation is illegal. Settlements are illegal. Only a two-State solution can deliver sustainable peace.”

He said the high-level conference in June, co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia, is an important opportunity.

“The world, the region – and, most of all, the people of Palestine and Israel – cannot afford to watch the two-State solution disappear before our eyes,” he said.

Respect Lebanese sovereignty

The Secretary-General addressed the

situation in Lebanon. He emphasized that the country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected, and the Government must have full control over the entire territory.

He was encouraged by continued progress on reforms as well as efforts to deploy the Lebanese Armed Forces to the south, with support from the UN Mission in the country, UNIFIL.

Mr. Guterres touched on Syria, saying sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity are critical. He urged strong support for an inclusive Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political process that safeguards the rights and participation of all the country’s people and ensures their protection.

Regarding Yemen, he noted that

At Arab League Summit, Guterres reiterates call for Gaza ceasefire (continued)



attacks by Houthi rebels in the Red Sea have caused significant damage to regional and local economies. He welcomed the cessation of hostilities between the Houthis and the United States, announced by Oman on 6 May. The Secretary-General also called for the release of UN staff and other personnel in Yemen who have been arbitrarily arrested.

Engagement on Sudan

In Sudan, renewed and coordinated multilateral engagement is crucial to help stem appalling violence, famine, and mass displacement, he said, and thanked the Arab League and African Union (AU) for the excellent coordination meeting convened the previous day. He also commended the Arab League's efforts to strengthen multilateral coordination.

The Secretary-General turned next to Somalia, saying unity and inclusive dialogue are imperative. Furthermore,

assistance from Somalia's partners will be essential in the fight against Al-Shabaab militants and to strengthen peace and security.

For this reason, Mr. Guterres said he has put forward a recommendation to the UN Security Council to enable predictable and sustainable financing for the AU Support and Stabilization Mission in the country.

Meanwhile in Libya, the UN is also actively engaging in efforts to end the confrontation between armed groups, to preserve the independence of key oversight institutions, to address obstacles preventing national elections, and set the course for long-term stability and prosperity in line with the people's needs and aspirations.

Lessons from Baghdad

The Secretary-General concluded his remarks by commending the progress Iraq has made since the restoration of sovereignty in 2004, such as

strengthening institutions, resolving outstanding disputes through dialogue, and promoting sustainable development as well as human rights.

He said the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) has accompanied the country on this path and is working to ensure the successful delivery of its residual mandate and an orderly drawdown by the end of the year.

"Despite the enormous challenges, let us draw lessons and hope from here in Baghdad. Working in unity and solidarity, we can help resolve conflicts and build a future of peace and prosperity," he said.

Gaza situation 'beyond inhumane'

Speaking later to reporters, Mr. Guterres said the situation for Palestinians in Gaza "is beyond description, beyond atrocious and beyond inhumane."

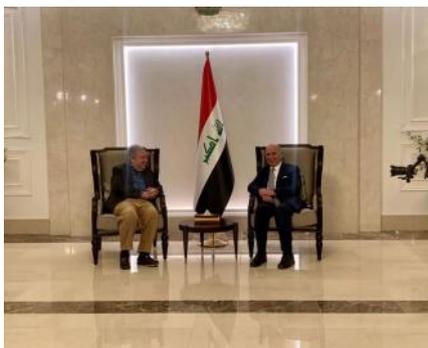
Since 2 March, Israel has banned the entry of cargo into the Strip, including aid and other life-saving supplies. UN agencies continue to warn that the entire population, 2.1 million people, is at risk of famine and one in five faces starvation.

"A policy of siege and starvation makes a mockery of international law," he said, calling for the blockade to end immediately.

By UN News.

Full text (as delivered) of the Secretary-General's remarks is available at <http://bit.ly/44CXyqS>

Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General— part related to Iraq



New York, 16 May 2025 - The following is a near-verbatim transcript of today's briefing by Stephanie Tremblay, Associate Spokesperson for the Secretary-General:

**Secretary-General/Iraq

As we have mentioned yesterday, the Secretary-General is in Baghdad. Today, he met with the President of Iraq, Abdul Latif Rasheed. They discussed regional issues. The Secretary-General thanked the Iraqi President for the hospitality shown during the summit and the continued and enhanced UN-Iraqi cooperation.

The Secretary-General also met today with the African Union Commission Chairperson, the new one, Mahamoud Ali Youssouf. Mr. [António] Guterres also met with the Sudanese delegation that is attending the summit, and he underscored the UN's interest in a

dialogue that can lead to a solution in the country, as well as the importance of protecting civilians.

The Secretary-General also held discussions today with the Foreign Minister of Egypt, [Badr Abdel Aty]. They discussed the situation in Gaza and Sudan, among other topics.

Tomorrow, as you know, he will attend the Arab League Summit. He is expected to address the situation in Gaza, to talk about Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and others. We will share, we expected to be able to share his remarks under embargo a little bit later today, and you should be able to watch him live, we hope, on UN Web TV tomorrow.

Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo meets in Baghdad with government and civil society representatives

Baghdad, 18 May 2025 - Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo met today in Baghdad with government and civil society representatives, including Dr. Shahbaa Ahmed Hussein Al-Azawi, the Prime Minister's adviser on women's issues. Discussions focused on Iraq's efforts to advance the women's affairs file and ongoing collaboration with the United Nations to promote women's participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections. Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo commended the positive steps taken and reaffirmed the UN's commitment to advancing the role of Iraqi women across all areas of public life.



Secretary-General of the United Nations meets with the UN staff working in Iraq

Baghdad, 18 May 2025 - "In Baghdad, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, met with the UN staff working in Iraq. As UNAMI is closing this year, the Secretary-General told the colleagues that he shares their emotions and at the same time, he is very proud of all the work they have done throughout the years".



Security Council

SRSG Al Hassan: "UN is committed to supporting free, fair and transparent election with the participation of all Iraqis"



New York, 10 June 2025 - The top UN official in Iraq reiterated his confidence in the resilience of the country's people, and the determination of their leaders, in a briefing to the Security Council on Tuesday.

"Iraq is a nation of profound history, strength, potential, and pride. By working together, Iraqis can continue to make meaningful strides towards stability, prosperity and human rights for all," said Special Representative

Mohamed Al Hassan, who also heads the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

He provided updates on political, human rights and other developments over the past six months, and the Mission's ongoing support to the authorities as it prepares to leave at the end of the year.

UNAMI was established in 2003 and works to advance inclusive political dialogue as well as reconciliation at the national and community levels, among other mandated tasks.

Parliamentary elections ahead

At the outset, Mr. Hassan commended the Iraqi Government for providing humanitarian aid to people in Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen and Syria, and for supporting the new peace initiative between Türkiye and the Kurdistan Workers' Party, a militant group

SRSO Al Hassan: “UN is committed to supporting free, fair and transparent election with the participation of all Iraqis” *(continued)*

known as PKK.

He said Iraq is well on the way to fresh parliamentary elections set for 11 November, and the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) is making notable progress towards polling day, with UNAMI’s technical support.

Although voter registration should conclude in the coming days, and nearly three-quarters of all voters have completed biometric registration, challenges and logistical concerns remain.

Supporting the vote

“But IHEC is committed to doing its best towards a free, fair and transparent election with the participation of all Iraqis without fear and intimidation,” he said.

“UNAMI will spare no effort in providing the most professional technical support towards this end, including efforts to promote the widest participation of women, youth and minorities.”

Mr. Al Hassan also reported on the aftermath of the successful parliamentary elections held in the Kurdistan region in northern Iraq last October. With formation of a regional government still outstanding, he called for a spirit of compromise to break the impasse.

Returns from Syria

Turning to other matters, he said more than 800 Iraqis recently returned from the Al-Hol camp in northeastern Syria. For years, thousands of people from Syria, Iraq and other countries have been held at the notorious complex for their alleged ties to Daesh extremists.

He said the development is an indication of the Iraqi Government’s commitment to accelerating returns of its citizens, with UN support.

“It is nevertheless essential that adequate resources are invested in supporting a dignified reintegration of returning families, and in ensuring a fair judicial process for the detainees who are being repatriated,” he added.

Concern for Yazidi community

Meanwhile, the situation of people displaced within Iraq continues to demand urgent attention. They include members of the Yazidi minority community who are living in camps and informal settlements in harsh conditions.

More than a decade has passed since ISIL fighters attacked the Yazidi’s ancestral homeland around Sinjar, in



northern Iraq, committing atrocities such as executions, forced conversions and abducting thousands of women and girls into sexual slavery.

Mr. Al Hassan said the Iraqi Government’s recent recognition of Yazidi land rights was “a significant milestone,” with over 1,300 ownership letters and nearly 100 title deeds distributed this year. Yet he stressed the need for a national plan that provides durable solutions.

End the injustice

“The return process cannot just be physical relocation, it needs to be a meaningful process that rebuilds lives, livelihoods, and hope for the future,” he said.

Speaking in Arabic, he said the Yazidis “have been greatly harmed in a manner that cannot be described.” He called on all concerned in Iraq and neighbouring countries “to take all the necessary measures” to protect them.

“We think it is important to put an end to this injustice that has been imposed on the Yazidi Iraqi people, and to guarantee their return to their homes and to their areas in dignity and in pride.”

Uphold human rights

Moving on, he said that “commitment to human rights is at the heart of Iraq’s stability and development.” He pointed to measures including progress towards a draft law on minority rights and the adoption of a national strategy to counter hate speech.

“Among the human rights files that must be dealt with urgently is that of those who have been disappeared and those who are in jail without any legal and just and transparent trials,” he said.

Planned withdrawal

Regarding UNAMI, he said that “the Mission continues to pursue a structured transition according to schedule and in close cooperation with the Government of Iraq Transition Team.”

Its offices in Mosul and Kirkuk have closed and staffing levels are being gradually reduced, with the goal of balancing the drawdown as mandated tasks continue. This is taking place “in a context of serious financial constraints impacting the United Nations as a whole,” he added.

Before concluding his remarks, Mr. Al Hassan underlined his “complete trust and confidence in Iraq and Iraqis and the ability of this great country, which is among the founding members of the United Nations to regain its status among the nations.”

He said the UN “will spare no effort in our cooperation and our assistance because we believe in this country and its potential, and its capacities and the capabilities of its people.”

By UN News.

Full text of the briefing (as delivered) is available at <http://bit.ly/4lGG6rA>



United Nations entities and the Permanent Committee on Support for Women's Political Participation discuss support to Iraqi women's participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections

Baghdad, 29 May 2025 – Supporting Iraqi women's participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections and ways for the United Nations in Iraq to provide technical assistance was the focus of a meeting today between representatives of United Nations entities and the Permanent Committee on Support for Women's Political Participation.

Led for the United Nations by Claudio Cordone, the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, and for Iraq by Dr. Yossra Karim Mohsen, Director General, National Directorate for Iraqi Women, under the Council of Ministers Secretariat, the teams engaged in a detailed discussion on promoting women's participation in the elections and UN support for the process.

Committee members outlined their plans and strategies on protection, training, media campaigns, countering hate speech and providing civic and voter education. UN participants, who included UNAMI, UN Women, UNFPA



and UNDP, underscored areas where their expert advice and support can benefit Iraqi women.

In line with its mandate, UNAMI provides advice and technical assistance to the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) and other Iraqi institutions. This was reiterated with the aim of ensuring the

full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation of Iraqi women in the elections, scheduled for 11 November 2025. The teams agreed to continue to coordinate in the runup to the elections. UN Iraq will continue to provide support to Iraqis beyond the end of the year when UNAMI's mandate ends.

Diplomatic Corps in Baghdad briefed on UN technical assistance to Iraq, specifically to the Independent High Electoral Commission

Baghdad, 3 June 2025 - UN technical assistance to Iraq, specifically to the Independent High Electoral Commission, was outlined at a briefing to members of the Diplomatic Corps in Baghdad today. UNAMI and UNDP have developed a joint electoral project to support the 11 November 2025 Council of Representatives elections, with UNAMI's participation to last until the Mission's mandate expires on 31 December, after which the project will continue under UNDP.



IHEC and UNAMI discuss the annual plan for the IHEC Women's Empowerment Team

Baghdad, 17 June 2025 - Dr. Ahlam Al-Jaberi, member of the IHEC Board of Commissioners and head of the Women's Empowerment Team, met with the senior advisor of UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance, Ms. Fernanda Lopez. They discussed the annual plan for the IHEC Women's Empowerment Team and the implementation of its provisions.





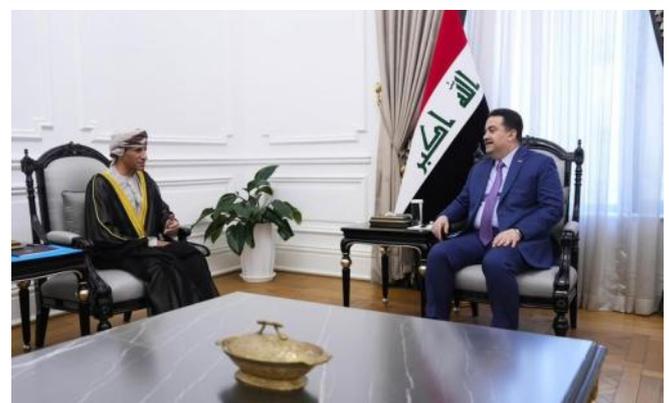
Baghdad, 08 May 2025 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, **Mr. Claudio Cordone**: "Productive meeting today with Minister of Communications **Dr. Hiyam al-Yasiri** and my colleagues from the Human Rights Office. Discussed the final stages in the preparations of the national strategy to counter hate speech and UNAMI's continuing support."



Baghdad, 12 May 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with **Ms. Marwa Shihab Al-Din Ahmed**, director of the Hayat Foundation for the Rights of the Deaf and member of the Assembly of the Arab Organization for Persons with Disabilities as well as member of "It's Time for Iraqi Women" initiative. The Special Representative reiterated the United Nations in Iraq's support for persons with disabilities and emphasized the continued commitment to promoting their well-being.



Baghdad, 12 May 2025 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with members of the "It's Time for Iraqi Women" Initiative, which advocates the empowerment of Iraqi women and seeking to enhance their participation in political, social and economic fields. The Special Representative heard their views and concerns about the general state of women in Iraq. He highlighted the important role of Iraqi women, reiterated the longstanding commitment of the United Nations in Iraq to promote women's empowerment, noting that the Iraqi authorities are deeply interested and keen on enhancing the status of Iraqi women as key partners in Iraq's comprehensive development process.



Baghdad, 14 May 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, was received today by Prime Minister **Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani**. They discussed developments in Iraq and the region, including the ongoing preparations in Iraq to host the Arab League Summit. The Special Representative emphasized the strong participation of the UN, represented by Secretary-General António Guterres and other officials. Dr. Al Hassan extended his wishes for a successful summit, which will also highlight the role and standing of Iraq in the Arab world and the region. Issues of common interest were also discussed, including the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations and Iraq in various fields as well as the firm UN commitment to further partnership. Photo courtesy of the PM Media Office.



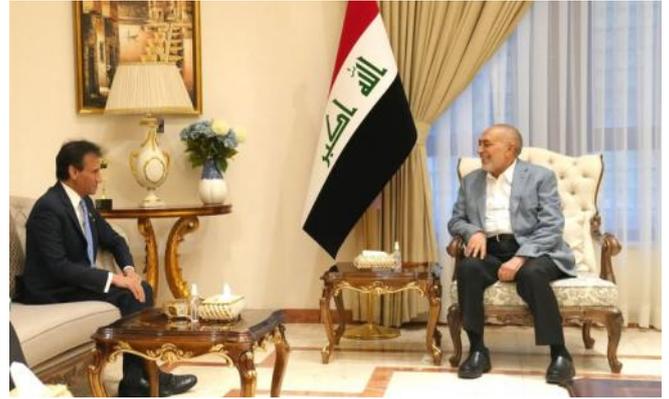
Baghdad, 29 May 2025 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with the Deputy Minister for Energy Affairs and Minister of Oil **Hayyan Abdul-Ghani**. They discussed issues relating to the energy sector and the efforts to protect the environment.



Baghdad, 29 May 2025 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with representatives of the **Yazda human rights organization**. Discussion focused on the plight of the Yazidi community, some of whose members remain kidnapped or missing, the concerns of survivors over their safety and security and efforts to alleviate the hardship they have endured as a result of the Da'esh/ISIL atrocities. Reconstruction efforts in Sinjar District in Ninewa Governorate to ensure their dignified return were also discussed.



Baghdad, 18 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with National Security Advisor, Mr. **Qasim al-Araji**. They discussed the general situation in Iraq and the region.
Photo courtesy of the NSA Media Office.



Baghdad, 17 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, **Dr. Mahmoud Al-Mashhadani**. They discussed issues of mutual interest and the work of the United Nations in Iraq, including the humanitarian and human rights files, as well as the technical support provided by the Mission to the Independent High Electoral Commission.
Photo courtesy of the CoR Media Office.



Kirkuk, 19 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with the head and members of the **Arab Alliance in Kirkuk**. During their meeting, they discussed several matters of concern to Kirkuk and that preserve the achievements that have been made, foremost among them stability and the strengthening of peaceful coexistence among the various communities in the governorate, in a manner consistent with and aligned to Iraq's aspirations.



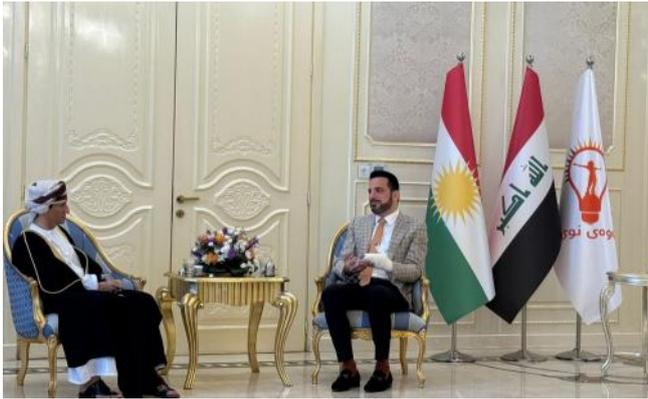
Kirkuk, 19 June 2025 - Today, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, convened a roundtable with **Iraqi civil society in Kirkuk**. Representatives from the Arab, Kurdish, Turkmen, Sabean-Mandaean and Kakai communities shared recommendations on empowering Iraqi women and youth as peacebuilders and discussed creating a permanent forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue with the Kirkuk authorities. Members of the Kirkuk Governorate Council voiced their support for the civil society initiative, emphasizing that sustainable development requires inclusive partnerships across all sectors of



Kirkuk, 20 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today in Kirkuk with the head and members of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, **Mr. Mohammed Samaan Aga**. During the meeting, they reviewed issues of common interest.



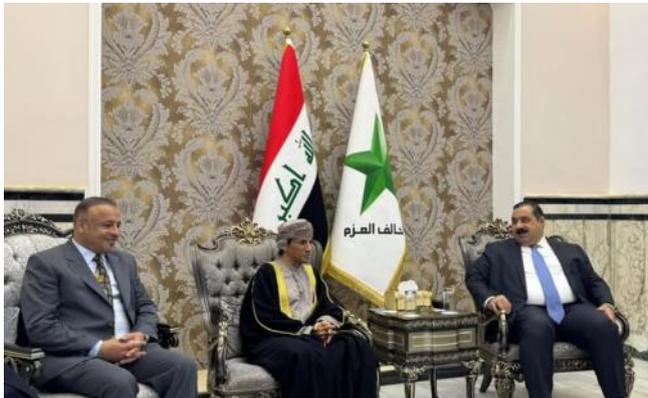
Kirkuk, 20 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with the Governor of Kirkuk, **H.E. Mr. Rebwar Taha**. During the meeting, which was attended by officials from both sides, they reviewed the positive developments witnessed in the Kirkuk governorate across various political, service-related, and economic fields, and ways to enhance these developments as part of the ongoing efforts by the Iraqi government.



Sulaymaniyah, 21 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with **Shaswar Abdulwahid**, President of the New Generation Movement. They discussed regional developments and the need to safeguard Iraq’s security and stability, while also stressing the importance of broad participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for November in Iraq.



Sulaymaniyah, 21 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with His Excellency **Bafel Jalal Talabani**, President of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. The meeting included a review of the current political and security developments in the region. They emphasized the importance of preserving Iraq’s security and stability, and welcomed the call made by the United Nations Secretary-General to end the war and resolve disputes through peaceful means.



Samarra, 22 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met today with the head of Azim Alliance, **Muthana AbdulSamad Al Samarrai**. They discussed regional developments and the need to safeguard Iraq’s security and stability, while also stressing the importance of broad participation in the upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for next November in Iraq.



Baghdad, 30 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, met with former Prime Minister **Mustafa Al-Kadhimi**. Discussions covered the situation in Iraq and the region, as well as the need to maintain stability in Iraq amidst developments in the Middle East.

UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative discusses developments in Iraq and the Region with Iraqi Prime Minister

Baghdad, 25 June 2025 – Today, His Excellency the Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, received the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan. The meeting included discussions on the situation in Iraq and the wider region.

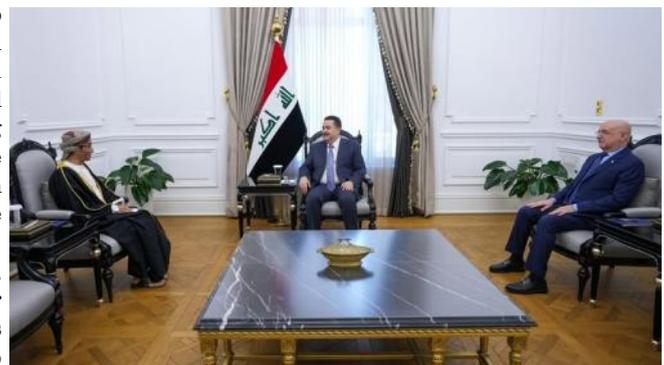
The Special Representative conveyed to the Prime Minister the greetings of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and his appreciation for Iraq’s responsible stance and his policy aimed at preventing the country from being drawn into regional conflicts. He also commended Iraq’s

support for dialogue and diplomatic efforts as a way forward to peacefully resolve and settle ongoing disputes.

The Special Representative stressed the importance of maintaining stability in Iraq and the region, praising the efforts made to restore security and stability and to build mutual trust based on the enduring principles and noble values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister expressed his country’s deep

appreciation for the role of the United Nations and its Secretary-General in defending truth, justice, and the noble values upon which the United Nations is founded.



UN Secretary-General's Special Representative meets with Iraq's Minister of Justice

Baghdad, 25 June 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, met today with the Iraqi Minister of Justice, Dr. Khalid Shwani, at the Ministry's headquarters in Baghdad.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed a range of issues of mutual interest between the United Nations and the Government of Iraq, with a particular focus on the completion of the official and sustainable entitlement of the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights. Discussions also covered justice sector reform, the promotion of the rule of law, and the

improvement of detention conditions in line with international standards.

The meeting also addressed the situation of forcibly disappeared persons, detainees, and prisoners, and stressed the importance of ensuring that citizens who have not been convicted of crimes are allowed to return to their homes, lands, and villages, in accordance with laws and regulations, that are consistent with international human rights principles - based on the respect for dignity and equality before the law for all Iraqis.

The Special Representative reaffirmed the United Nations'

continued support for the Government of Iraq's efforts to strengthen justice, equality, and accountability, and to combat impunity. He also commended the Ministry of Justice's positive engagement with the United Nations, in a spirit that reinforces transparency and the rule of law.



Regional Consultations



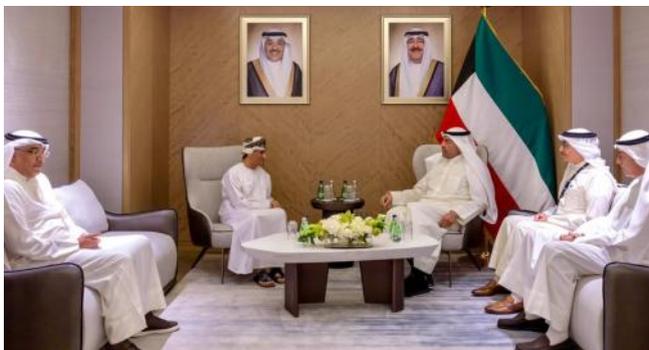
Kuwait, 02 June 2025 - His Highness the Crown Prince of Kuwait **Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah** received today the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, on the occasion of his visit to Kuwait. They discussed issues of common interest, including the cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq in line with UNAMI's mandate from the UN Security Council.

Photo courtesy of the Diwan of H.H. the Crown Prince - State of Kuwait.



Kuwait, 02 June 2025 - His Excellency Ambassador **Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, received His Excellency Ambassador **Dr. Mohammed bin Awad Al-Hassan**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. They discussed possible ways to assist the mission in performing its tasks towards the State of Kuwait, in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions.

Photo courtesy of MoFA - State of Kuwait.



Kuwait, 02 June 2025 - His Excellency **Mr. Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Yahya**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, received this afternoon His Excellency Ambassador **Dr. Mohammed bin Awad Al-Hassan**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), on the occasion of his official visit to the State of Kuwait.

Photo courtesy of MoFA - State of Kuwait.



Kuwait, 15 June 2025 - His Highness the Crown Prince of Kuwait **Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah** received today the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), **Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan**, on the occasion of his visit to Kuwait. They discussed issues of common interest, including the cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq in line with UNAMI's mandate from the UN Security Council.

Photo courtesy of the Diwan of H.H. the Crown Prince - State of Kuwait.

Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo meets with H.H. the Crown Prince of Kuwait Al-Sabah

Kuwait, 19 May 2025 - In Kuwait today, Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo met with H.H. the Crown Prince of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, to discuss UN–Kuwait cooperation, including on regional issues.

The meeting at Bayan Palace was attended by Mazen Al-Issa, Diwan Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, and Abdulaziz Saud Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations. UN Deputy Special Representative for Iraq Claudio Cordone joined Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo.



Human Rights

Strengthening Iraq's efforts against terrorist crimes

Baghdad, 08 May 2025 – The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), in close collaboration with the National Security Advisory (NSA) and the National Center for International Judicial Cooperation (NCIJC), held a three-day workshop in Baghdad for the NCIJC aimed at strengthening the integration of human rights and international humanitarian law in Iraq's counter-terrorism efforts. Held at the NCIJC's Headquarters, the workshop—titled “Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism: The Principles of Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law, and Human Rights-related Reporting”—brought together around 15 staff members from the NCIJC, including judges, prosecutors, legal officers, and personnel from evidence management, witness protection, and victim support units.

Judge Ali Hussain Chfat, President of the NCIJC, stated that “the establishment of the NCIJC marks a new chapter in Iraq's pursuit of justice. Building on UNITAD's work, we are now taking full national ownership of ISIS-related evidence, with a structure designed to act swiftly, transparently, and in full respect of human rights.” He underscored the importance of collaboration with UNOCT and expressed hope that future workshops will offer further opportunities to strengthen the Center's role in promoting accountability and the rule of law.

This event was yet another delivery in a series of capacity-building workshops since 2023 delivered under the UNOCT

Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism Project, funded by Canada, which supports Iraqi national authorities in aligning counter-terrorism responses with international human rights standards. Previous workshops under this project have engaged members of the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Committee and other national institutions.

The NCIJC, formally established following the conclusion of UNITAD's mandate in 2024, plays a central role in judicial cooperation, international coordination, and documentation of crimes committed by Da'esh. The workshop was designed to enhance the Center's capacity to apply human rights in its daily operations and international engagements.

Key objectives of the workshop included:

- Strengthening knowledge of applicable international human rights and international humanitarian law;

- Equipping participants with strategies to integrate human rights into the prosecution of terrorism-related cases;
- Enhancing staff capacity to draft and respond to human rights-related reports and cooperate with international partners.

Participants engaged in discussions with Iraqi and international experts, exploring the challenges and opportunities related to the NCIJC's mandate and the role of Iraqi legislation in upholding international obligations. Special focus was placed on improving reporting and coordination in response to international mechanisms and inquiries.

The workshop concluded with a shared commitment by all participants to continue fostering a human rights-based approach to counter-terrorism, ensuring that justice, accountability, and the rule of law remain at the core of Iraq's efforts to address terrorist crimes.



UNAMI HRO discusses the draft 'Law on Regulating Minorities' Rights and Prohibiting Discrimination'

Baghdad, 08 May 2025 - UNAMI Human Rights Office, jointly with the Human Rights Committee of the Council of Representatives (CoR), held a workshop to discuss the draft 'Law on Regulating Minorities' Rights and Prohibiting Discrimination'.

The workshop was organised at the initiative of Mr. Arshad Al Salihi, Chair of the Human Rights Committee of the CoR. It forms part of UNAMI's ongoing efforts to provide technical support to the CoR to strengthen the draft legislation in accordance with international human rights standards.

The workshop was attended by members of the CoR Human Rights and Legal Committees, MPs from Iraq's component groups, the Adviser to the Iraq High Commission for Human Rights and officials from the Office of the National Security Advisor.

Speaking at the event, DSRSG Claudio Cordone stated that the United Nations



is ready to support Iraq in taking this legislation forward as part of broader efforts to foster a society where every individual can participate in all aspects of Iraq's political, social economic and cultural life without discrimination.

"Iraq benefits from a rich and vibrant

heritage of cultures, languages, traditions, races and ethnicities. I hope today's discussions will contribute to achieving the goal of enacting a legal framework that fully guarantees equality and non-discrimination for all Iraqis."

UNOCT Cybersecurity and New Technologies Programme kicked off its CT TECH+ initiative for Iraq

Baghdad, 25 May 2025 - CT TECH+ is a joint United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and INTERPOL initiative aiming to contribute to global security by strengthening law enforcement capacities of selected Partner States. The initiative focuses on countering the increasing use of new technologies for terrorist purposes, while ensuring the protection of human rights and the rule of law. Funded by the European Union, CT TECH+ is implemented under the UNOCT Global Counter-Terrorism Programme on Cybersecurity and New Technologies.

The meeting was opened by Dr. Zaidan Khalaf, Deputy National Security Advisor in the Office of the National Security Adviser, who emphasized the relevance of CT TECH+ and expressed full support and commitment to it. Deputy Head of Mission of EUAM-Iraq, Mr. Ralf Schroeder and Head of UNOCT Regional Office in Baghdad, Mr. Zeeshan Amin, emphasized good collaboration between the EU, UN and Iraq and the potential for CT TECH+ to expand this collaboration to new areas. Iraq stressed the timeliness of the proposed support, provided an overview of its plans to update its national counter-terrorism strategy and to develop law enforcement capabilities on new technologies across different agencies.



The CT TECH+ initiative, in close coordination with UNOCT Regional Office in Baghdad will continue assisting the Government of Iraq to respond to the increasing use of new technologies for terrorist purposes while upholding human rights in the following areas:

Strengthening Iraq's national counter-terrorism policies or strategies to include comprehensive approaches to countering the use of new technologies for terrorist purposes. This includes national trainings on threat assessments and policy development, and awareness raising on Artificial Intelligence.

Enhancing the national technological

capabilities of Iraq's law enforcement agencies to counter terrorism. This includes national consultations with Iraq to review their law enforcement capabilities for new technologies and identify areas of improvement, but also trainings on Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT), artificial intelligence as well as darknet and virtual assets investigations.

Improving Iraq's international cooperation and public-private partnerships to use new and emerging technologies to counter terrorism. This includes organizing and running a CT TECH+ operation towards the end of the initiative and table-top exercises on public-private partnerships.

A national dialogue on a human rights-based approach to anti-corruption efforts held in Baghdad



Baghdad, 25 May 2025 - UNAMI Human Rights Office and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), together with the Federal Commission of Integrity (CoI), organized a national dialogue in Baghdad on a human rights-based approach to anti-corruption efforts,

concluding a series dialogues held this year in Anbar, Baghdad, Basra and Kirkuk governorates.

The event was attended by 79 participants, and included also staff from various government ministries, the Independent High Electoral Commission, the Communications and

Media Commission, the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights, as well as journalists, defense lawyers and anti-corruption activists.

Participants discussed the linkages between corruption and human rights violations and the need for collaborative approaches, including with relevant authorities, to prevent and combat corruption and promote human rights, as well as the protection of whistleblowers and anti-corruption activists.

Participants highlighted the importance of launching an awareness-raising campaign on the mandate, functions, and complaint procedures of the Commission of Integrity, as well as on the legal and policy frameworks for the protection of whistleblowers and anti-corruption advocates. Such efforts were seen as essential to building public trust and fostering a more enabling environment for accountability and civic engagement.

The UNAMI Human Rights Office conducts a four-day training course aimed at strengthening the capacity of trainers within the Ministry of Oil's human rights department

Baghdad, 19 June 2025 – The UNAMI Human Rights Office, in collaboration with the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR) / Baghdad Office, and in partnership with the Training and Qualification Institute of the Iraqi Ministry of Oil, conducted a four-day training course aimed at strengthening the capacity of trainers within the Ministry's human rights department.

This marked the third training in a series, following earlier sessions held in Basra and Kirkuk in May. The course focused on enhancing participants' understanding of fundamental human rights principles and Iraq's international treaty obligations, with particular emphasis on the right to a healthy and safe environment. Key topics included the environmental impacts of oil extractions such as air



and water pollution, the degradation of agricultural land, and the consequent threats to livelihoods—which

frequently led to the displacement of communities residing near oil extraction and refining sites.

Freedom of Expression

UNFPA on X

Baghdad, 03 May 2025 - "This #WorldPressFreedomDay, UNFPA spotlights the brave women behind the bylines. We're proud to have trained women journalists across Iraq, equipping them to cover issues that matter to women, youth, and communities, amplifying voices that often go unheard."

UNESCO and the Iraqi Security Media Cell celebrate World Press Freedom Day: artificial intelligence and its impact on the future of journalism



Baghdad, 04 May 2025 - UNESCO Iraq Office, in partnership with the Security Media Committee, commemorated World Press Freedom Day through a high-level discussion session held in Baghdad. The session focused on this year's global theme launched by UNESCO: "Reporting in the Brave New World – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media"

The event brought together a

distinguished group of journalists and media professionals, and was attended by Major General Saad Maan, Head of the Security Media Committee, who reaffirmed the commitment of the Joint Operations Command to facilitating journalistic work and supporting freedom of expression as a cornerstone of democracy and pluralism.

In his remarks, Dhea Subhee, UNESCO's CI Officer, emphasized that freedom of expression and the safety of

journalists remain central to UNESCO's mission. He noted that UNESCO is working to empower media professionals with AI tools that enhance journalistic performance and improve well-being—rather than become a source of psychological or professional risk.

Prior to this official session, the Prime Minister of Iraq held an important meeting with the families of fallen journalists, listening to the challenges faced by the press and the struggles endured by the relatives of those who lost their lives defending the truth. The meeting, attended by UNESCO and the Security Media Cell, served as a humanitarian gesture that underscored the vital role of journalism and the need to ensure its protection and support.

This year's commemoration was more than a ceremonial occasion; it served as a powerful statement of Iraq's and the international community's commitment to defending press freedom in an era of rapidly evolving technology—and a reminder that artificial intelligence should be a tool for empowerment, not an obstacle, for journalists.

Hate Speech

Message from SRSG for Iraq Dr. Al Hassan on the International Day for Countering Hate Speech

Baghdad, 18 June 2025 - Message from Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI):

"Today, June 18, marks the annual

International Day for Countering Hate Speech.

On this occasion, and on behalf of the United Nations in Iraq, I would like to emphasize the importance of strengthening coexistence, tolerance, and cooperation, and of rejecting hate

speech, which contradicts our shared human values.

Let us all renew our commitment to combating hate speech, discord, and strife, to promoting our human values, and to protecting the rights and dignity of Iraqis." #NoToHate

Hate speech in the age of AI - why it matters now?

Baghdad, 18 June 2025 - In today's hyper-connected world, hate travels fast and far. Amplified by algorithms and fueled by disinformation, it's a borderless threat.

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) has added new complexities. While AI can prevent harmful speech, it can also deepen inequalities. When bias and hate are embedded in technology, those already at risk, particularly women, minorities and refugees are often most affected. As we navigate these growing

concerns, UNDP's 2025 Human Development Report, explores how technology can empower and protect.

The International Day for Countering Hate Speech, June 18, reminds us that this is a human issue. Creating safe and inclusive spaces, from community meetings to online chat groups, means making sure the voices that are usually ignored are heard and included.

UNDP promotes the use of AI that protects people, empowers marginalized groups and transforms

digital spaces into hubs of inclusion and dialogue.



UNODC organizes Regional Expert Consultation on UNODC model law and legislative guides on the smuggling of migrants

Cairo, Egypt, 11 June 2025 - 38 experts from 10 MENA countries came together in Cairo for a 5-day Regional Expert Consultation, organized by UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Egyptian Public Prosecution and National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons (NCCPIM&TIP), and funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The mission?

To update the UNODC Model Law and Legislative Guides on the Smuggling of Migrants, ensuring they reflect the region’s legal and operational needs, strengthen national frameworks, align



with the Protocol, and equip states with the tools and mechanisms needed to

effectively address this transnational crime.

UN Resident Coordinator for Iraq, Ghulam Isaczai, visits Al Amal Center

Al Amal Center, 25 June 2025- Today, UN Resident Coordinator for Iraq, Ghulam Isaczai, visited Al Amal Center to assess service provisions for Iraqis returning from Al Hol camp in NE Syria. The visit underscored the importance of sustained government and international support to enhance essential services and rehabilitation efforts for returnees.



The ONE UN Plan Steering Committee Meeting reviews implementation progress of UN support to the government of Iraq in the return of its nationals from Al Hol and Al Roj camps in northeast Syria

Baghdad, 29 June 2025 - The ONE UN Plan Steering Committee Meeting—chaired by the Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Resident and Humanitarian

Coordinator, Ghulam Isaczai—brought together UN agencies and development partners to review implementation progress of UN support to the government of Iraq in the return of its nationals from Al Hol and Al Roj camps

in northeast Syria. The committee discussed the challenges arising and issued key recommendations to strengthen service delivery for returnees to Al Amal center and onward in return communities.



A DAFI refugee scholarship contributes to physiotherapy and healing in Erbil

Erbil, 19 March 2025 - The physiotherapy centre run by Fawaz, a 25-year-old Syrian refugee in Erbil in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, is abuzz with patients waiting to be ushered in for their treatments. Working eight hours a day, six days a week, Fawaz and his Iraqi colleagues offer electrotherapy, acupuncture, dry-needling and other physiological services to help refugees and Iraqis alleviate their physical pain.

For five years since his graduation from university in Iraq, Fawaz has been using his skills to improve the wellbeing of his patients. But for him personally, this has been more than a job; it has been an opportunity to build a new life and become an active part of the community.

Fawaz fled Syria with his family in 2013, just before his 13th birthday, arriving in Darashakran refugee camp located in Erbil. He completed his primary and secondary education in a camp-based school and was accepted at the prestigious Erbil Polytechnic University. The family's meagre income helped Fawaz initially pay for his education, but the rising cost of living increased the strain on the family and caused significant stress to Fawaz.

Thankfully, during the third year at university, Fawaz was awarded a scholarship through the DAFI Tertiary Scholarship Programme, implemented by UNHCR, which provides financial support to refugee students to attend university and help them meet their additional educational needs such as buying books or covering transportation costs. This support eased the pressure on Fawaz and allowed him to focus on his studies with even greater determination.

During his studies, Fawaz gained professional experience by practicing physiotherapy as a volunteer at a



local centre in Erbil. Upon graduation, Fawaz and a group of his local Iraqi classmates opened their own physiotherapy centre. "Patients seek specialists who can help them regain a normal life, and this is what they find here," he says.

"It is incredibly rewarding to see someone go from being bound to a wheelchair to starting to walk again after receiving treatment," Fawaz says.

Fawaz's physiotherapy centre quickly built a reputation for excellence across Iraq. Dhiaa, an Iraqi national, travelled over 300 kilometers from Baghdad specifically to be treated by Fawaz and vouches for the quality of treatment he has received in the centre.

"A friend recommended Fawaz as a great physiotherapist. He is not just my doctor now. We have become good friends. I am impressed by his skills at such a young age," Dhiaa says, as faint electric pulses pass through carefully placed needles along his arm and leg, helping him breathe in relief after years of pain.

"The majority of my patients do not care that I am a refugee. What matters is that we are all here, helping each other," Fawaz says.

Establishing the centre was a turning

point for Fawaz and he now is the primary breadwinner supporting his family. However, for Fawaz, the goal is not just earning a living, but also helping others rebuild their lives. "This centre helps us make a living, but what matters most is working with a conscience and helping people heal and regain their independence. We cannot add days to a patient's life, but we can add life to their days," Fawaz says "I am proud to help people and make a difference in this community," he concludes.

UNHCR has implemented the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship programme in Iraq since 2016, helping 488 refugee students, including 280 women, across 21 universities complete their tertiary studies. Ultimately the scholarship programme aims to empower refugee youth to contribute meaningfully to communities while building a brighter future for themselves and others.

The DAFI programme in Iraq and around the world is supported by Germany, with additional support from Denmark and private partners and foundations.

Farha Bhojroo contributed reporting to this story.

By Rasheed Hussein Rasheed, UNHCR

UNHCR works to expand self-reliance opportunities for refugees in Iraq

Erbil, 02 May 2025 - "I make my living doing what I'm good at - barbering, a skill I learned in Syria," says Ahmed Muhammed, at his barber shop in Kawergosk camp, Erbil.

Like Muhammed, most refugees are willing to work and simply need access to opportunities to help build their self-reliance.

Supporting refugees find employment not only helps them rebuild their lives but also strengthens the local economy and fosters inclusion in the community. UNHCR is working with governments, development partners, international financial institutions, and the private sector to expand self-reliance opportunities for refugees in Iraq.



Legal assistance provides relief to asylum-seekers and refugees in Baghdad

Baghdad, 09 May 2025 - On a typical Wednesday evening during Ramadan, Ali was visiting a friend in a nearby neighbourhood in Baghdad when he was unexpectedly arrested. As a Syrian asylum-seeker who had been living in Iraq for the past year and a half, Ali was registered and documented with UNHCR. However, when security forces approached, he wasn't able to show the standard residency documentation that is expected from foreign citizens living in the country.

"We were 11 Syrians who were arrested," Ali explains. "Even though some of us had the UNHCR certificate, the security forces didn't accept that as a valid form of documentation."

Ali and his friends were taken to the local police station and detained overnight. The next day, however, he grew increasingly worried about being deported back to Syria. "I fled to avoid military conscription, but I still don't consider it safe to go back. I am from Lattakia. There are still problems there."

When Ali was summoned to court, he explained to the investigation judge that he was a Syrian asylum-seeker registered with UNHCR. He was subsequently assigned a lawyer – Raghad – to support with his case.

As a lawyer working for UNHCR's legal partner, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Raghad explains that some judges know to contact her when they come across cases of refugees and asylum seekers who have been arrested on immigration-related charges.

"Sometimes we get contacted by the refugees themselves or their families via our hotline, sometimes the police station informs us, or other times the investigation judge, either way we can then step into provide legal representation for the detained individual."

In Iraq, refugees and asylum-seekers should be exempt from the provisions of the Residency Law as per Article 8 of the 1971 Political Refugee Law. However, despite having documentation identifying them as refugees or asylum-seekers, individuals like Ali sometimes end up being detained inadvertently and require legal support.

In these circumstances, lawyers such as Raghad, working for UNHCR's legal partner, are assigned to different administrative areas. They



are ready to assist when called upon and also work proactively to identify those in detention, providing support where needed. Last year, over 1,800 refugees required this assistance.

"I was detained for 16 days because I didn't have a residency card," Ahmed recalls. "I had applied to register with UNHCR, but the appointment had not yet been set so I also didn't have a UNHCR certificate. After three days of being arrested, Raghad was assigned as my lawyer to help."

In Ahmed's case, the police station initially reached out to flag that they had a potential Syrian refugee who needed support. "After I made the statement in front of the judge to explain Ahmed's situation, he was released on bail. I made the statement on Wednesday, and he was released the next Sunday," Raghad recounts.

Ahmed has since completed the UNHCR registration process as an asylum-seeker and holds a UNHCR certificate.

Behind the scenes, however, Raghad says that cases such as these require a large amount of paperwork. "I have to document everything before I give my statement to the judge."

In addition to this day-to-day legal work, UNHCR is also providing technical support to the Government of Iraq to update the current 1971 Iraqi Political Refugee Law, to bring it more in line with international refugee law and standards. An updated legal framework would also be an important step towards preventing some of the arrests and detention of asylum-seekers like Ali and Ahmed on immigration related charges in Iraq.

So far in 2025, UNHCR has prevented the potential refoulement

of over 300 asylum-seekers and refugees through its legal intervention. Most are Syrian nationals. This work is generously funded by the Italian Development Agency, EU Humanitarian Aid and the Netherlands through the PROSPECTS partnership. UNHCR for the time being continues to call on States not to forcibly return Syrian nationals to any part of Syria.

Another important aspect of UNHCR's legal programme is raising awareness among legal actors and authorities about the rights asylum-seekers and refugees should enjoy during their stay in Iraq, mitigating against the risk of detentions. Raghad says she is seeing progress in this area.

"Initially the police and judges are surprised when we introduce ourselves and our work. Some of them are not familiar with the refugee law, but gradually they are becoming more understanding."

For the time being, however, UNHCR's legal programme remains a necessary reality. The dedication and tireless efforts of Raghad and other lawyers like her continue to make a significant difference in the lives of asylum-seekers and refugees.

By Lilly Carlisle, UNHCR Iraq



Cash assistance helps refugee mothers overcome hardship



Erbil, 14 May 2025 - In Iraq, cash assistance is critical for the most vulnerable refugees, including single mothers, people with disabilities, and survivors of gender-based violence, to meet their basic needs.

Sara* tightly grasps her son's hand while speaking, her gaze fixed on her daughter. After her husband was killed in Syria, her life became increasingly challenging. They were internally displaced several times, before moving in with Sara's in-laws, who attempted to marry her to a relative. When she refused, the family separated her from her two children. Eventually, Sara and her children escaped to Damascus and later to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. "If I had stayed in Syria, I would be dead by now," she reflects.

After arriving in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Sara sought asylum and immediately started looking for a job. "I worked in salons here and there in need of extra help. Then, I found a sort of stable job. However, I was the only woman working there, and men started to harass me," she says.

When Sara started to feel uncomfortable, she tried to talk to her boss. She hoped he would understand but, instead, he just told her to be nice to the customers. Disheartened, Sara made the difficult decision to quit. "As a single parent life is complicated. I need to work long hours to cover the family's

expenses. The most difficult thing to do for me is leaving the children alone. They can't cook for themselves; they can't take care of themselves".

In 2024, Sara was thrown a lifeline when she started to receive cash assistance from UNHCR. This assistance is targeted to support the most vulnerable refugees in Iraq meet their basic needs, including women who have faced harassment and violence. 26% of the current recipients are female headed households like Sara.

"Thanks to UNHCR's cash assistance, I started to save some money to cover the rent and our basic needs, such as food. We always try to save money for the next meal. I also now manage to spend more time with my children."

In Iraq, 7,000 vulnerable refugee households currently receive cash assistance from UNHCR. According to surveys conducted by UNHCR after the distribution of cash assistance, most refugees spend the money on paying rent, buying food and paying medical bills. 98 percent of recipients also report that the cash assistance positively impacts their lives and helps reduce stress.

This is certainly true for Fadyia, a 48-year-old Syrian refugee, widow and mother of seven children. When her husband passed away from cancer in November 2024, Fadyia was at a loss of how she would cope "My husband worked in the

construction field. Then, he fell ill for two years and eventually passed away. In the end, he was hospitalized. I fear for my children. They are very young."

As a single parent to seven, Fadyia's most difficult challenge is covering daily household expenses, such as rent and food. Being enrolled in UNHCR's cash assistance programme has helped bring a little relief.

"I have been able to pay rent, and buy food, and clothes for my children, among other expenses," she says. However, her financial situation remains precarious.

Refugees like Sara and Fadyia are enrolled in UNHCR's cash assistance programme for an initial duration of a year. This length of time is considered sufficient to help them meet their most urgent basic needs, give them an opportunity to get back on their feet and build some self-reliance. In 2025, the programme has been generously supported by donors such as the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

Funding shortages, however, mean that cuts to the cash assistance programme are likely in upcoming months. Out of \$20 million urgent needs, less than a third has been received.

This shortfall threatens to reduce the amount of cash assistance UNHCR is able to distribute, the number of families supported, and the length of time families receive the cash assistance, risking increased numbers of vulnerable refugees falling into dire poverty. Without this support, families may also resort to harmful coping mechanisms, such as reducing food intake and accumulating debt.

Cash assistance is the most cost-effective way to provide aid. It empowers refugees and contributes to local economies. For Sara and Fadyia, the benefits are clear. Cash assistance has not only helped them meet their basic needs, but also provided protection and a sense of stability when they needed it most.

*Name changed for protection reasons

By Viola Eleonora Bruttomesso, UNHCR

UNHCR on X

Baghdad, 29 May 2025 - UNHCR partner Wchan is now offering WHO's Self-Help Plus (SH+) programme which helps refugees manage stress and build resilience independently.

For those needing extra care, referrals are available to Shahid Hemn Public Hospital for counseling and psychiatric support. A big step toward local, sustainable solutions.

Bearing the scars of conflict: Iraq's Yazidi community



Sinjar, 14 May 2025 - In the summer of 2014, Daesh forces invaded Sinjar, a district in northern Iraq, launching a brutal campaign against the Yazidi community that would forever reshape the region.

Yazidis are a minority community residing in northern Iraq, bound by an ancient faith and culture, Farhad and Zana, two brothers, are from a small Yazidi village nestled in Sinjar that was also a target for one of the most horrifying genocides in recent history. The 3rd of August 2014, the day when Daesh shattered their simple life on a small family farm, still haunts them.

They fled with their family and hid on their farm for as long as they could. Eventually, armed militants discovered them and forcibly moved them to the nearby village of Kocho. Men and women were separated: the men and boys were confined to a school, while the women and younger children were taken elsewhere. That day marked the last time the siblings saw their parents.

Farhad and Zana were separated too and taken captive. Only their scars silently talk about the hardships, fear and brutality of punishments they went through.

"Every day was a test of survival," Farhad recalls. "They tried to break us, both morally and physically". During captivity, he was shot in his foot and hand. Both times, he was treated without anesthesia, and the injury to his hand eventually led to an amputation.

"Losing my hand was one of the hardest things I had to face," he says. "It was as if they wanted to take away every last piece of who I was, but I wouldn't let them break my spirit."

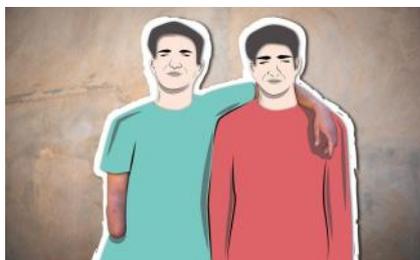
Zana's story is equally harrowing but differs from Farhad's in significant

ways. Zana was too young when he was taken captive, forced to do chores, and considered "lucky" that he could avoid physical punishment. After four years in captivity, in a rare chance, both brothers managed to escape during the liberation operations. "Escaping Daesh felt like breathing again for the first time," reflects Zana. "But I'd lost so much—my family, my home, everything I had known."

Zana recalls how he felt the bittersweet reality of being largely alone in the world until he was reunited with Farhad thanks to the efforts of the government and humanitarian agencies.

The impact of Daesh's violence has left many survivors struggling to rebuild their lives from the ground up. Upon returning to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the brothers found some assistance in navigating a world that had moved on while they remained trapped in a nightmare.

Farhad eventually connected with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iraq, which assisted him in filing for legal compensation under the Yazidi Survivors' Law (Law No. 8 of 2021). The law provides reparations for survivors of sexual violence and other atrocities committed by Daesh. This change and support offered Farhad a glimmer of hope, providing him with a degree of financial stability and the chance to restore his legal identity



documents.

Though challenging, the brothers are looking to the future. Farhad hopes to find their missing family members, and Zana wants to become a doctor to fulfill his and his family's aspirations.

Farhad, Zana, and other survivors carry their own stories and those of countless others silenced by violence. As they gradually rebuild their lives, they hope their suffering will not be forgotten and that future generations will know a Sinjar free from terror.

Their voices are powerful reminders of the Yazidis' ongoing struggle for justice, calling for the world to remember and respond.

"Every step towards recovery is a reminder of what they took from us," Farhad says. "It's a long path, but at least there is a path forward."

After years of conflict and displacement, thousands of Yazidi survivors like Farhad and Zana, displaced families, and returnees across Iraq are still struggling to rebuild their lives. For many, the first step is legal identity — a document that proves who they are, allows them to access basic services, and helps restore a sense of belonging.

Through its legal programme, IOM Iraq has been walking alongside affected communities on their path to recovery. In 2024, over 12,000 people received direct legal assistance — from help with civil documentation to securing housing, land and property rights. Another 8,000 took part in information sessions and awareness activities, learning how to navigate complex legal procedures that affect their daily lives.

The support goes beyond paperwork. IOM's legal experts work closely with courts and administrative offices, providing financial assistance where needed and tailoring outreach to address the specific challenges women face. Every ID issued, every property claim supported, is a step closer to stability, social cohesion, and recovery.

IOM's legal assistance work in Iraq was made possible with support from various donors, including the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Government of Norway.

Names were changed to ensure safety and privacy.

By Ahmed Kaka | Senior Communications Assistant, IOM

Navigating change in refugee child protection services

Erbil, 05 Jun 2025 - In a small, makeshift room in a refugee camp in Erbil, home to more than 8,500 refugees, 12-year-old Dilan* sits quietly, lost in thought. He often keeps to himself, still carrying the pain of being bullied. "I prefer staying inside," he says. "The other kids call me names."

At just five years old, Dilan fled Syria with his younger sister and elderly grandmother. His father had passed away two years earlier and his mother remarried, abandoning her children. Scarred by these early childhood experiences, Dilan has lived with the trauma ever since and his ageing grandmother struggles to provide adequate care.

"Dilan's pain runs deep. He needs more follow-up and consistent support to begin healing and to have even a chance at a normal childhood. Yet now, even that hope is slipping away." Dler Sdiq, a social worker working for UNHCR's partner Kurdistan Save the Children, explains.

Like other vulnerable refugee children, Dilan had previously benefited from attending UNHCR supported child protection related programmes in the camp. His neighbour, Rua*, who often checks in on the children, was the one who initially spotted that he required additional support.

"His sister and grandmother said he was becoming more aggressive, probably from spending too much time playing games on her smartphone. I took Dilan to the UNHCR community centre in the camp," she says.

"He was suffering from lack of focus and felt shuttered, and a sort of a depression. We included him in a programme tailored for such situations," adds Dler.

Due to funding shortages, however, UNHCR supported child protection programmes like this will soon cease operation earlier than originally planned.



Instead, refugee children might access child protection support through public services, which are open to both Iraqi and non-Iraqi nationals alike. Although the accelerated phase-out is driven by funding limitations, the inclusion of refugees within national systems, including those related to child protection, has been a long-term goal of UNHCR in Iraq.

To support inclusion efforts, through steady efforts, UNHCR has been contributing to strengthening child protection services in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. In 2024, UNHCR supported the Kurdistan Regional Government's Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (DoLSA) by training almost 950 government staff and child protection workers on key aspects of protecting children who are assessed to be at risk.

"UNHCR's trainings helped shift our knowledge from theory to practice, equipping us to handle cases to international standards," said Ahmed Rashid, Head of DoLSA's Child Protection unit in Erbil who participated in one of the trainings last year.

These efforts have also been supported by the construction of community centres, outside refugee camps but located in refugee hosting areas, which are accessible to both

the Iraqi and refugee communities. "UNHCR will soon hand over a new community centre in Kawergosk, which will be a location where DOLSA can offer inclusive services for both refugees and Iraqis," explains Ahmed.

Despite these efforts, there remain concerns about the immediate gaps that might be created as humanitarian child protection services phase out and public services to support children at risk continue to face several challenges. "We have always supported all children, no matter their background. Our services will continue and even expand, but I fear they will not reach the same level without support from partners," Ahmed concludes.

With over 130,000 refugee children under 18 registered with UNHCR in Iraq, public services will likely be strained as they strive to fill the void. Therefore, continued support and collaboration will remain critical to strengthen these services. Through sustained efforts and partnerships can every child like Dilan, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to heal, grow and thrive.

* Names have been changed for protection reasons.

Lilly Carlisle contributed reporting to this story.

By Rasheed Hussein Rasheed, UNHCR

UNHCR supports the Kurdistan Regional Government to strengthen the inclusion of refugee children in public education system

Erbil, 10 June 2025 - Over 55,000 Syrian refugee children will soon wrap up the 2024-2025 academic year across the Kurdistan Region.

Learning alongside Iraqi students promotes social cohesion and gives refugee children a better chance at

prospering in the future.

UNHCR supports the Kurdistan Regional Government to strengthen the inclusion of refugee children in public education system, including through building additional classroom and providing school supplies.



UNHCR is amplifying the voices of colleagues who have lived the experience of displacement

Baghdad, 20 June 2025 - Every refugee story is different. This #WorldRefugeeDay, UNHCR is amplifying the voices of colleagues who have lived the experience of displacement and who now dedicate their lives to protecting others through their work at UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

Refugee staff spotlight: Rehab Khalifa
 "Being a refugee is not an identity. It is a circumstance and it can happen to anyone."

Meet our colleague Rehab Khalifa, a Community-Based Protection Officer with UNHCR in Iraq. After two decades supporting displaced communities, she now finds herself

living the very experience of those she has worked with. Rehab shares her story of becoming a refugee, overnight. "I'm originally from Sudan. I always believed in our mission with all my heart. I never imagined that one day, I'd be living the very reality I worked to alleviate.

Today, I am no longer just a humanitarian worker, I am also a refugee.

Displacement does not come with warning. Families are torn apart in an instant. Elders left behind, not by choice, but by force. Now, it's mostly the younger ones who made it out. We carry the guilt and sorrow of

separation.

This dual identity is a burden and a beacon. I carry fear for my children, the grief of loss, but also the resilience of my people and the belief that even in exile, we can still heal and hope."



UNHCR on X

Baghdad, 20 June 2025 - UNHCR Iraq is now on WhatsApp

"This #WorldRefugeeDay, UNHCR's launched its WhatsApp channel to help refugees stay informed with trusted, up-to-date information direct to their phones."

□ <https://bit.ly/45xCseq>

UNFPA on X

Baghdad, 20 June 2025 - On #WorldRefugeeDay, UNFPA Iraq continues to support those displaced by conflict with safe spaces, healthcare, and hope. #SolidarityWithRefugees



Baghdad, 22 June 2025 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. **Ghulam Isaczai**, met today with the Minister of Migration and Displaced, Ms. **Evan Faiq Jabro**. They discussed issues of common interest including the return of Iraqi families from the Al-Hol camp in Syria and the importance of supporting community rehabilitation efforts for internally displaced persons.

Photo courtesy of MoMD.

Development

UNDP values its collaboration with the Iraqi government in the development and adoption of an e-commerce regulatory system

Baghdad, 25 April 2025 - UNDP in Iraq is pleased to reaffirm its support for the Council of Ministers in advancing digital transformation efforts. We also welcome Iraq's official adoption of the country's new e-commerce regulatory framework.

This milestone is the result of the efforts of a high-level committee established by the Iraqi Council of Ministers, chaired by the Governor of the Central Bank of Iraq. The committee also included specialized advisors, representatives from relevant

government departments, UNDP, and the private sector. This committee was responsible for drafting the regulation, with UNDP providing critical legal and technical input, which significantly contributed to shaping the final version of the text.

UNDP values its collaboration with the Iraqi government in the development and adoption of an e-commerce ... (continued)

The Iraqi team has expressed deep appreciation for the efforts of the UNDP representatives, recognizing their valuable contributions, comments, and consultations, all of which enhanced the quality of the project and ensured its alignment with international best practices.

This important initiative focuses on:

- Enhancing legal clarity and providing essential consumer protection in the digital marketplace.
- Supporting innovation and encouraging entrepreneurship within the e-commerce sector.
- Aligning Iraq's digital economy with internationally recognized standards.

UNDP's contributions included:

- Specialized legal reviews and recommendations from international experts.
- Technical support to ensure compliance with global standards.
- Guidance on building a forward-thinking legal framework that fosters growth and prosperity in Iraq's digital economy.

The adoption of this new system underscores the strong partnership between UNDP and the Iraqi government, reaffirming both parties' commitment to creating a flexible legal environment that can adapt to the evolving digital market.

In conclusion, UNDP extends its sincere thanks to the Iraqi team, ministry representatives, the private sector, and legal experts for their

effective efforts and constructive collaboration, all of which were vital to the successful completion of this significant initiative.



Reforms of the banking sector in Iraq requires the concerted efforts of all involved

Baghdad, 6 May 2025 - Aligning Iraqi banks with the global financial system as an incentive to strengthening Iraq's economic development and future prosperity was one of the key issues discussed at a meeting that brought together representatives of Iraqi banks, the United Nations in Iraq and the larger international community.

Addressing the meeting, organized by the Iraqi Private Banks League, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, said that the government's reforms of the banking sector in Iraq require the concerted efforts of all involved.

"Working together ensures that



solutions are tailored to the challenges faced by Iraq and are in its best

interests, ultimately promoting long-term economic stability", he added.

UNICEF revitalizes Sarta Spring in Erbil

Erbil, 08 May 2025 - Under the leadership of the General Directorate of Water Resources in KRL, in partnership with the local community and funding from the German Government through the German Development Bank – KfW, UNICEF revitalized Sarta Spring in Erbil, Iraq.



"Unlocking SME Potential: The Power of Credit Guarantees in Iraq" roundtable held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 28 May 2025 - Today, the International Labour Organization (ILO), in collaboration with the Iraqi Company for Bank Guarantees (ICBG) and hosted by The Iraqi Private Banks League, convened a pivotal round table titled "Unlocking SME Potential: The Power of Credit Guarantees in Iraq."

This event addressed the critical need to bridge the collateral gap for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and explored how a credit guarantee company can effectively address these challenges. Key stakeholders from the Iraqi banking sector participated, discussing the obstacles hindering SME expansion and job creation, and their impact on the broader economic landscape.

The ILO is providing active support for the transformation of ICBG into ICBG 2.0. This initiative aims to foster financial empowerment through structural enhancements, governance reforms, and operational efficiency. The



transformation encompasses a new organizational structure, independent board members, streamlined Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), an enhanced Management Information System (MIS), and the establishment of a guarantee fund, all designed to create

a more dynamic and responsive financial ecosystem in Iraq.

This project contributes to a more inclusive financial future, enabling SMEs to unlock their full potential and contribute meaningfully to Iraq's economic resilience.

Strengthening the financial sector's capacity to support green growth and decent jobs in Iraq

Erbil, 15 May 2025 (ILO News) – As part of broader efforts to promote a just transition to a green economy and expand decent work opportunities in Iraq, the International Labour Organization (ILO), with funding from Italy through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) and in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) and the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI), conducted a five-day training workshop in Erbil from 11 to 15 May 2025. Under the title "Making Green Microfinance Work: Managing Product Diversification," the training aimed to equip financial institutions with the skills and tools needed to design green financial products that serve sustainable small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the country. The training is part of the ILO's flagship project "Towards More and Better Employment through Enhanced Support to Private Sectors in Southern Iraq – With a Focus on Green Business," and it is a part of Team Europe Initiative for Iraq "TAUFIQ initiative" and represents a critical step toward advancing Iraq's transition to a green economy and strengthening inclusive financial systems.

The training was designed to empower Iraq's financial institutions with the



expertise needed to develop and diversify financial products that support green businesses. Participants from the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI), commercial banks, governmental banks, and microfinance institutions (MFIs) gained valuable insights into how they can tailor their financial offerings to meet the unique needs of businesses committed to sustainability. By strengthening this capacity, Iraq's financial institutions are now better positioned to foster the growth of green enterprises and contribute to long-term economic and environmental sustainability.

Throughout the training, participants explored a range of critical topics,

including strategies for new market development, where they examined ways to identify and cultivate new green market segments. Product strategy sessions focused on the creation of green loan products, savings schemes, insurance offerings, and non-financial services designed to support SMEs engaged in sustainable practices. The Training programme also addressed communication and client relationship strategies, as well as methodologies for tracking and evaluating the impact of green finance products.

The training also delved into global and regional green microfinance trends, providing participants with insights

Strengthening the financial sector's capacity to support green growth and decent jobs in Iraq *(continued)*

into the latest research and developments in the field. Discussions included strategies for product diversification, aligning financial services with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, and creating outreach initiatives that encourage SMEs to adopt green finance solutions. By combining technical knowledge with practical application, the training aimed to build long-term institutional capacity and promote a more sustainable financial ecosystem in Iraq.

In this context, Maha Kattaa, ILO Country Coordinator for Iraq, stated: "Our partnership with the Central Bank of Iraq, the International Training Centre, and all stakeholders in Iraq represents a strategic step toward building a robust green finance ecosystem. It aligns with Iraq's green growth strategy, which promotes environmentally responsible practices and the development of sustainable businesses. These efforts also contribute to the creation of decent work by empowering financial institutions to support environmentally and socially oriented small and medium-sized enterprises—fully in line with the ILO's vision of promoting social justice and decent work for all."

Dr. Ammar Khalaf, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Iraq, affirmed that "the partnership with ILO in this

pivotal initiative is fully aligned with Iraq's vision to modernize its financial sector. By promoting green finance, we are not only supporting business growth but also contributing to Iraq's environmental and sustainability goals. This partnership equips financial institutions with the necessary tools to build a more sustainable economy, in line with Iraq's strategy to achieve sustainability under the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. These efforts are also consistent with the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Guidelines issued by the Central Bank in September 2024, which mandate banks to comply with environmental sustainability standards."

This activity forms a core component of the broader ILO project "Towards More and Better Employment through Enhanced Support to Private Sectors in Southern Iraq – With a Focus on Green Business," which operates across three interrelated levels, each directly connected to the training initiative. At the macro level, it supports the development of evidence-based policy recommendations for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) through an assessment of the business environment using the ILO's Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (ESEE) tool, which informs

policies for green and sustainable enterprise development. At the meso level, the training builds the capacity of banks and microfinance institutions to design green finance products, while also strengthening business intermediary organizations to deliver continuous skills development. At the micro level, the training complements the SIYB and Financial Education programs by enabling youth and small business owners in green sectors to access financial services—supported by the Central Bank of Iraq's 4 trillion-dinar initiative to provide affordable financing to MSMEs.

Together, these efforts represent a comprehensive approach to advancing green enterprise development in Iraq. By equipping financial institutions with the tools and capacities needed to support environmentally sustainable businesses, the initiative lays a strong foundation for inclusive economic growth and decent job creation. In the next phase, the International Labour Organization, the Central Bank of Iraq, will provide targeted technical support and guidance to participants in order to develop and implement green lending products that address the needs of environmentally impactful small and medium-sized enterprises across the country, while also strengthening financial inclusion and accelerating the transition to a sustainable economy.

Empowering youth, elevating quality: a new stop in the International Trade Center march in Iraq

Baghdad, 19 May 2025 - Today, the International Trade Center (ITC) in Iraq celebrated a significant achievement representing the graduation of 50 "Young Quality Heroes" from the colleges of agriculture in Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. The event marked the culmination of an intensive training and application course within the "Young Champions of Quality" programme, which is part of the SAAVI project funded by the EU.

Following the completion of the training phase, participants engaged in three-month practical projects, during which they worked directly with 11 SAAVI SMEs and agricultural alliances in the three cities, sowing the seeds of change – whether in themselves as youth leading transformation, or in institutions embracing improvement and development. Notable examples



are Ibrahim Haider, a graduate of the SAAVI Training program and a farm owner, who benefited from supporting young heroes in improving operations within his poultry farm.

During the graduation ceremony, the young champions introduced a range of quality improvement initiatives, showcasing their practical contributions to supporting local

Empowering youth, elevating quality: a new stop in the International Trade Center march in Iraq *(continued)*

agricultural enterprises. Their efforts have been echoed positively from business owners, who expressed their appreciation for the tangible value these young professionals added to their enterprises.

Over eight months, the “Young Quality Champions” program provided participants with personal and professional skills, alongside strong foundations in quality management systems, food safety, and agile management. From developing and executing production and accounting procedures, to training others on agricultural and good hygiene practices, participants graduate ready to effectively support local businesses. The International Trade Center is

proud to support these young leaders as they bring practical solutions and innovative ideas to the local agriculture sector. Their commitment, knowledge,

and practical support is key to improving the performance of small agribusinesses and boosting their competitiveness.



EU to support Iraq's water sector through enhanced cooperation with UNICEF and UNECE

Baghdad, 27 May 2025 - At the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference, H.E. Ambassador Thomas Seiler announced the European Union's intention to support Iraq's water sector through enhanced cooperation with UNICEF and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Ambassador Seiler highlighted the EU's intention to support the water sector in Iraq through €10 million for water resources management, continuous provision of drinking water for Basra, and for internally displaced communities.

The European Union has been one of UNICEF's most significant partners in Iraq over the years, providing vital support to advance children's rights and improve access to education, health, social protection, and safe water.



UNICEF welcomes this renewed commitment and look forward to working with the European Union and

the Government of Iraq to build a sustainable future for children and vulnerable communities in Iraq.

UNDP organizes the New York Convention Roadshow in Baghdad



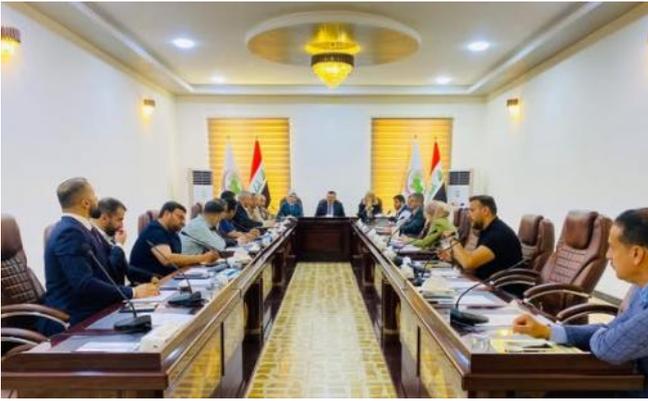
Baghdad, 12 June 2025 - For the first time in Iraq, the United Nations Development Programme, in

partnership with the International Council for Commercial Arbitration (ICCA), organized the New York

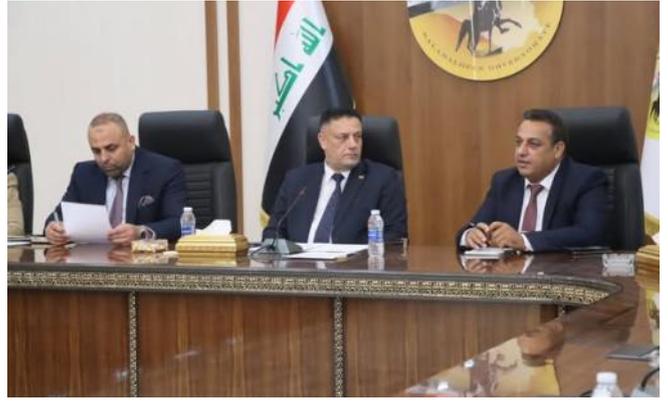
Convention Roadshow in Baghdad.

The event brought together ICCA's judiciary committee representatives from Egypt with judges from across Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to discuss the interpretation and application of the 1958 New York arbitration Convention — an essential legal instrument which entered into force in Iraq in February 2022.

By supporting development of arbitration and mediation in Iraq, UNDP strives to contribute to better investment climate, and hence, to diversification of economy of Iraq.



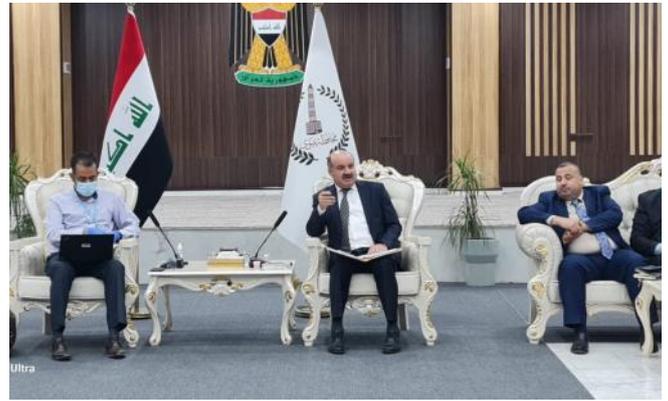
Anbar, 30 April 2025 – Today, the Joint Coordination Forum (JCF) in Anbar convened to discuss key priorities for the governorate, including sustainable development projects in vocational training centres, the governorate’s strategy to support development efforts, and the upcoming Anbar University Conference on Economic Development. The meeting brought together representatives from the Government, the United Nations, and NGOs to align on shared priorities.



Salah al-Din, 21 May 2025 - Today, the Joint Coordination Forum (JCF) in Salah al-Din held its monthly meeting, bringing together the government, UN and NGOs to discuss key priorities: providing basic services in areas of return, the impact of financial challenges to support IDPs and returnees, and enhancing cooperation between local authorities and NGOs to overcome obstacles in implementing re-stabilization programs.



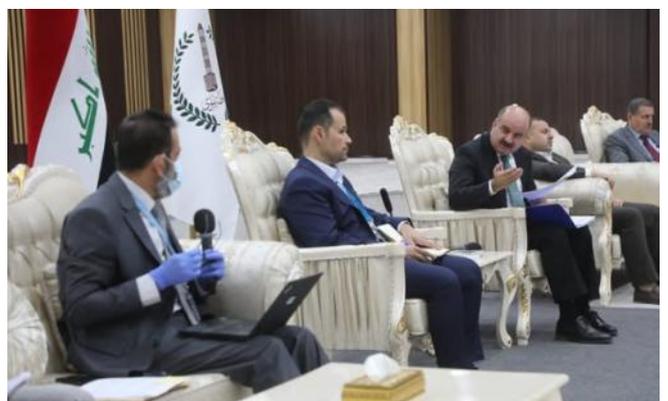
Anbar, 25 May 2025 - Today, the Joint Coordination Forum (JCF) in Anbar held its monthly meeting. Key priorities discussed: climate change; environmental impacts in Ramadi; coordinating site visits to Al-Amal Rehabilitation Center and return areas in western Anbar; and enhancing cooperation between service departments and NGOs in capacity building. The meeting was attended by representatives of local authority, UN & NGOs.



Mosul, 26 May 2025 - Key discussions at the 11th Ninewa Joint Coordination Forum (JCF), held on today, focused on access challenges in Sinjar, the documentation of displacement linked to climate change, complex legal case management, and pressing needs in the education sector. The meeting brought together representatives from the local authorities, UN agencies, and NGOs.



Salah al-Din, 23 June 2025 - Today, the Joint Coordination Forum (JCF) in Salah al-Din held its monthly meeting, bringing together the government, UN and NGOs to discuss key priorities: Challenges facing drinking water in Salah al-Din due to the decline in the Tigris River’s water levels, finding effective solutions, and enhancing cooperation between the local government and NGOs on stabilization issues.



Ninewa, 30 June 2025 - Today, the 12th Ninewa Joint Coordination Forum (JCF) brought together local authorities, UN agencies, and humanitarian organizations to discuss ongoing projects in the governorate, mental health and psychosocial support services, and support for returnees from Al Amal Rehabilitation Center.

A delegation from the Embassy of Japan in Iraq visits the Japan Village Project site in Mosul

Erbil, 01 May 2025 - Today, a delegation from the Embassy of Japan in Iraq visited the Japan Village Project site in Mosul. The visit coincided with International Labour Day, allowing UN-Habitat to highlight the contributions of Japanese workers and taxpayers to the project. Their efforts are helping to create sustainable solutions and promote stability and development in Iraq.

The Japan Village Project, funded by the Government of Japan in partnership with Japanese private entities (PPP), aims to provide social housing for returnees in Ninewa and develop the neighbourhood as part of the Mosul Master Plan. Additionally, the project offers training to unemployed youth and vulnerable populations, equipping them with work skills, experience, and opportunities.

Mr. Kenji Yokota, Chargé d'Affaires, and Ms. Mayuko Hori, First Secretary, were welcomed by representatives from the Government of Ninewa, Mosul Municipality, and the UN-Habitat Iraq team. They expressed their satisfaction



with the project's progress and its importance to the community.

This visit honours the efforts of people of Japan and highlights the interconnectedness of our global community, where shared prosperity contributes to a better urban future, leaving no one and no place behind.

In addition, thirty-two solar-powered streetlights now brighten the newly completed multi-purpose sports court and its surroundings in the Japan

Village Housing Complex, located in the Rajm Hadeed neighbourhood of Mosul.

This transformation—made possible through the collaboration between UN-Habitat and Toyota Iraq, in coordination with the Ninewa Governorate and Mosul Municipality—is part of a broader vision: to create not just housing, but a safe, inclusive, and sustainable urban future for returnees and their communities.

UN-Habitat continues its strong support to the Ministry of Justice on updating national legislation to enable the digital management of immovable property records

Baghdad, 20 May 2025 - UN-Habitat continues under funding from European Union and Government of the Netherlands its strong support to the Ministry of Justice on updating

national legislation to enable the digital management of immovable property records. Precisely Real Estate Registration Law No. 43 (1971) to formally recognize electronic archiving

and data and to contribute to the future interoperability among relevant agencies.



Second UN-Habitat Assembly held in Nairobi – Iraq reaffirms its commitment to a national housing policy focused on low-income and vulnerable groups

Nairobi, Kenya, 30 May 2025 - At the Second UN-Habitat Assembly in Nairobi, H.E. Mohammed Ali Tamim, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning of Iraq, reaffirmed Iraq's commitment to a national housing policy focused on low-income and vulnerable groups.

Speaking at the High-Level Dialogue, he highlighted the role of adequate housing as a cornerstone of prosperity in supporting economic and social development and the need to close the housing gap, especially amid population growth, extreme heat, and water scarcity, and called for

innovative financing and strategic partnerships.

He urged Member States to share experiences and support capacity-building programs, especially in fragile environments.

His Excellency also held a bilateral meeting with Anacláudia Rossbach, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN-Habitat, to discuss the long-standing partnership between the Government of Iraq and UN-Habitat. Their discussions focused on enhancing urban infrastructure, promoting sustainable urban development, and integrating

climate adaptation strategies into urban planning.



Iraq joins UN-Habitat Executive Board for the first time



Nairobi, 01 June 2025 – UN-Habitat is pleased to announce that, on behalf of Iraq, H.E. Mohammed Ali Tamim, Minister of Planning, has secured a seat on the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) — an unprecedented milestone since the Board's establishment in 2018.

This achievement underscores Iraq's growing global role and its commitment to shaping inclusive, resilient, and forward-looking cities. As a Board

member, Iraq will contribute to global urban policy and the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

UN-Habitat proudly supports — and will continue to support — the Government of Iraq in building a better urban future: one that places adequate housing at the core of development, empowers communities, strengthens infrastructure, and promotes stability and improved living conditions for all.

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UN-Habitat proudly participates in the Iraqi Smart Cities Forum 2025 in Baghdad

Baghdad, 04 June 2025 - On 28–29 May, UN-Habitat proudly participated in the Iraqi Smart Cities Forum 2025 in Baghdad, where it presented its mandate on People-Centred Smart Cities as a pathway to delivering housing, land, and basic services.

The Forum served as a high-level platform, bringing together government representatives, the private sector, and development partners to explore smart and resilient solutions for Iraq's urban future. The event underscored the potential of smart technologies to enhance service delivery, urban resilience, and governance—while stressing the importance of context-appropriate approaches.

During the Forum, Marcus Tudehope, on behalf of UN-Habitat Iraq, joined a panel discussion on smart city management and presented the Building Equitable and Inclusive



Transformation (BEIT) programme—an EU-funded initiative jointly implemented by UN-Habitat, the International Labour Organization, and the International Trade Centre. The programme aims to drive economic growth by creating decent job opportunities through advancing Iraq's affordable and sustainable housing initiatives and strengthening the construction sector.

The lively discussion highlighted the importance of vision grounded in realism, and the value of learning from international experiences rather than importing ready-made solutions. UN-Habitat emphasised that 'smart' do not necessarily need to be high tech, and urged practical innovations that address Iraqi cities' challenges, such as urban governance, informal growth, and basic service gaps.

UN-Habitat on X

Sinjar, 29 June 2025 - UN-Habitat has completed the rehabilitation and handover of 258 houses across eight villages in Sinjar—Chalaen, Bajini, Kharb Surek, Omer, Qazilkind, Khafy, Zomani, and Kavroky—providing safe and dignified housing for 1,855 people.

Using data collection and remote sensing analysis to strengthen data driven decision-making for wheat production

Baghdad, 01 May 2025 - As part of the implementation of recommendations by the government committee of fact finding to enhance agricultural and water monitoring through remote sensing technologies, a 5 day joint field activities including Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) is underway in Nineveh and Kirkuk Governorates.

MoA team, trained by FAO on using spectroradiometers and ENVI software, are now training MoWR team in data collection and remote sensing analysis to strengthen data driven decision-making for wheat production.

The objectives: validate crop and water data; support national teams to



generate accurate yield forecasts; promote evidence-based policy through national capacities.

The mission, implemented under the synergies between WaPOR and Sida

funded project, includes: field data collection using advanced spectroradiometer; ground-truthing in wheat fields; satellite-based analysis to estimate wheat yields.

Workshop on improving animal nutrition and enhancing productivity held in Karbala

Karbala, 04 May 2025 - Under the patronage of H.E Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organized a workshop in Karbala on Practical and Sustainable Applications to Improve Animal Nutrition and Enhance Productivity as part of the project Integration of Climate-Smart Practices for Women Empowerment in Iraq, funded by Norway.

The workshop opening was attended by a member of Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources,

the FAO Iraq Representative and the Deputy Director of Agriculture in Karbala.

They emphasized the importance of this workshop in improving animal nutrition and empowering rural women in the face of climate change.

MoA extension officers and livestock breeders also participated in the workshop.

This workshop highlighted: challenges in animal nutrition; best practices and techniques; the importance of green fodder; and communication with livestock breeders.



FAO Iraq follows up on the implementation of climate smart agricultural practices in fodder cultivation

Baghdad, 05 May 2025 - As part of ongoing monitoring of the Norway funded project activities, FAO Iraq team and representative Salah El Hajj Hassan, followed up on the implementation of climate smart agricultural practices in fodder cultivation contributing to improving sustainable agricultural practice and women empowerment.

These interventions also contribute to improved animal nutrition, increased milk production, and enhanced food security in Iraq.

The team also monitored the rehabilitation works of milk collection, processing, and marketing centers, carried out under the project's interventions.

These centers serve as a cornerstone for improving the livelihoods of breeders in rural communities.

This is the first initiative of its kind in the Mid-Euphrates region, marking a qualitative step in supporting the local dairy sector.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq, will organize training courses to strengthen the beneficiaries' capacities in using milk processing tools and equipment, helping to improve product quality and boost marketing opportunities.



International Trade Centre inaugurates second agricultural aggregation hub in Hamidat, Iraq

Mosul/Geneva, 04 May 2025 – The International Trade Centre (ITC), in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the World Food Programme (WFP), yesterday inaugurated an agricultural aggregation hub in Hamidat district, Ninewa Governorate. Funded by the European Union through the “Strengthening the Agriculture and Agri-food Value Chain and Improving Trade Policy in Iraq” (SAAVI) project, the hub was formally handed over to local farmers under the SAAVI Alliances, marking another milestone in Iraq’s agricultural transformation. This is the second aggregation hub established under the SAAVI project, following the launch of the first facility in Al-Quba district. These hubs are designed to serve as vital market-linkage platforms, helping farmers aggregate, clean, sort and grade produce to meet buyer specifications and access higher-value markets.

ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke Hamilton said, “This aggregation hub is more than just infrastructure—it’s a gateway to opportunity. By enabling farmers to process, package and meet market standards, it unlocks access to new buyers and more stable incomes. It’s a practical example of how trade can empower communities, strengthen rural economies and build resilience where it’s needed most.”

Mr. Lennart Deridder, Head of Cooperation at the Delegation of the European Union to Iraq said: “The European Union is proud to support initiatives like the SAAVI project that empower Iraqi farmers and



transform local agricultural systems. This aggregation hub in Hamidat is a demonstration to what can be achieved through partnership, innovation, and community engagement. By connecting farmers to better markets, fostering sustainable practices, and strengthening value chains, we are helping lay the groundwork for long-term economic resilience and food security in Iraq. The EU remains committed to supporting inclusive development that leaves no one behind.”

The inauguration ceremony—co-hosted by the Ninewa Governorate and key development partners—featured guided tours of the facility, personal stories from local farmers and the official handover of the hub to the farming community.

Since the start of the SAAVI project, more than 75 business transactions have been facilitated, moving a total of 270 tons of agricultural produce. Of

this, 36 tons were aggregated and sold directly through the hubs to supermarkets such as Carrefour Iraq and Big Mart, significantly reducing reliance on intermediaries and enabling farmers to secure fairer prices.

“Supporting smallholder farmers is central to WFP’s mandate in Iraq,” said Mageed Yahia, WFP Iraq Representative and Country Director. “We are delighted to be working with ITC to ensure more smallholder farmers in Ninewa have access to the resources and markets they need to build a more resilient food system and enhance their livelihoods.”

The event also convened agencies and partners of the European Union’s Agri-Food Business Development Programme (AfBDP), which aims to strengthen governance in the agri-food sector and promote sustainable job creation. ITC is one of the implementing partners of AfBDP.

Beyond improving market access, the aggregation hubs play a crucial role in long-term agricultural resilience. By providing training, supporting climate-smart agriculture, and fostering innovation, they are building the foundations of a more sustainable and prosperous agri-food economy in Iraq.

About the International Trade Centre – ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the Aid-for-Trade agenda and the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. ITC operates four offices across Iraq—in Baghdad, Mosul, Erbil, and Basra.



FAO delegation visits a Farmer Field School in Najaf to observe climate-smart agriculture practices

Najaf, 10 May 2025 - A delegation from Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), joined by the Director General of Agricultural Extension at the Ministry of Agriculture, the Director of the Agriculture Directorate in Najaf, and officials, visited a Farmer Field School in Najaf to observe climate-smart agriculture practices.

During the visit, an engaging discussion was held with farmers on how to scale up these interventions. The practices aim to promote modern irrigation systems and efficient management of agricultural inputs to enhance: water productivity and crop yields.



Restored Nimrud Agricultural Institute opens doors to stability and opportunity

Ninewa, 27 May 2025 - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with the Governments of Sweden and Italy and in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, officially inaugurated the Agricultural Technical Institute in Nimrud—a major milestone under UNDP Iraq's Stabilization Programme.

Located in the heart of the Ninewa Plains, the Institute had suffered extensive damage during years of conflict. Today, it stands restored as a critical hub for agricultural education and economic opportunity for hundreds of young Iraqis.

The first phase of the project, funded by the Government of Sweden with \$1.25 million, was completed in March 2023. It restored essential



academic and agricultural infrastructure, including classrooms, laboratories, poultry facilities, and

core services. The second phase, supported by the Government of Italy with over \$1.1 million, further expanded academic facilities, constructed a student dormitory and club center, and upgraded campus infrastructure.

The inauguration was attended by representatives of the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the President of the Northern Technical University, Dr. Alia Al-Attar, several faculty members, and the Director of Nimrud Police.

“This inauguration represents more than the reopening of a building—it is a powerful symbol of resilience, hope, and Iraq's path to development,” said Auke Lootsma, UNDP Iraq Resident



Restored Nimrud Agricultural Institute opens doors to stability and opportunity *(continued)*

Representative. "By investing in education and skills for youth, especially in areas impacted by conflict, we are laying the foundation for long-term stability and development."

The revitalized Institute will serve over 300 students and faculty, while benefiting the wider community of more than 250,000 residents. With the anticipated reopening of a nearby bridge across the Tigris River, it is also expected to become a key driver of regional connectivity and economic renewal.

UNDP expresses its sincere appreciation to the Governments of Sweden and Italy, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and Northern Technical University for their ongoing commitment to Iraq's stabilization and development.



Harvesting hope: reversing desertification through conservation agriculture for sustainable land management in Southern Iraq

Baghdad, 17 June 2025 - Desertification, water scarcity, salinization, and land degradation have long threatened rural communities in southern Iraq. These interlinked challenges—worsened by climate change and unsustainable practices—have led to declining soil fertility, reduced crop yields, and increasing vulnerability to drought.

However, a new hope is taking root in the governorates of Thi-Qar and Al-Muthanna. With the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in partnership with Iraq's Ministries of Environment, Water Resources, and Agriculture, and with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), farmers are adopting Conservation Agriculture to combat land degradation, protect natural resources, and build a more resilient farming future.

As we mark the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (June 17), this initiative is a powerful example of how sustainable land management can Restore the Land and Unlock opportunities to preserve ecosystems and improve livelihoods.

Restoring Degraded Land in a Time of Drought

This initiative is part of the project titled "Sustainable Land Management

(SLM) for Improved Livelihoods in Degraded Areas of Iraq", designed to help farmers restore crop productivity on degraded lands while conserving water and improving their resilience to drought.

To highlight the economic and ecological advantages of Conservation Agriculture (CA) practices, FAO and national partners established 41 Farmer Field School (FFS) demonstration plots across Thi-Qar and Al-Muthanna. These plots serve as validation trials to compare conventional traditional farming methods with CA practices for key crops such as wheat, barley, mung beans, faba bean, sorghum, millet and

alfalfa, providing hands-on training to 1,600 farmers. Practices included:

- Minimum tillage to reduce soil disturbance
- Crop rotation or intercropping to improve soil fertility
- Soil cover crop, organic mulching using surface crop residue management to retain moisture and prevent erosion

Farmers Reaping the Benefits

Despite initial hesitation, farmers quickly recognized the benefits. Improved soil structure and moisture retention led to healthier crops, higher yields, lower costs and higher economic



Harvesting hope: reversing desertification through conservation agriculture for sustainable land management ... (continued)



returns—transforming their approach to farming.

Key Benefits of Conservation Agriculture

Increased Crop Yields “I’ve seen my crop yields increase by around 25% since I started using conservation agriculture,” says Farmer Hashim Koti. “Before, I only earned 60-70K IQD every 2-3 months, but now I make 100-150K IQD per month. I’m using these techniques of CA on all my crops now—there’s no going back.”

Saving Water, Building Resilience “Conventional farming required 7 irrigation cycles for my barley and berseem crops,” explains Farmer Sadiq Mazher. “But with Conservation Agriculture, I only need 5 cycles—that’s almost 30% water savings. This also makes soil better, improve environment and my crops are doing better than ever.”

Reducing Costs and inputs “I’ve saved 20% on farming costs in the first year alone,” shares Farmer Issa Ramadhan. “Traditional tillage is expensive with all the ploughing, fertilizers, and water

required. With Conservation Agriculture practices, I’ve reduced these costs significantly, and the results speak for themselves. I’ve been able to reinvest that money into improving my farm.”

Scaling Up Sustainable Solutions

Through continuous Farmer Field School training, demonstration plots, and peer exchange, the project has inspired a growing number of farmers in southern Iraq to shift toward sustainable farming practices.

As the initiative expands, the goal is not only to improve crop productivity but also to restore degraded land, reduce erosion, and reverse desertification.

Sowing the Seeds of Land Restoration

The success of this initiative shows that change is possible—even under challenging environments. By

improving soil health, reducing pressure on water resources, and increasing resilience to climate extremes, Conservation Agriculture is restoring ecosystems and helping communities thrive.

On this World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, the story of these farmers reminds us that investing in land restoration is investing in people, resilience, and a more secure food future.

With continued support from FAO, GEF, and Iraq’s authorities, local farmers are becoming champions of sustainability—reshaping the future of agriculture across Iraq’s most fragile landscapes.

This initiative contributes to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 15 (Life on Land).



FAO in Iraq is leveraging its comparative advantage to deliver results for people and planet

Cairo, Egypt, 24 June 2025 - At the Cairo workshop on Enhancing Partnerships and Resource Mobilization for Development, the Food

and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq showcased its strategic approach: trusted presence, strong government

partnerships, focus on resilience, accountability, and scaling up impact.

Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, FAO Iraq Representative, presented FAO Iraq comprehensive approach which includes: deep government trust; localized presence; co-leadership in UN coordination (Water Task Force, OP4); data-driven resource mobilization; monitoring and Evaluation co-owned with ministries and farmers; transparent, real-time impact reporting.

With a focus on sustainable agriculture, value chains and resilience, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq is leveraging its comparative advantage to deliver results for people and planet.



ILO on X

Baghdad, 01 May 2025 - "This #LabourDay, we honour the strength and resilience of workers across Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon. From farms to enterprises, from training to career development — your determination and inspiration drive progress. We stand with you. We work for you."

FAO on X

Baghdad, 01 May 2025 - Behind every harvest, there's hard work. This #LabourDay, we celebrate the farmers and agri-workers shaping Iraq's future. Together with partners, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is committed to: growing skills; creating decent jobs; empowering women and youth; and supporting agri-livelihoods.

ILO-KfW visit to the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, formalization of the SME financing partnership, and first Steering Committee of the SME development project in Iraq



Baghdad, 29 April 2025 (ILO News) - The International Labour Organization (ILO), together with the German Development Bank (KfW), conducted a high-level visit to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Mr. Ahmed Al Asadi, to provide updates on the progress of the joint project, "Promotion of the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Iraq," funded by the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Development Bank. During the meeting, KfW announced an additional €20 million in funding to expand its support for SME lending initiatives in Iraq.

Mr. Ahmed Al Asadi, the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, emphasized the significance of this project as said "Strengthening small enterprises is essential for fostering a more equitable and inclusive economic future. Through collaboration with our partners, we strive to equip young people and women with meaningful opportunities to unlock their potential. By providing assistance and improving access to sustainable financial services, we enable them to unlock new employment opportunities for themselves and others, ensuring wider economic participation."

Marc-André Hensel, KfW Country Director for Iraq, highlighted KfW's strong commitment to the initiative during the meeting and stated "We are pleased to see the tangible progress this project has achieved in laying the groundwork for a viable SME financing

system in Iraq. Based on this success and the continued commitment of national partners, KfW is increasing its contribution by an additional €20 million. This reflects our confidence in the project's direction and our joint ambition to boost private sector development and employment across Iraq."

The visit marked a significant step forward in strengthening Iraq's SME sector and enhancing its potential for sustainable job creation and private sector growth. Maha Kattaa, ILO Iraq Country Coordinator, presented the project's achievements to date, underscoring the establishment of a solid infrastructure to facilitate SME financing.

In conjunction with the visit, the ILO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning (MoP) and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA), hosted a formal event titled "Formalization of the SME Financing Partnership." The event featured a signing ceremony with Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs), including the National Bank of Iraq, Bank of Baghdad, Al Mashreq Al Arabi Bank, and First Finance Company. Key stakeholders such as the Central Bank of Iraq, the Iraqi Private Banks League, the Iraqi Federation of Industries, and the Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce also participated actively in the event.

Sabah Jondi, Director General of the

Economic and Financial Policies Department at the Ministry of Planning, expressed strong support for the initiative: "This partnership supports sustainable employment and social protection by linking responsible investment and financial tools to fair development. It also strengthens collaboration between Iraqi financial institutions and the ILO to build a robust and inclusive economy."

Later in the day, the project convened its inaugural Steering Committee Meeting, bringing together representatives from MoP, MoLSA, KfW, and the ILO. The committee will provide strategic guidance to ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the project.

Maha Kattaa highlighted the broader significance of the initiative: "This project represents a vital commitment to unlocking the potential of Iraq's SMEs as engines of decent job creation and inclusive growth. By improving access to finance and strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem, particularly for youth and women, we are laying the groundwork for a resilient and equitable economy. The project has already succeeded in establishing a solid infrastructure to support SME financing, which is a critical foundation for long-term impact."

Osama Alkhafaji, Director General of the Department of Labour and Vocational Training highlighted the importance of the project, saying, "I believe that empowering small enterprises is the key to building a fairer and more inclusive economic future. We work with a humanitarian spirit to provide young people and women with a genuine opportunity to realize their potential by supporting them and facilitating their access to sustainable financial services, so that they can become the agents of change in their homeland."

Strengthening the voice of trade unions in Iraq

Erbil, 03 May 2025 - The Bureau for Workers' Activities at the ILO Regional Office for Arab States in Beirut, in collaboration with the ILO Country Office for Iraq, organized a training workshop on Effective Communication Skills for Workers' Organizations from 27 to 29 April in Erbil, Iraq. The workshop brought together media officers from several trade union organizations to analyze the current communication landscape, trade union strategies, and ways to enhance them in line with global developments in the field.

Specialists from the Bureau for Workers' Activities, technical experts, and communication professionals from the ILO delivered a series of training sessions addressing the decent work gap in Iraq, in addition to specialized topics such as: writing press releases



and impactful stories, crisis communication and reputation management, website and social media strategies, multimedia and podcasting skills, countering disinformation, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence.

The training aimed to strengthen trade unions' role and support the development of effective communication strategies. It enabled Iraqi unions to better represent workers, amplify their voices, and promote decent work for all.

Second Job Fair held in Sulaymaniyah with strong turnout and institutional support

Sulaymaniyah, 04 May 2025 (ILO News) - The second Job Fair was successfully held in Sulaymaniyah, drawing wide participation from job seekers, employers, and institutional partners. The event was organized jointly by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – General Directorate of Social Management, the Polytechnic University of Sulaymaniyah, and the International Labour Organization (ILO), under the EU-funded "Joint Social Protection Programme for Iraq". The job fair brought together nearly 40 employers offering around 600 employment opportunities across various sectors in Sulaymaniyah city. More than 300 job seekers participated, exploring potential career paths and engaging directly with company representatives.

This marks the second job fair in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) supported by the ILO, following the launch of the Job Matching Platform in November 2024. These efforts are part of a broader strategy to promote employment and enhance employability, expand social security coverage, strengthen collaboration between the public and private sectors, and increase the reach of the Job Matching Platform across the region.

The event was officially inaugurated by Dr. Haval Abubakir, Governor of Sulaymaniyah, alongside Mr. Kwestan Mohammed Abdullah, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, and a representative from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific



Research. The fair was also attended by the Dean of Sulaymaniyah Polytechnic University, the Head of the Sulaymaniyah Chamber of Commerce, several Director Generals, private sector leaders, academics, and media representatives.

In his opening remarks, Governor Abubakir expressed his full support for initiatives that enhance employment prospects and foster economic development in Sulaymaniyah. He emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between government institutions, academia, and the private sector to generate meaningful opportunities for the region's youth.

As part of the event, a panel discussion titled "From Graduation to the Labour Market: Opportunities and Challenges" was held, bringing together key voices

from government, academia, and the private sector. The session explored the main barriers young graduates face when entering the labour market and highlighted practical solutions to improve job readiness and employment outcomes. In addition, the event featured inspiring job success stories from young Iraqis who have benefited from career support initiatives. A video introduction showcased the objectives and functions of the Job Matching Platform, helping participants better understand how to navigate available opportunities and connect with potential employers.

The ILO reaffirms its commitment to working with national and regional stakeholders to promote decent work, enhance employability, and build inclusive labour markets throughout Iraq.

Ministry of Planning and ILO organize workshop on decent work in public contracts



Baghdad, 13 May 2025 - As a significant step toward promoting the principles of decent work in public contracts, the Ministry of Planning organized, on Tuesday, 13 May 2025, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), a consultative workshop titled "Promoting Decent Work in Public Contracts", with the participation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the International Trade Centre (ITC), as part of the "Building Equitable and Inclusive Transformation "#BEIT" programme funded by the European Union. This workshop marked an important milestone in the Government of Iraq's efforts to reform its public procurement system, making it more compliant with international labour standards and more responsive to the principles of social justice. The event brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of

Planning's Directorates of Regional and Local Development, Government Contracts, and Human Development, as well as representatives from the Labour and Vocational Training, Social Security, and National Occupational Safety and Health Centre under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The aim was to explore ways to translate the concept of decent work into practical, actionable mechanisms within government contracting processes. During the workshop, the ILO presented a general overview of ILO Convention No. 94 (1949), which Iraq ratified in 1986. The Convention focuses on the conditions of employment in public contracts and was reaffirmed as a key legal reference to ensure fair and safe working conditions for workers employed in publicly funded projects. The presentation also highlighted comparative experiences from countries such as Italy, Germany,

and Spain, which have incorporated contractual clauses that oblige companies to comply with national labour laws and collective agreements. In the same context, the International Trade Centre presented its vision for possible reforms in public procurement policies and procedures, drawing on international frameworks such as the EU procurement directives, the UNCITRAL Model Law on Public Procurement, and the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA). The presentation emphasized the importance of adopting a strategic approach that makes public contracts a tool for transparency, efficiency, and inclusive employment.

What distinguished this workshop was not only the technical content of the presentations, but also the genuine commitment expressed by participants to move forward in revising Iraq's public procurement regulations to incorporate clear social dimensions, anchored in social dialogue, and supported by effective oversight and inspection mechanisms. The objective is to transform public procurement into a driver of development and labour rights protection in Iraq.

The workshop also served as a platform to reaffirm the need for enhanced coordination between national institutions and international partners, particularly within the framework of the BEIT joint initiative, which brings together the ILO, the International Trade Centre, and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to support Iraq in building a more responsive and rights-based public procurement system.

In collaboration with the International Labour Organization: the Ministry of Planning launches a national dialogue to design a comprehensive Public Works Programme in Iraq

Baghdad, 15 May 2025 (ILO News) – As part of a significant step toward generating large-scale employment opportunities and promoting sustainable socio-economic development, the Ministry of Planning organized an extensive consultative workshop on Wednesday, 14 May 2025, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO). The workshop aimed to discuss mechanisms for designing and implementing a National Public Works Programme

(NPWP) in Iraq.

This initiative falls within the Ministry's broader efforts to align employment policies with social protection and climate change strategies, through investment in labour-intensive projects that can create real and impactful job opportunities, particularly for vulnerable groups in the labour market, including job seekers registered in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' database and

beneficiaries of the social protection network.

In his opening remarks, Maher Hammoud Johan, Technical Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Planning, emphasized the importance of public works for Iraq. He explained that the programme is being designed to support the achievement of two key national policy objectives: Goal 4 on expanding solar energy systems and Goal 9 on sustainable afforestation, both of which contribute to emissions

In collaboration with the International Labour Organization: the Ministry of Planning launches a national dialogue ... (continued)

reduction and long-term climate resilience.

From the ILO side, Maha Kattaa, ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq, presented a strategic overview of the technical cooperation with the Iraqi government, particularly on piloting operational models within the public works framework. She highlighted the reforestation project in Duhok, which generated more than 27,000 workdays with a strong focus on engaging vulnerable populations, Kattaa also noted that the ILO, in coordination with the Ministry of Planning, is working on a National Public Works Roadmap, expected to be announced following consultations with relevant ministries, workers' and employers' organizations.

She emphasized that the government's proposal to afforest 6,228 dunams across 14 governorates presents a strategic opportunity to launch a programme that could generate at least 15,000 green jobs over the next five years. The programme aims to integrate public works with vocational training, entrepreneurship, and social protection, forming a cohesive model for sustainability and efficient public spending. She affirmed the ILO's readiness to provide technical support by developing unified implementation tools, including Standard Operating

Procedures (SOPs), a monitoring and evaluation system, and coordinated governance structures, while also exploring green financing partnerships. The workshop concluded with a set of practical recommendations, including, Finalizing the National Roadmap for the Public Works Programme, covering design, financing, governance, and implementation modalities; Launching pilot projects in solar energy, afforestation, construction, and digital infrastructure; Building the capacities of local actors, partner institutions, and beneficiaries; Strengthening partnerships with civil society and the private sector.

Participants unanimously affirmed that the Public Works Programme

represents a central pillar for tackling unemployment, stimulating economic recovery, and fostering social cohesion. They stressed that its success would depend on coordinated efforts among key ministries, particularly Planning, Labour, Agriculture, Oil, Industry, Construction and Housing, alongside the technical support of international partners, most notably the ILO.

This workshop is part of the "Building Equitable and Inclusive Transformation (BEIT)" project is an EU-funded initiative that aims to drive economic growth by creating decent job opportunities, advancing Iraq's affordable and sustainable housing initiatives and strengthening the construction sector.



ILO and Iraqi Federation of Industries launch workshop to strengthen enterprise formalization in Iraq

Fostering Dialogue with Employers and Delivering Practical Responses to Informality under the PROSPECTS Partnership

Baghdad, 28 May 2025 (ILO News) - The International Labour Organization (ILO), in collaboration with the Iraqi Federation of Industries, organized a

two-day workshop on 27–28 May 2025 in Baghdad. The workshop is part of ongoing efforts to address the challenges of the informal economy and promote enterprise formalization within Iraq's labour market.

Informality remains a major challenge in Iraq, with more than half of the workforce engaged in informal

employment, particularly in sectors such as construction, agriculture, manufacturing, and retail trade. According to ILO estimates, approximately 5.73 million Iraqis work without formal contracts, social protection, or decent working conditions.

The workshop served as a dialogue platform that brought together representatives from the Iraqi Federation of Industries, the Kurdistan Region Chambers of Commerce Union, and the Erbil Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Discussions focused on identifying root causes of informality, exploring strategies for formalization, and strengthening cooperation with employers to advance decent work and sustainable development.

The agenda addressed the impact of informality on workers and enterprises, examined legal and regulatory reforms, and explored incentives and support services that could help enterprises



ILO and Iraqi Federation of Industries launch workshop to strengthen enterprise formalization in Iraq *(continued)*

transition to the formal economy.

Adel Akkab, President of the Iraqi Federation of Industries, stated: “The informal economy is a major obstacle to sustainable development. Integrating it into the formal economy requires legal reforms, simplified registration procedures, and safer working environments. While the transition is challenging, it is essential for building a more balanced and resilient economy.”

In her remarks, Maha Kattaa, ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq, said: “We are pleased to welcome our partners from the Iraqi Federation of Industries and the Kurdistan Chambers of Commerce. Enhancing cooperation with employers is vital to advancing social protection and enabling a transition to a more inclusive and formal economy in

Iraq.”

José Manuel, Senior Employers’ Specialist at the ILO, added: “This workshop represents a significant step in supporting employers’ organizations to tackle informality and promote decent work. Together, we can develop practical solutions that foster enterprise growth and facilitate sustainable formalization.”

The workshop was grounded in ILO Recommendation No. 204 on the transition from the informal to the formal economy, emphasizing the need for integrated strategies to address the structural drivers of informality in Iraq, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises in improving their formal status and working conditions.

This initiative marks an important step

towards building consensus and strengthening employers’ capacity to confront informality and enhance the business environment in Iraq.

The workshop is part of the PROSPECTS project, a global partnership aimed at improving access to education, social protection, and decent work for host communities and forcibly displaced persons. Supported by the Government of the Netherlands, the partnership brings together the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank. It seeks to transform how governments and partners, including the private sector, respond to forced displacement situations.

Coding a better future: digital skills for youth in Mosul, Iraq

Mosul, 05 June 2025 - In an effort to address youth unemployment in Iraq, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) launched the Austrian Government-funded ‘Digital technology skills to enhance employability in Iraq’ project, targeting young refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and host communities. In April 2025, 12-day training in Mosul, Nineveh, engaged 20 participants in hands-on coding, robotics, and entrepreneurship skills.

The curriculum gradually introduced participants to increasingly complex topics, balancing theoretical understanding and hands-on experience. Participants learned Arduino, a widely used platform for electronics projects known for its simplicity and versatility. They also learned C/C++, programming languages commonly used in software development.

The first nine sessions covered the fundamentals of coding and programming and participants explored the basics of motors, controlling robot motion, using output modules, and LCD displays. Each technical session emphasized experimentation, fostering confidence in programming logic, electronics handling, and basic mechatronic applications.

Complementing the technical track, the final three days focused on the development of business skills. These sessions aimed to instill an



entrepreneurial mindset and provide participants with foundational tools to assess, plan, and manage small business ventures. The goal was to help participants understand the role of entrepreneurs in economic development and encourage them to think critically about starting and sustaining their own businesses while linking their technical skills to real-world economic opportunities. The sessions also dedicated time to the fundamentals of financial record-keeping, budgeting, and profit projection.

Thana Mashkur, legal advisor at the Industrial Development and Regulatory Directorate of the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Minerals, applauded the programme, stressing the importance of entrepreneurship for youth who face significant challenges in starting their own businesses.

“Digital technology is increasingly

indispensable for aspiring entrepreneurs to foster innovation, growth, and sustainability,” Thana noted.

Participants demonstrated remarkable growth throughout the training. Zahra Luay, a recent graduate of the Mosul University’s College of Sciences and a freelance tutor, participated in the training with the goal of securing full-time employment. While she had learned coding theory at university and enjoyed teaching it to her students, she previously struggled to link the principles of coding with practical applications. After completing the training, she expressed confidence in her ability to teach hands-on projects and develop technology-based solutions. Reflecting on her experience, Zahra said, “The most engaging part of the training was the project where we installed sensors for humidity, heat,

Coding a better future: digital skills for youth in Mosul, Iraq (continued)

sound, and smoke. I can now assemble them on my own without any assistance.”

Zahra believes that unemployed youth should look for novel opportunities in digital technologies. Inspired by the entrepreneurship component of the programme, she is now considering setting up a tutoring office and transforming her freelance work into a more sustainable business. "Entrepreneurship sessions enabled me to identify and address the needs of potential customers and myself, utilizing my technology proficiency and the economic opportunities in the growing digital landscape," she added. Iraq is currently grappling with significant economic challenges, including high unemployment, widespread poverty, and limited job opportunities. The country also faces ongoing insecurity and political instability, which further complicates the economic landscape.

Youth under 24 account for 57.9% of

Iraq's population. Unemployment is a major concern for this demographic, particularly young women. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the 2024 projected youth unemployment rates are 27.8% for males and 63.3% for females.

Digital technologies hold immense potential for driving job creation and fostering economic inclusion. They can help reduce the gender gap by offering favorable working conditions, such as flexible hours and remote work. Many young Iraqis are increasingly interested in pursuing careers in information and communication technology (ICT), recognizing the opportunities it presents.

Walid Raid, a student at the Mosul Technical Institute, also participated in the training. He had no prior background in coding and said that the training opened up new horizons for him. Drawing on what he learned, Walid designed and developed a project to help deaf and hard of hearing people,

using sound sensors, artificial intelligence, and an LCD.

"I enjoyed the training hours especially because they offered a practical link with theories. It has changed my vision of the possibilities of technology." Walid said.

Abdulkareem Ahmed, the training's C/C++ programming instructor, praised the participants' progress: "We could see the confidence of participants. Towards the end of the training, there was much better communication and interaction between them. Participants expressed their empowerment and initiatives to provide more sustainable sources of income."

By providing young people with the necessary skills and knowledge, the Austria-UNIDO project, 'Digital technology skills to enhance employability in Iraq,' has proven to be a catalyst for fostering a more inclusive and stable society, ultimately contributing to the long-term well-being and prosperity of Iraq.

UNHCR on X

Baghdad, 12 June 2025 - Every child deserves a safe, happy childhood - not forced to work.

On #WorldDayAgainstChildLabour, we stand with the UN in calling for: quality education; protection from exploitation; time to play and grow.

Security Sector Reform

Challenges and opportunities for women in the security sector discussed at the training in Baghdad

Baghdad, 22 May 2025 – UNDP has just wrapped up Phase 2 of its training on "The Role of Leadership in Empowering Women in Security Sector Institutions" in Iraq, 24 leaders - women and men - came together to discuss challenges and opportunities for women in the security sector including but not limited to Institutional structures, policies and the role of champions to further advance the success of Iraq's experience in promoting women's participation in the security sector, in line with UNSCR 1325 and the National Action Plan III, the 12 sessions showed the strong commitment from senior officials to support women's career progression and recommended Reviewing recruitment and promotion systems, Strengthen institutional accountability through monitoring mechanisms and developing internal mentorship programmes.



UN launches network to support victims and survivors of terrorism

New York, 28 April 2025 - A new UN initiative aims to drive collective action to support the rights and needs of people everywhere whose lives have been upended by the continuing threat posed by terrorism.

The UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) launched the Victims of Terrorism Associations Network (VoTAN) on Monday.

The network is a key outcome from the first UN Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism, held in September 2022. It brings together victims and survivors of terrorism, victims' associations and civil society organizations from across the globe.

The goal is to provide a safe space for

victims and survivors to support each other, build resilience and engage as advocates, educators, and peacebuilders.

Solidarity, advocacy and assistance

Vladimir Voronkov, UN Under Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, expressed solidarity with all victims regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or religion, and paid tribute to their courage and resilience.

"In the face of unimaginable personal tragedy, many have chosen to raise their voices, becoming powerful advocates for solidarity and tolerance," he said, while also calling for greater support.

"In many cases, the needs of victims and survivors are urgent and underfunded. International and national assistance remains critical," he stressed.

Understanding victims' needs

The development of VoTAN received financial support from Spain and its launch marks an important step which will allow victims to connect and support each other, said the country's Foreign Minister José Manuel Albares

Bueno.

"Synergies between civil society and governments are essential to understanding the needs of victims, so we trust that other Member States, especially those belonging to the Group of Friends, will also support the Global Network," he added.

The Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, chaired by Spain and Iraq, was established nearly six years ago to uphold the need to protect victims' rights.

Co-chair Abbas Kadhom Obaid Al-Fatlawi, Chargé d'Affaires at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq, reaffirmed the Group's solidarity with all those affected.

"They all have our utmost respect and commitment to continue doing everything necessary to make them feel recognised, cared for and protected," he said.

Transforming pain into purpose

The event concluded with statements from five victims of terrorism and victims' associations.

Grace Acan from Uganda highlighted "the critical importance of collaboration, resilience and partnership" in her remarks.

"Through partnerships, we can amplify our voices, advocate for justice and ensure that the needs of victims are met with compassion and urgency," she said.

"Together, we can transform our pain into purpose, creating a safer, more inclusive world for all."

By UN News.



“ I have had the honour of speaking with a number of victims and survivors of terrorism over the years. Many go on to use their experiences to build peace, to drive change, and to assist each other. This is why initiatives like the Victims of Terrorism Associations Network are so important. We need to support victims and amplify their stories.”

MR. VLADIMIR VORONKOV
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism at the VoTAN Hybrid Launch Event - 28 April 2025 - UNHQ

Building a stronger local response to emergencies

Baghdad, 26 May 2025 - In a crisis, every minute counts. Response needs to be prompt, effective and inspire trust.

IOM Iraq, EUAM Iraq + Iraq's Community Police Directorate teamed up to prepare for the best way to build a stronger local response to emergencies.

This project is supported by the Government of the Netherlands.

"The more we understand each other, the more mutual trust we will build. This will reduce anxiety in approaching the police for help in crises" Ali Ajami, Community Police Head, Iraq.

"Preparedness is the key to effective crisis management: whether it's trough crowd control, mobile police stations, or by improving communication with communities." Muneer Tashman,

community policing specialist, IOM Iraq.

"The collective international expertise in civilian security offers the Iraqi police a wealth of proven strategies to inspire effective crisis response." Jens Hesselberg Moeller, Senior Strategic advisor on command and control/crisis management, EUAM Iraq.



SRSR for Iraq Dr. Al Hassan participates in the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism Conference in Baghdad



Baghdad, 28 May 2025 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, participated today in the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism Conference in Baghdad.

The conference, under the title “Challenges Facing Arab Banks in Complying with International Laws and Legislations, and the Means to Fulfil Correspondent Banks Requirements”, was an opportunity to share expertise and address other matters that affect confidence building, attract investment and international partnerships that Iraq can benefit from.

Dr. Al Hassan stated: “The United Nations believes that good governance, transparency and compliance with international regulatory frameworks are not only pillars for the prevention of money laundering and financing terrorism, but also tools to enhance trust building measures between states and institutions, especially in the financial sector, which is the lifeline for economic growth.”

Here is the full text of Dr. Al Hassan speech at this event:

“Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to participate in the

opening of the second edition of the Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Conference, which constitutes a significant milestone in the path of Iraq towards the transition to the state of the rule of law and institutions - and the positive interaction in efforts to combat money laundering, dry up the sources of financing terrorism, and strengthen compliance systems for regulatory and governance frameworks in the financial and banking sector.

I would like to start by referring to the title chosen for this edition “Challenges Facing Arab Banks in Complying with International Laws and Legislations, and the Means to Fulfil Correspondent Banks Requirements”. It reflects the growing awareness among financial and banking institutions that restoring trust and attracting international partnerships require commitment to the highest standards of transparency and responsibility.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations believes that good governance, transparency and compliance with international regulatory frameworks are not only pillars for the prevention of money laundering and financing terrorism, but also tools to enhance trust building measures between states

and institutions, especially in the financial sector, which is the lifeline for economic growth.

In this context, the United Nations appreciates the efforts of the Central Bank of Iraq and the Association of Iraqi Private Banks in leading this positive movement. It calls for strengthening partnerships with the international financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, The Financial Action Task Force (FATF and MENA FATF), The Basel Committee and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), etc. in order to build national capabilities that contribute to raising standards to keep pace with global requirements and entitlements.

Such partnerships, accompanied by building on the successful experiences in several Arab states (and non-Arab states) that were able to gain the trust of international institutions and international banks by adopting profound reforms, would ensure the integration of Iraq into the global banking system, serving its national interests towards sustainable economic development.

Distinguished participants,

Today's conference is a considered a platform to exchange experiences and review the applications of financial technology and artificial intelligence as practical tools to enhance regulatory compliance systems and combat money laundering and financing terrorism. In light of the accelerated digital transformation, technology is no longer an option, but an urgent necessity. It has the potential, if used properly, to detect suspicious patterns, enhance the accuracy of regulatory procedures, and accelerate the response to financial risks. However, this technological development must be accompanied by a strong legislative system. While digitization offers unprecedented possibilities, legislative compliance remains the main guarantor of the sustainability and legitimacy of this transformation.

Iraq's full recovery and its return to playing a positive role has become a regional and international necessity. The time has come to shake off all the dust of the past from this gem — the Eastern pearl — and the people and leadership of Iraq are capable of doing so.

Thank you.”

Promoting transparency, integrity and accountability is essential to achieve a prosperous society

Baghdad, 28 May 2025 - Promoting transparency, integrity and accountability is essential to achieve a prosperous society where all citizens enjoy equal rights, opportunities and access to services. Building strong communication between anticorruption bodies and citizens is key to earning trust and encouraging cooperation.

As UNDP, we have been working closely with the Federal Commission of Integrity, the Supreme Judicial Council, the Commission of Integrity and the Judicial Council in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to develop and execute communications and outreach strategies.

Together with Media in Cooperation



and Transition, workshops have been conducted to co-finalize the strategies and discuss best ways of engaging with stakeholders and citizens to together address corruption.

Funded by the European Union,

through UNDP's Anti-Corruption and Arbitration Initiatives, these efforts aim to strengthen Iraq's fight against corruption through boosting communications, outreach and citizen engagement.

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations discuss strategic partnership

New York, 30 May 2025 - United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism reports that the Under-Secretary-General Mr. Vladimir Voronkov met with Chargé d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations in New York, Dr. Abbas Kadhom Obaid, to discuss strategic partnership, ongoing collaboration and ways to strengthen Iraq's counter terrorism efforts and leadership at the national and regional levels including Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (PRR), Victims of Terrorism, Human Rights, Countering Terrorist Travel.



UNODC organizes a regional workshop in Cairo focused on strengthening regional cooperation to prevent and counter terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters

Cairo, Egypt, 02 June 2025 - UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in partnership with the Egyptian Public Prosecution, organized a regional workshop in Cairo with senior law enforcement and criminal justice officials from nine MENA countries: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yemen.

The workshop focused on strengthening regional cooperation to prevent and counter terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters.

Funded by the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund (UNPDF), discussions covered:

legal and operational tools for extradition and mutual legal assistance; use of digital evidence and

cross-border case-building; and regional judicial cooperation and information-sharing mechanisms.



Building 'New' Basra City: mine action as enabler

Basra, 08 May 2025 - Shatt Al-Arab district is located to east of the Basra city. It is situated along the Shatt Al-Arab river, where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers meet and flow into the Gulf. This district is known for its fertile agricultural lands and historical significance. This area has long been a cornerstone of Iraq's cultural and economic identity.

Tragically, Shatt Al-Arab area became a battlefield during the Iraq-Iran War which lasted for eight devastating years. The war left behind a damaged lands contaminated with ERW and legacy mines.

Yet, life continued, UNMAS Iraq in collaboration with the DMA, the Government of Iraq National Mine Action Authority accepted the challenge of addressing these long-standing hazards and implemented the humanitarian mine action response in this area between 2022 and 2023.

Substantial mine action operations including explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) activities were carried out by Al-Khebra Al-Faniya (AKAF), UNMAS Iraq national implementing partner, in Basra. The EORE shares essential messages to the communities on the EO threats and demonstrate the safe practices and behavior in the occasion of encountering any explosive threat.

"Shatt Al-Arab district is known as the New Basra these days! Yes, we are delighted to share that the area cleared by UNMAS Iraq is now a site of significant development, a new highway is under construction to connect two major parts of Basra all the way to the port. Additionally, the clearance operations encouraged the construction of new infrastructure including housing projects around the area of Shatt Al-Arab" said Mr. Nibras Fakhir, the Head of the DMA Regional

Mine Action Centre (RMAC) South.

Despite all the cheerful news and all the construction activities in the area, large areas in Basra governorate is still affected by landmines and ERW, posing ongoing risks to civilians and hindering rehabilitation efforts.

Shatt Al-Arab's story highlights the pivotal role of mine action in restoring communities and fostering growth. With continued efforts, this district is transforming from a symbol of conflict into one of hope and renewal.



UNMAS welcomes the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation to the operations site in Mosul

Baghdad, 18 May 2025 - Today, UNMAS welcomed the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) to the operations site in Mosul, where they learnt more about the current endeavors and the impact of Mine Action on local communities. Thank you, Italy.



Ongoing battle: unwavering Mine Action endeavors in Tal Kaif



Ninewa, 22 May 2025 - In coordination with the Directorate for Mine Action, UNMAS Iraq cleared explosive ordnance contaminated areas in Tal Kaif, Ninewa governorate. The clearance operations of vast areas of contamination paved the way for the

safe return of displaced families. The clearance operations had a significant impact, enabling the communities to rebuild their lives and contributing to development and stabilization. Families could return home safely and restore their hope for the future.

"I looked at my house with tears in my eyes and a broken heart when I left that day. I never thought that I would return safely to my house after the devastating attack we witnessed" said Shaimaa Ali, a mother and head of household in Khawaja Khalil village in Tal Kaif district.

In 2014, the residents of Khawaja Khalil village were forced to abandon their homes and belongings, fleeing for their lives from the violent attacks by ISIL. Three years later, in 2017, Tal Kaif district was finally liberated following extensive military operations. Following the coordination with the DMA, the village and surrounded areas were cleared by UNMAS Iraq implementing partner, Global Clearance Solutions (GCS) in 2023. These clearance operations highlighted vast areas of contamination, paving the way for the safe return of displaced

Ongoing battle: unwavering Mine Action endeavors in Tal Kaif (continued)

families.

The clearance operations had a profound impact, enabling the community to rebuild their lives.

Families, including Shaimaa's, could return home safely and rebuild their lives through agricultural activities. The villagers restored their hopes to future, contributing to the development of the local community, and stabilization of the region.

Still, the locals face a new challenge:

the presence of explosive threats in and surrounding the village. In Ninewa governorate, the majority of civilian casualties after the liberation were caused by EO items, including different types of ERW and numerous improvised explosive devices (IEDs). This is another reminder that the battle against ISIL has not completely ended until such time all EO items have been removed from the ground. Following 40 years of conflict, Iraq is

one of the world's most EO contaminated countries. As of March 2024, there are approximately 2,723 square kilometres of recorded contaminated land across Iraq. UNMAS Iraq, with support from the international donors and coordination with DMA, shall continue its dedicated endeavors to make Iraq free from EO threats.



Safety billboards installed across explosive ordnance-affected areas in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Erbil, 28 May 2025 - To mark International Mine Awareness Day (IMAD) 2025, Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) Iraq installed safety billboards across explosive ordnance-affected areas in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The messages warn the locals and visitors of explosive threats. UNMAS is grateful to donors for supporting #SaferCommunities.



Quality Assurance (QA) in mine action in Iraq discussed in Erbil

Erbil, 01 June 2025 - Recently, UNMAS Iraq facilitated a workshop in Erbil in support of the Directorate for Mine Action (DMA) and the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency

(IKMAA) to discuss and establish a unified approach for Quality Assurance (QA) in mine action in Iraq. The workshop covered a comparative analysis of the two national authorities'

current QA reports, the role of risk assessment in QA, and the standardized QA roles, responsibilities and qualifications of QA personnel.

UNMAS Iraq facilitates a Mine Action legislation workshop

Baghdad, 05 June 2025 - In early May, following a request from the Government of Iraq, UNMAS Iraq facilitated a Mine Action legislation workshop with participation from the National Standing Committee of the International Humanitarian Law of the Prime Minister's Office, the Directorate for Mine Action (DMA), Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), and with support from UNAMI. The workshop covered the draft mine action law supporting the implementation of international treaties and the efforts to protect the affected communities.



UNMAS publishes 2024 Annual Report for Iraq

Baghdad, 29 June 2025 - UNMAS delivers mandates assigned by the United Nations Security Council to peace operations and responds to requests for assistance from United Nations Resident Coordinators and

national authorities in states affected by explosive ordnance. UNMAS responses are aligned to the objectives of the United Nations Mine Action Strategy and the United Nations vision of a world free from the threat of mines,

explosive remnants of war (ERW) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The 2024 Annual report for Iraq is available at: <https://bit.ly/4nb7FdE>



Iraq and World Health Organization celebrate World Health Day 2025 with the launch of the National Strategy for the Health of Women, Children, and Adolescents



Baghdad, 24 April 2025 - In celebration of World Health Day 2025, the World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with Iraq's Ministry of Health, organized a high-level event to highlight progress in public health and promote a shared vision for the future. Held under the theme "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures," the event brought together senior government officials, UN agencies, donor partners, and members of the diplomatic community.

The event featured the official launch of the National Strategy for the Health of Women, Children, and Adolescents, jointly developed by WHO, UNICEF, and UNFPA. It included a high-level panel discussion that emphasized Iraq's transition from emergency health response to building resilient and sustainable health systems. Discussions focused on strengthening national leadership, multisectoral

collaboration, and ensuring equity in health service delivery.

H.E. Dr. Saleh Al-Hasnawi, Minister of Health, stated: "WHO has been a trusted and longstanding partner in supporting Iraq's health agenda. From emergency response and health system strengthening to technical guidance in developing national strategies, the Organization's leadership and expertise have been instrumental in advancing equitable, resilient, and people-centered health services."

Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Isaczai, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, noted: "The health sector plays a vital role in Iraq's development and recovery. This event marks a pivotal moment in our shift from emergency response to sustainable, resilient health systems that serve all. As UN partners, we are committed to supporting Iraq's leadership and national health agenda

in delivering inclusive and sustainable healthcare for everyone."

The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Jamela Al-Raiby, WHO Representative in Iraq, and included participants from the UN, Ministry of Health, Prime Minister's Office, and international partners. The dialogue explored practical approaches to strengthen health systems, invest in early life stages, and integrate services across sectors.

Dr. Al-Raiby emphasized that the event reflected WHO's core mission to convene, coordinate, and catalyze efforts for healthier communities, reaffirming the joint determination to place women, children, and adolescents at the heart of health policy and investment—because sustainable development begins here.

The event also highlighted key recent health achievements in Iraq, including:

- Maternal mortality rate reduced to 29.6 per 100,000 live births
- Neonatal mortality rate reduced to 10.5 per 1,000 live births
- Under-five mortality rate reduced to 19.7 per 1,000 live births

The event concluded with a renewed call for continued collaboration between the government, the United Nations, and the international community.

WHO extends its sincere appreciation to all partners and donors for their continued support in improving health in Iraq. The Organization reaffirms its commitment to national priorities and to working alongside partners to ensure that every child in Iraq is protected by a health system that offers them a promising future.

WHO Representative in Iraq, Dr. Jamela Al-Raiby, commences her first official visit to the Kurdistan Region

Erbil, 05 May 2025 - WHO Representative in Iraq, Dr. Jamela Al-Raiby, commenced her first official visit to the Kurdistan Region with a warm welcome from the Ministry of Health-KRG. In a high-level meeting with H.E. Dr. Saman Barzangy, Minister of Health, both parties reaffirmed their shared commitment to health sector reform. Discussions focused on scaling digital health (DHIS2), strengthening the health workforce, and expanding primary health care services. WHO remains a trusted partner in advancing KRG's priorities of infrastructure, system modernization, and equitable



service delivery.

On the celebration of the #WorldHealthDay2025, Dr. Jamela Al-

Raiby, WHO Representative in Iraq, undertook her first official mission to the Kurdistan Region, reaffirming

WHO Representative in Iraq, Dr. Jamela Al-Raiby, commences her first official visit to the Kurdistan Region *(continued)*

WHO's strategic collaboration with MOH-KRG. The visit underscored the importance of investing in primary health care, maternal and child health, and equitable service delivery particularly in a region that continues to host large numbers of displaced populations. Marking the global day under the theme Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures, WHO and partners renewed their collective commitment to advancing health equity and resilience across all communities in the Region.

As part of her official visit to the Kurdistan Region, Dr. Jamela Al-Raiby, WHO Representative in Iraq, conducted field missions to Ble General Hospital in Soran and Erbil Maternity Hospital two facilities serving diverse populations in remote and urban settings. In Soran, she witnessed how



digital health and infrastructure investments are enabling equitable care in mountainous areas. In Erbil, she observed the life-saving impact of WHO and BPRM-supported upgrades, with neonatal mortality dropping from

6.2% to 0.9%. These visits reflect WHO's commitment to Universal Health Coverage and ensuring quality services reach all especially women, newborns, and underserved communities.

Dr. Jamela Al-Raiby visited the WHO Iraq Warehouse in Erbil-MOH-KRG-hosted and the first globally to adopt WHO's new warehouse system. Essential supplies worth ~\$144K were handed over to boost emergency readiness. At a joint press briefing, WHO reaffirmed its support to health equity, maternal care, and digital transformation. H.E. Dr. Saman Barzangy was recognized for his visionary leadership in driving health reform and inclusive service delivery across the Region.



The sounds of care, comfort, and hope have been replaced by growing health risks and uncertainty

Baghdad, 07 May 2025 - Visiting Al Amal Camp was a stark reminder of what happens when health services are taken away. The World Health Organization (WHO) clinics once stood as a shield protecting communities from disease outbreaks, managing chronic conditions, and delivering care to those who needed it most. It was more than a facility; it was a lifeline for thousands.

Now, that lifeline is gone. The clinic doors are closed. The sounds of care, comfort, and hope have been replaced by growing health risks and uncertainty.

Dr. Jamela walked the empty halls, met with community members, and listened to their urgent calls for help. Without the clinic, the community is deprived of access to essential health services including primary care, emergency treatment, chronic disease management, and preventive care. The absence of medical support means



people go without vital medications, timely diagnoses, or consistent follow up leaving the entire population vulnerable to preventable illnesses and worsening health outcomes.

WHO remains committed to restoring these essential services because every life matters, and every community deserves protection, dignity, and health.

UNFPA on X

Baghdad, 05 May 2025 - “This #InternationalDayOfTheMidwife” we salute the incredible Iraqi midwives who bring life safely into the world every day. UNFPA will continue to support midwives to ensure that women are receiving skilled care during pregnancy and childbirth.

“Midwives are a cornerstone of reproductive health services. Investing in midwifery education is a direct investment in the health and stability of communities.” Dr. Hind Jalal, UNFPA Representative in Iraq.

WHO works with universities across Iraq to advance the Health Promoting Universities initiative

Baghdad, 13 May 2025 - As part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) mission to integrate health into all sectors, we are proud to work with universities across Iraq to advance the Health Promoting Universities initiative. Universities are not only centers of knowledge they are platforms for shaping healthier, more resilient societies. Through healthy campus environments, mental health support, and student engagement, we invest in a healthier future.

“Universities have a unique power to shape not only minds but communities. By embedding health in education, we build generations that value well-being, equity, and sustainability.”- Dr. Jamela



Al-Raiiby, WHO Representative in Iraq. The World Health Organization remains committed to supporting Iraqi

academic institutions in becoming active drivers of public health and development.

UNICEF is working to support health care centers to protect children from diseases

Basra, 23 May 2025 - At the Al-Shaibi Center in Basra, a three-month-old baby Rawan, was accompanied to receive the vaccine.

With support from Korea, UNICEF is installing solar panels to preserve vaccines, rehabilitate the center, and provide medical supplies to ensure services continue to the most vulnerable communities.

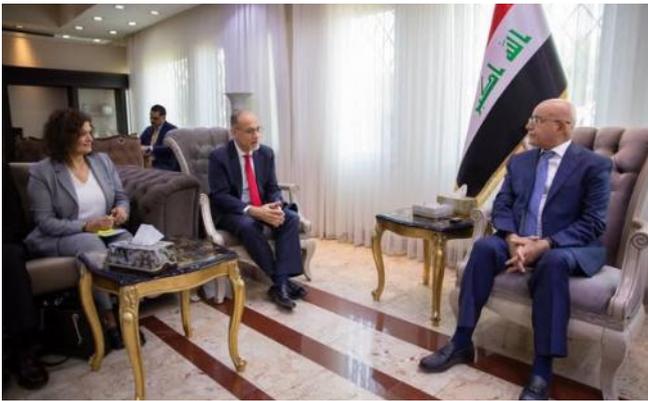
Vaccine is safe ... And sustained support makes all the difference.



WHO Iraq staff come together for a “Walk the Talk”

Baghdad, 30 May 2025 - WHO Iraq staff came together for a “Walk the Talk” reinforcing the importance of physical activity, team spirit, and leading by example in promoting healthier lifestyles. The initiative aligns with WHO’s global movement to inspire individuals and communities to incorporate regular physical activity into daily life as part of a broader commitment to health and well-being. Through this walk, WHO Iraq reaffirmed its dedication to workplace wellness and encouraged all partners and stakeholders to prioritize physical and mental health as key components of a resilient, thriving society.





Baghdad, 23 June 2025 - UN Resident Coordinator for Iraq, **Ghulam Isaczai**, and World Health Organization (WHO) Representative for Iraq, **Dr. Jamela Al-Raiby**, met with Minister of Health **Dr. Saleh Al-Hasnawi** to discuss ongoing UN–MoH collaboration and joint efforts to strengthen health services, with a focus on contingency planning.
Photo courtesy of MoH.



Baghdad, 24 May 2025 – **Ms. Hind Jalal**, UNFPA Iraq Representative, met **Dr. Huda Sajad**, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, to discuss strengthening future collaboration on women’s empowerment and protection of vulnerable groups under the new Country Programme.

Family Planning

UNFPA Iraq launches the new Country Programme 2025–2029

Erbil, 10 May 2025 - In Erbil, UNFPA launched the new Country Programme 2025–2029 with partners from the KRG, donors and civil society. A new chapter focused on systems strengthening for lasting impact. Thank you for the inspiring dialogue and shared commitment.



UNICEF and UNFPA jointly conducted two experience exchange workshops

Baghdad, 22 May 2025 - UNICEF and UNFPA jointly conducted two experience exchange workshops with the support of Baghdad Makers for the

Ministry of Health Staff from media and public health offices. The two days discussed the updates on social media and using it in campaigns, and an

introduction to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it can be used in photos/videos and campaigns.



Baghdad, 29 May 2025 - UNFPA met with H.E. **Dr. Hamid Naim Al-Ghizi**, Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers of Iraq, to discuss strengthening joint cooperation mechanisms and reaffirming the commitment to implementing the new Country Programme under the Joint Cooperation Framework.
UNFPA Iraq Resident Representative, **Ms. Hind Jalal**: "I had a fruitful meeting with the General Secretary of the Ministers' Council in Iraq. We engaged in productive discussions focused on strengthening mechanisms for joint cooperation and reaffirming our commitment to implementing UNFPA-Iraq new Country Program Document 2025-2029".



Baghdad, 29 May 2025 - UNFPA Iraq recently held a productive meeting with **Mr. Maher Jouhan**, Deputy Minister of Planning. The discussion reaffirmed the strong and long-standing partnership with the Ministry of Planning. The meeting explored ways to deepen collaboration on key national priorities, especially: data strengthening; post-census activities; and critical population issues essential to Iraq’s development. UNFPA Iraq remains committed to working hand in hand with the Ministry of Planning to support national goals and contribute to a more data-driven and inclusive future for all Iraqis.

UNHCR and its partners plant trees in schools across Sulaymaniyah

Sulaymaniyah, 04 May 2025 – UNHCR, its partner Intersos Iraq and in coordination with the Directorates of Forest and Environment in Sulaymaniyah, refugee and Iraqi children came together and planted trees in schools across the city. This initiative helps foster environmental awareness among children, creates greener schools, and promotes eco-friendly habits.



"Environmental Enhancement" project implementation discussed at a meeting in Baghdad

Baghdad, 06 May 2025 - As part of the "Environmental Enhancement" project implemented by the Iraqi Ministry of Environment with support from the UNDP, a key meeting was held at the Bahr Al-Uloom Forum for Studies in Baghdad, attended by His Excellency the Minister of Environment, Dr. Halo Mustafa Al-Askari, and the Prime Minister's Climate and Environment Advisor, Dr. Ali Al-Lami, to discuss the project's main recommendations. Participants discussed proposed mechanisms for improving the performance of the Ministry of Environment and achieving integration between national environmental policies, with the goal of building a just and sustainable environmental system

in Iraq. It also discussed the report to identify the pollution priorities based on the

National Strategy of Environmental Pollution Reduction and Action Plan (2022-2030).



FAO empowers rural women to lead climate action in Iraq

Erbil, 14 May 2025 – Building on the momentum of the Climate Wise Women (CWW) Module 1 training held in Basra, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), has concluded a six-day Intensive Training of Trainers (TOT) in Erbil. This 1 training marked a significant milestone in preparing Master Trainers—women leaders from Najaf, Muthanna, and Baghdad—to initiate, demonstrate, and spearhead community-level climate action across southern Iraq.

Delivered under the project “Enhance Climate Resilience of Vulnerable Agriculture Households in Southern Iraq”, the training, delivered by FAO Specialists, combined Modules 2 and 3 of the CWW curriculum into one comprehensive cycle. Participants were introduced to advanced concepts in climate-resilient irrigation and water

management, sustainable soil-water-crop relationships, agrometeorological advisories, and resilient food systems technologies. Designed to be practical, locally adapted, and feasible for women smallholder farmers on the ground, the training equipped participants with both scientific tools and leadership skills to support rural women in their farms. “This training demonstrates that women are at the heart of agricultural

transformation in Iraq,” said Salah Hajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq. “By equipping them with the tools and leadership skills to adapt to climate change, we are laying the foundation for resilient communities and sustainable food systems.” The opening ceremony was attended by Dr. Hadi Al-Yasiri, Director General of the Horticulture Department at the Ministry of Agriculture, and Dr. Mohammed Mankhi, Director General



FAO empowers rural women to lead climate action in Iraq *(continued)*

of the Agricultural Mechanization Department. Both officials praised the initiative, emphasizing that empowering rural women with adequate knowledge and capacity to adapt to climate change is a strategic investment in Iraq's agricultural future, and would foster climate resilience where it is most needed—within local communities."

This training followed earlier steps in the CWW initiative, including the successful TOT and the training of 50 local women facilitators from Najaf and Muthanna. These facilitators, have now established community-based women farmer groups, and will work closely with the Master Trainers to promote climate-smart agricultural practices tailored to the agro-climatic realities of the target communities, as well as to their adaptive capacities.

The training sessions concluded with a

closing ceremony, during which the FAO team awarded certificates and celebrated the achievements of the Master Trainers—reaffirming the commitment of all partners to empowering rural women as agents of change in climate action.

With the scientific training phase now complete, the Climate Wise Women initiative is entering its field implementation stage. Local facilitators will begin cascading training sessions and conducting hands-on demonstrations using sets of field toolkits provided by FAO. Women farmer groups will be encouraged to engage in peer learning exchanges, form their own knowledge exchange groups, and deliver community awareness activities focused on sustainable water use and adaptive agriculture.

This transition to fieldwork is the

result of three successful Training of Trainers (TOT) cycles, through which FAO has built a core group of capable women leaders ready to spearhead climate adaptation efforts. The Climate Wise Women initiative stands as a significant genuine example of how combining scientific expertise with local leadership can drive lasting change for communities most vulnerable to climate impacts.

By investing in rural women and building their capacity to lead climate action, the initiative directly contributes to several Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). It strengthens the nexus between environmental sustainability, gender empowerment, and food security in fragile settings.

Iraqi Government and FAO launch \$39-million climate resilience project

Baghdad, 26 May 2025 - As part of his visit to Baghdad, Iraq, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Mr. QU Dongyu, together with key Iraqi ministries, today launched the Green Climate Fund (GCF)-funded project titled "Strengthening Climate Resilience of Vulnerable Agricultural Livelihoods in Southern Iraq" (SRVALI)". The announcement took place on the sidelines of the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference, in the presence of senior government officials, international partners and United Nations representatives.

With a total investment of USD 39 million, the SRVALI project aims to directly benefit rural households in the

governorates of Karbala, Najaf, and Muthanna, regions increasingly affected by drought, land degradation, and water scarcity. The project includes a generous co-financing from the Government of Canada and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)

Mr. Dongyu emphasized that the SRVALI project is a testament to Iraq's strong national ownership, inter-ministerial coordination, and efforts to delivering sustainable solutions to those most affected by climate change. He commended the Ministries of Environment, Water Resources, Planning, and Agriculture for their exemplary partnership throughout the project's development.

Iraqi Minister of Environment, H.E.

Dr. Halo Al-Askari, highlighted that addressing climate change is a top priority for the Iraqi government, integral to the transition towards a sustainable green economy and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of hunger and poverty.

The Minister of Water Resources, H.E. Dr. Aoun Diab Al-Abdullah, stated that the project represents a significant step toward achieving development goals through field interventions and sustainable infrastructure development. He affirmed the Ministry's full commitment to supporting the project's efficient implementation in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, ensuring benefits for Iraq's water and agricultural sectors.

The initiative encompasses upgrading irrigation systems to enhance water use efficiency, deploying solar-powered irrigation solutions, reclaiming degraded farmlands, and promoting sustainable land and water management practices. Additionally, it focuses on strengthening Water User Associations, empowering rural women and youth, and introducing digital tools and early warning systems to mitigate risks and build resilience.

Minister of Agriculture, H.E. Eng. Abbas Jabr Al-Maliki, noted that the project's launch results from extensive



Iraqi Government and FAO launch \$39-million climate resilience project *(continued)*

collaboration with FAO and the GCF, significantly contributing to combating climate change and advancing Iraq's agricultural strategy goals.

Ghulam Mohamed Isaczai, UN Deputy Special Representative, Resident Coordinator, and Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, remarked that establishing Iraq's first-ever GCF financing is a significant achievement in national climate finance, reflecting

Iraq's dedication to building climate resilience, enhancing food security, and transitioning towards a more sustainable and inclusive economy.

Mr. Dongyu concluded by highlighting that the event's timing with the Water Conference underscores that climate resilience begins with water. He reiterated FAO's commitment to supporting digital water management through tools like the FAO WaPOR

platform and promoting community-level water governance through climate-smart solutions.

This event also marks Iraq's growing prominence on the international stage, showcasing leadership and vision through initiatives such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, the One Country One Priority Product platform, and the World Food Forum.

UNESCO takes part at the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference

Baghdad, 27 May 2025 - UNESCO Iraq was proud to co-organize and moderate the session "Empowering Youth and Women for Climate Resilience and Water Security" at the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference.

Led in collaboration with key partners including the Ministry of Water Resources, SIWI, IHE Delft, GIZ, WDC, and others, this hybrid session brought together inspiring voices from Iraq and the region to spotlight the crucial role of youth and women in driving innovative solutions to climate and water challenges.

From local initiatives in drought management to regional cooperation in water governance, speakers and panelists shared concrete examples and strategies to:

1-Promote inclusive and gender-



responsive water policies

2-Strengthen community resilience through education and awareness

3-Build partnerships that support the 2026 UN Water Conference agenda

Special thanks to the speakers,

panelists, and attendees who contributed to such a dynamic and hopeful conversation. Let's continue to amplify youth and women leadership for a more water-secure, climate-resilient future

UN-Habitat and the University of Baghdad, and partners study growing water deficit and develop nature-based solutions



Baghdad, 27 May 2025 - Iraq has been named the fifth-most vulnerable

country to climate breakdown, and the data makes it clear: rainfall is steadily decreasing—with a projected 9% drop by 2050—while temperatures are rising up to seven times faster than the global average.

With support from the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), experts from UN-Habitat and the University of Baghdad, and The Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD) are studying this growing water deficit and developing nature-based solutions to restore degraded land, reduce water loss, and combat sand and dust storms at their source. The findings and proposed solutions, aimed at building a more resilient and livable urban future, were presented at the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference.

Iraq advances in developing transparency frameworks in climate action

Baghdad / Beirut, 28 May 2025 – Iraq took a significant step forward in its climate action today with the official launch of key climate reports during a high-level ceremony in Baghdad. The event was held under the patronage and in the presence of Dr. Hallo Mustafa Al Askari, Minister of Environment of the Republic of Iraq, and Mr. Sami Dimassi, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Representative and Regional Director for West Asia, and was attended by representatives from key ministries, government institutions, United Nations agencies, and international partners.

The reports—the Second National Communication (SNC), First Biennial Update Report (BUR), and Biennial Transparency Report (BTR)—are essential tools in enhancing Iraq's transparency in climate action and reaffirm its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement.

These reports are cornerstones of global climate reporting frameworks, offering accurate, transparent, comparable, and comprehensive data. They allow for effective tracking and assessment of climate progress and help align national efforts with international climate goals.

The reports were developed through strong collaboration between the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia and the Government of Iraq, with financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). A national team comprising experts from various ministries, as well as contributions from national and international research institutions, played a key role in their preparation.



In his remarks, Mr. Dimassi emphasized the importance of this milestone, stating:

"Iraq today has a real opportunity to reshape its environmental future. Despite serious challenges ranging from water scarcity, land degradation, and rising temperatures to urban pollution and pressure on natural resources, we are confident in Iraq's ability to become a success story in environmental transformation in our region, thanks to its human potential and strategic regional position."

Dr. al-Askari, reiterated that "this step constitutes a strategic move toward reducing carbon emissions, building a sustainable green economy, and increasing the resilience of communities affected by climate change." He emphasized that the Second National Communication report and the First Biennial Update Report represent one of Iraq's most important climate commitments, and reflect the government's approach toward adopting comprehensive and proactive climate policies.

The SNC and BUR provide a detailed analysis of Iraq's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and outline efforts

for their reduction. They also assess the impacts of climate change across critical sectors such as water, agriculture, and biodiversity, and set out national priorities and mechanisms for adaptation.

The BTR presents a comprehensive and transparent overview of Iraq's GHG emissions, progress towards achieving its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and the climate support requested and received in the form of technology transfer, capacity-building, and climate finance. As a key reporting tool under the Paris Agreement, the BTR contributes to the Global Stocktake, builds trust among Parties, and strengthens global accountability. UNEP's Regional Office for West Asia supported the development process by organizing three capacity-building workshops for government officials and a national workshop to review and validate the findings.

During the event, a third project that aims to accelerate the implementation of Iraq's NDCs by building institutional and technical capacity at the governorate level was also launched. Funded by the NDC Partnership Action Fund, the planned activities include targeted training sessions for key stakeholders such as decision-makers, governors, local councils, and climate change departments.

In accordance with the requirements of climate agreements, Parties are requested to submit a National Communication every four years and a Biennial Update Report (BUR) periodically. The Paris Agreement also established the Enhanced Transparency Framework for Action and Support, which requires the submission of a Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) every two years, replacing the BUR.



Iraq takes a major step toward protecting its biodiversity!

Baghdad, 29 May 2025 - Iraq successfully concluded a key project that strengthened its efforts to conserve nature.

The project led to:

- The development of new national biodiversity targets aligned with global goals.
- Preparations to revise Iraq's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

• The foundation of Iraq's first-ever #Biodiversity Finance Plan to explore innovative financial solutions for biodiversity action.

UNDP is proud to support Iraq's commitment to protecting nature, conserving biodiversity, and meeting its international environmental obligations.

Toward a greener and more sustainable Iraq.



Support and future prospects

Diyala, 26 May 2025 - Marwa 35 years never imagined she would become the catalyst for a waste recycling initiative in Iraq. As she walked the streets of Diyala, watching garbage mounds grow taller each day, one persistent question occupied her thoughts: "Why aren't we harnessing this potential wealth?" This simple yet profound question planted the seed of an audacious idea in the young engineer's mind - one that would transform her city into a symbol of environmental innovation.

Marwa's research revealed a remarkable solution: worms could convert organic waste into valuable compost. She named her project "Douira" (Arabic means 'to re-cycle'), representing the continuous process of waste transformation into agricultural fertilizer. Though her journey was challenging, Marwa's unwavering determination, supported by her family, ultimately brought her vision to life.

The Great Challenge

When Marwa announced her project, she was met with skepticism and ridicule from the community especially when she explained her idea, which some dismissed as impossible. Though the comments saddened her, Marwa refused to give up. Instead, they fueled her determination to prove the project's worth. Even her own family was hesitant at first, as the concept was entirely new and unfamiliar in Iraq. However, she refused to be discouraged and was determined to change the negative perceptions others tried to impose on her.

One morning day, Marwa opened the worm incubator and found the first batch of organic fertilizer fully processed. Tears of joy streamed down her cheeks as she held a handful of this "black gold" in her fingers, she explained: "Organic fertilizers are natural, safe, and a sustainable choice for agriculture. They enhance soil fertility, increase nutrient content,



reduce acidity, and improve soil structure promoting better water absorption."

She describes the core concept of her project, which revolves around: Carefully sorting waste into dedicated, separate containers

Placing it in a specialized incubator containing specific worm species, maintained in optimal humid conditions

Each 1kg of worms produces 250g of organic fertilizer daily

Separating the compost for agricultural use while recycling the worms for continuous production

Marwa said: "Using organic fertilizer is a crucial step toward a greener world. It's an excellent alternative to chemical fertilizers that damage soil health."

Despite financial and social challenges, her determination became the foundation for launching the project - which ultimately enabled its growth and success.



Support and Future Prospects

Supported by United Nations Development Programme's Building Resilience through Employment Promotion (BREP) programme, in partnership with the Humanitarian Relief Foundation (HRF) with generous funding from the German government through KfW Development Bank, Marwa was able to expand her project. She began supplying organic fertilizer to farmers in Diyala, significantly enhancing soil fertility while delivering substantial economic and environmental benefits, with plans to scale "Douira" to new regions and develop additional organic fertilizer products, Marwa's future looks exceptionally promising.

Today, her project generates substantial profits while earning deep community respect. Residents view Marwa as a driving force for positive environmental and social change.

Her story transcends personal achievement, it's part of a larger UNDP-led initiative to rebuild Iraq by, creating greener environment and establishing sustainable stability Marwa's journey demonstrates how unwavering determination can transform daunting challenges into impactful solutions. It stands as living proof that every green revolution begins with a single courageous idea.

By Sally B. Al Bahri , Partnerships and Communications Analyst, UNDP Iraq

UNHCR on X

Sulaymaniyah, 05 June 2025 - In Sulaymaniyah, UNHCR and partners are greening schools and communities. Trees mean better learning spaces plus healthier futures for all. #WithRefugees #WorldEnvironmentDay

UNFPA on X

Baghdad, 05 June 2025 - On #WorldEnvironmentDay, remember: climate change doesn't just threaten the planet, it threatens our health too. □ <https://tinyurl.com/3zux33me>

DSRSG/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq Mr. Isaczai's message on World Environment Day

Baghdad, 05 June 2025 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Mr. Ghulam Isaczai, gave the following statement on World Environment Day:

“Iraq stands on the frontlines of the

climate crisis, facing heatwaves, devastating droughts, floods, and acute water scarcity. These challenges touch the lives of every Iraqi.

The United Nations is committed to support Iraq as it navigates these climate threats. From reforestation and the restoration of green spaces, to

promoting sustainable agriculture, strengthening early warning systems, and expanding access to safe water – we are working together for lasting solutions. Every action matters. With climate action, we can green Iraq and build a resilient, sustainable future for generations to come”.

World Environment Day 2025 commemorated in Iraq

Baghdad, 05 June 2025 - As Iraq continues its efforts to protect the environment and combat pollution, it remains aligned with the global drive for sustainable action. On this World Environment Day 2025, we reflect on significant milestones, such as the partnership between UNDP, UNEP, and the Government of Iraq, which in 2022 launched the National Strategy for Environmental Pollution Reduction and Action Plan (2022-2030).

This strategic framework addresses Iraq's

most pressing environmental challenges, including air pollution, the contamination of surface waters—particularly wetlands and coastal areas—improper waste management, and soil degradation.

We also remember the inspiring initiative from 2023, when a group of passionate young volunteers, with support from UNDP and the Ministry of Environment, took action to clean the banks of the Tigris River in Baghdad. Their efforts went beyond removing plastic waste; they sparked crucial conversations about

environmental stewardship and empowered local communities to take charge of their surroundings.

As we commemorate this day, let's continue to build on the momentum of these actions. Together, we can ensure that Iraq moves toward a cleaner, greener future. By promoting environmental awareness and prioritizing sustainability, we are one step closer to achieving our collective goal to #EndPlasticPollution.

President Rashid co-chairs World Delta Summit, warns of dire climate impact on Iraq's marshes

Nice, France, 09 June 2025 — President Abdul Latif Jamal Rashid co-chaired the World Delta Summit alongside His Excellency Phạm Minh Chính, Prime Minister of Vietnam. The summit, held in the city of Nice on the sidelines of the United Nations' Third Ocean Conference, brought together several heads of state and participating delegations, including Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fuad Hussein.

In his address, President Rashid emphasized that climate change is accelerating sea-level rise, pushing saltwater further inland and threatening the fragile ecological balance that has sustained river delta communities for generations. He stressed that the escalating environmental threats facing delta regions require immediate and coordinated international action.

The President drew particular attention to the deteriorating state of Iraq's southern marshes—designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site—describing their transformation into barren, salt-encrusted terrain as a “tragic” consequence of worsening water scarcity and environmental

degradation.

He also noted that Iraq has suffered a catastrophic decline of nearly 40% in the flow of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in recent decades.

Full remarks are available at <https://presidency.iq/EN/Details.aspx?id=5601>



Water scarcity hits Iraq hard: President Rashid calls for action at UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3)

Nice, France, 09 June 2025 — President Abdul Latif Jamal Rashid participated in the Third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3), held from June 9–13, 2025, and co-hosted by France and Costa Rica. Addressing the UNOC3, Iraq's President emphasized that Iraq's participation in the conference reaffirms its firm belief in multilateralism and its commitment to forging stronger international partnerships. He stressed that the global community must collectively confront the interconnected crises of climate change, economic disparity and food insecurity.



President of the Republic of Iraq delivers statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the UN Ocean Conference

Nice, France, 09 June 2025 - President Abdul Latif Jamal Rashid delivered a keynote address on behalf of the Group of 77 and China—under Iraq's current chairmanship—during the Third United Nations Ocean Conference, held in the presence of numerous heads of state and high-level delegations. The Iraqi delegation also included Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Fuad Hussein.

In his address, the President conveyed the Group's deep concern over the accelerating degradation of marine ecosystems and the growing threats posed by marine pollution—including plastic debris and chemical waste—as well as the unsustainable exploitation of ocean resources. He emphasized the urgent need for immediate, practical action supported by adequate and



timely financial resources to reverse the mounting damage and preserve the oceans for future generations.

Full remarks are available at <https://presidency.iq/EN/Details.aspx?id=5602>

UN team visits the Tanjaro river in Sulaymaniyah

Sulaymaniyah, 26 June 2025 - UN Resident Coordinator, Ghulam Isaczai, led a UN team on a visit of the Tanjaro river in Sulaymaniyah with the Minister of Environment, Dr. Hallo Al-Askari, to assess pollution levels. The visit reaffirmed UN support to national efforts aimed at restoring the river and safeguarding public health.



RC Isaczai: “The UN remains a committed partner in your efforts to ensure that water becomes a source of economic opportunities, prosperity, and sustainability for all Iraqis.”

Baghdad, 24 May 2025 - At the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference, UN Resident Coordinator Ghulam Isaczai reaffirmed the UN's strong partnership with the Government of Iraq and full support for its water agenda - calling for stronger governance, climate-resilient solutions, and regional cooperation. These efforts align with national plans, international commitments, and the SDGs - especially SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation.

“The UN remains a committed partner in your efforts to ensure that water becomes a source of economic opportunities, prosperity, and sustainability for all Iraqis.”

Here is the text of Mr. Isaczai speech:
 “Your Excellency, Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al Sudani
 Your Excellency, Dr. Aun Dhyai Abdullah,

Distinguished Guests, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor to join you today at the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference, a vital platform that brings together national leaders, regional experts, and international partners to address one of the most pressing challenges of our time: water security.

Today, we gather under the theme “Water and Technology: Partnership for Development” - a timely and urgent call to action. Iraq continues to face severe water scarcity, driven not only by climate change but also by water management issues, legacy infrastructure, and resource-intensive practices.

The consequences are far-reaching: from reduced agricultural productivity and internal displacement to increased fragility in already vulnerable communities. Water scarcity, quality, and security have become among the most critical challenges facing the country - threatening not only human consumption and economic development but also the ecosystems and the environment.

Yet, amidst these challenges, there is also opportunity.

The Government of Iraq has taken commendable steps - from launching the National Water Dialogue to hosting this yearly conference in addition to the cooperation efforts between the UN and Government of Iraq Water task forces.



Iraq's accession to the UN Water Convention in 2023 marked a historic milestone, making it the first Arab country to do so. This progressive step signals Iraq's commitment to regional cooperation and sustainable water governance.

The United Nations stands firmly with Iraq on this vital journey. Through the dedicated efforts of UN agencies together with national partners, we are supporting Iraq in modernizing irrigation and introducing water-saving technologies; rehabilitating marshlands and promoting ecotourism; developing early warning systems; advancing climate-smart agriculture; and strengthening Iraq's capacity for transboundary water negotiations.

As we work with the Government to finalize the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, we are placing climate action and environmental sustainability at the very heart of our shared vision.

The UNSDCF calls for a comprehensive and integrated approach to water resource management - one that ensures long-term water security, prevents future displacement, and supports sustainable development for all Iraqis.

These efforts are fully aligned with Iraq's National Adaptation Plan and its climate commitments, and with the Sustainable Development Goals - especially SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation.

As we look ahead, allow me to share three key areas where strong

government leadership - through policy reform, strategic investment, and regional cooperation - will be critical to advancing sustainable water management in Iraq:

Strengthen Institutional Coordination and Legal Reform: We urge the Government to reinforce national water governance by formalizing inter-ministerial coordination under the National Water Dialogue and accelerating legal reforms that promote shared accountability and ensure equitable access to water, particularly for women and vulnerable communities.
Invest in Scalable, Climate-Resilient Water Solutions: Diversifying water sources through investments in modern irrigation, rainwater harvesting, and safe wastewater reuse will be critical. Scaling up climate-resilient technologies will help Iraq adapt to growing water stress, reduce losses, and improve water use efficiency across sectors.

Champion Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation: Water knows no borders. Iraq's continued engagement with its neighbors - supported by intergovernmental platforms such as the Water Convention - will be essential to secure long-term water security. The UN stands ready to support Iraq in its efforts to ensure fair and sustainable water-sharing.

In closing, I commend the Ministry of Water Resources and all partners for their leadership and vision. The UN remains a committed partner in your efforts to ensure that water becomes a source of economic opportunities, prosperity, and sustainability for all Iraqis.

Thank you.”

FAO organizes 2 specialized sessions focused on promoting sustainable water management to support agriculture in Iraq and the region

Baghdad, 27 May 2025 - As part of its participation in the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference (BIWC), FAO Iraq, in collaboration with FAO, FAO in NENA and ICID, organized 2 specialized sessions focused on promoting sustainable water management to support agriculture in Iraq and the region.

The high-level session was titled “Mainstreaming of Water-Energy-Food Nexus & Resilient Water Resources Management for Sustainable Agriculture”.

This session was chaired by FAO in

Iraq Technical Advisor with the participation of experts from FAO, FAONENA, and the president of ICID.

The session focused on the importance

of strengthening the water-energy-food nexus to support innovation, and partnerships for sustainable agriculture.



UNFPA on X

Baghdad, 27 May 2025 - At the 5th Baghdad International Water Conference, Dr. Mahdi Al Alaq, Senior Advisor to UNFPA Iraq, chaired a session on “Sustainable Development and Environmental Challenges,” highlighting the need to integrate rural women’s needs into water policies.

IOM on X

Baghdad, 17 June 2025 - IOM Representative in Iraq, George Gigauri: “Water is everything to us.” IOM climate resilience project in Southern Iraq is bringing clean water to 530 households, supporting farming and daily life. For families like Hassan’s, this means no more buying water, and a real chance to stay, grow, and thrive.”

Culture

EU Ambassador to Iraq visits UNESCO project sites in Mosul



Mosul, 28 April 2025 - Today in Mosul, H.E. Mr. Thomas Seiler, Ambassador of the European Union to Iraq, visited two of the city's most iconic heritage landmarks: the Al-Nouri Complex and Al-Tahera Church, both rehabilitated by UNESCO with funding from the United Arab Emirates. The

visit highlighted the ongoing efforts to restore Mosul’s rich cultural and religious heritage, bringing back symbols of resilience and coexistence at the heart of the Old City.

The EU Ambassador and delegation also visited Hammam Al-Qala, one of Mosul’s historical public baths, where

UNESCO, with EU funding, is leading a new rehabilitation project. Preserving Hammam Al-Qala is part of the broader effort to safeguard Mosul’s living heritage and restore spaces that have long been central to the city’s social and cultural life.

As part of the visit to Mosul, Ambassador Thomas Seiler met with a local family living in one of the historic houses recently rehabilitated by UNESCO with the support of the European Union. Their story reflects how heritage restoration is about buildings, bringing life back to the Old City’s communities, and helping families rebuild their futures.



UNESCO, with EU support, organizes a new heritage conservation lecture at Northern Technical University in Mosul

Mosul, 30 April 2025 - UNESCO, with support from the European Union, organized a new heritage conservation lecture at Northern Technical University in Mosul. Dr. Assaad Seif, a renowned archaeologist and heritage management expert (ICOMOS/ICAHM), together with the Mosul Heritage Foundation, led a session examining the emergence of global heritage organizations and the core principles behind protecting cultural sites. Drawing from his international experience, Dr. Seif

provided students, officials, and practitioners with valuable insights

into safeguarding Mosul's cultural identity for future generations.



In the heart of Mosul's old city a new chapter of heritage preservation unfolds

Mosul, 02 May 2025 - A new chapter of heritage preservation is unfolding in Mosul's historic core. Local government professionals, supported by UNESCO and funded by the European Union, are now in the field—visiting key heritage landmarks, taking precise measurements, and documenting historic homes. This practical training marks a vital step in passing on the skills and knowledge needed to safeguard the city's rich architectural legacy.



Charsteen site in Dohuk reopens as a symbol of heritage and hope

Dohuk, 04 May 2025 - The Charsteen site in Dohuk has been beautifully upgraded and developed, celebrating the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of the region. Through the Madad Project, funded by the European Union and led by UNESCO, this transformation created work opportunities for both Syrian refugees and Iraqis, while preserving the site's deep historical and natural significance.

With strong support from local authorities, Dohuk Governorate, the Department of Dohuk Antiquities and heritage, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and Wadi Association, Charsteen now stands as a vibrant symbol of resilience, community pride, and sustainable development, inviting visitors to connect with the past while building a brighter future.



"Proficiency in Scanning Library Resources" workshop held in Mosul

Mosul, 11 May 2025 - UNESCO, in the framework of the Restoring Mosul University Library project supported by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), organized a workshop on "Proficiency in Scanning Library Resources" from 4 to 7 May 2025, in collaboration with the Section of Intellectual and Cultural Affairs of the Sacred Shrine of Al-Abbas. The workshop, delivered by the

Cataloguing and Information System Center, targeted Mosul University Library staff. It forms part of a series of ongoing training sessions aimed at strengthening the capacity of library staff by equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to archive and digitize valuable collections in preparation for the launch of the new Digital Repository being developed under the project.



UNESCO conducts a mission to the archaeological city of Samarra and Ashur



Samarra, Ashur, 07 May 2025 - As part of the UNESCO/Netherlands Fund-in-Trust initiative, the UNESCO Iraq Office, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and two experts from CRATerre - International Centre for Earthen Architecture, conducted a mission to the archaeological city of Samarra, one of Iraq's six World Heritage sites.

The aim of the mission was to better

understand the current state of the site and to lay the groundwork for a forthcoming capacity building programme. This programme will assist local professionals in identifying priority conservation actions, focusing on preventive, emergency and maintenance measures.

During the visit, key issues were discussed with the Mayor of Samarra and representatives of the Iraqi State

Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH), highlighting the urgent need for coordinated conservation efforts. Samarra, once a powerful Islamic capital of the Abbasid Empire, is a testament to Iraq's rich cultural heritage and remains a priority for heritage conservation.

Ashur, known for its outstanding earthen architecture, will serve as a key reference site for the upcoming training programme in Erbil focused on the conservation of earthen heritage.

During the visit, the team engaged with the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH), who highlighted pressing emergency issues on-site — most notably, water infiltration affecting the Ziggurat of Ashur, posing a critical threat to the integrity of the monument.

This mission is part of UNESCO's ongoing commitment to support Iraq in preserving its invaluable cultural heritage.

Venice Biennale: UNESCO honours Mosul's architectural renaissance

Venice, Italy, 11 May 2025 - UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay, is at the Venice Biennale this week to inaugurate the "Mosul: an Architectural Renaissance" exhibition at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, tracing the largest reconstruction programme ever led directly by UNESCO.

"Architecture plays an essential role in building strong ties between communities and creating a shared society. UNESCO's initiative to revive the spirit of Mosul, whose emblematic worksites have just been completed, is

yet another reminder of just how important this art form is for communities to recover after a tragedy and come together around a shared history. Through this exhibition, visitors will be able to discover not only the technical challenges posed by reconstruction, but also the human endeavour that made it possible." - Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director-General

This exhibition highlights the 'Revive the Spirit of Mosul' initiative, the largest reconstruction programme led directly by UNESCO since its creation.

It has enabled the rehabilitation and reconstruction of emblematic sites including the Al-Nouri Mosque and its Al-Hadba minaret, the Our Lady of the Hour Convent and its House of Prayer, the Al-Tahera Church, as well as 124 heritage houses and buildings in the Old City of Mosul.

Through models, technical documents, photos and videos, the exhibition presents the different stages of reconstruction and the technical challenges that were overcome. It also highlights the traditional skills used by workers and craftsmen to rebuild these sites to their original state, while training a new generation of Iraqi restorers, engineers and architects. It also pays tribute to the uniquely diverse identity of Mosul, which for more than 2,500 years was a meeting point for different religious and cultural communities.

The exhibition provides an opportunity to highlight the human aspect of this historic project, born from the aspirations of the local population and made possible by UNESCO's mobilization of the international community. Finally, it highlights how the initiative "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" can become a model for post-conflict reconstructions elsewhere in the world.



Equipping local professionals with essential skills in the material conservation of mudbrick and brick masonry

Erbil, 12 May 2025 - The ongoing training programme in Erbil, Iraq, under the UNESCO/Netherlands Fund-in-Trust, is equipping local professionals with essential skills in the material conservation of mudbrick and brick masonry.

Designed for participants from across Iraq, the training has provided a solid foundation in key areas such as heritage values, site management, inventory methods and diagnostic techniques for earthen archaeological sites.

Participants are now moving from theory to practice - applying their newly acquired knowledge through hands-on exercises at a selected pilot

site within the Erbil Citadel, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

This programme is an important step

in strengthening national capacity for the sustainable conservation of Iraq's cultural heritage.



Preserving Mosul's heritage through documentation

Mosul, 12 May 2025 - Trainees—comprising architects, engineers, and technical staff from Mosul's local government departments—are converting their on-site measurements into detailed architectural drawings. This is a crucial step in the conservation of the city's historic homes. As part of a broader UNESCO training initiative funded by the European Union, this phase equips participants with essential skills in architectural documentation and heritage preservation.



Participants gain valuable theoretical and practical knowledge of earthen architecture

Erbil, 13 May 2025 - The capacity building training "Strengthening Capacities for the Documentation and Conservation of World Heritage in Danger in Iraq", funded by the UNESCO/Netherlands Fund-in-Trust, has successfully concluded in Erbil citadel.

Organised with the support of the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage and led by CRAterre - International Centre for Earthen Architecture, the training brought together participants from different regions of Iraq. Over the course of the programme, they gained valuable theoretical and practical knowledge of earthen architecture, including preventive conservation, site diagnosis and working with local clay to produce low-cost brick mixtures.

Participants carried out conservation work on site and concluded the training by presenting their own conservation project proposals. The training was met

with great enthusiasm and encouraged collaboration across different institutions and professional backgrounds, all under the guidance of

two experienced mentors.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this training.



Farewell to the UNESCO Representative in Iraq

Baghdad, 12 May 2025 - Minister of Education Dr. Ibrahim Namis Al-Jubouri affirmed the continuation of international partnerships aimed at improving the educational file with UNESCO during his reception of the organization's country representative, Paolo Fontani, who today concluded a busy official career with programs spanning six consecutive years in Iraq. During his meeting with Fontani, the Minister of Education expressed his thanks and gratitude for the humanitarian and educational projects he has presented to advance the education system, particularly the Return to Education Initiative,

reducing school dropouts, strengthening infrastructure, and developing teaching staff through

training, in addition to UNESCO's support for the EMIS project and the development of educational television.



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Mosul University libraries join the global OCLC institution

Mosul, 17 May 2025 - UNESCO, in the framework of the Restoring Mosul University Library project supported by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), has secured an institutional membership with the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) for the University of Mosul's Libraries, granting long-term access to the OCLC WorldCat Cataloguing Service.

Through this membership, the University of Mosul's Libraries will benefit from access to WorldCat—the world's largest bibliographic database—enabling the import of high-quality bibliographic records directly into the library's cataloguing system.

UNESCO continues to foster partnerships between the University of Mosul Libraries and national and international institutions, supporting

access to knowledge and equipping library staff and patrons with the resources and tools needed for effective, day-to-day library operations.



UNESCO and the University of Mosul celebrate the conclusion of three training workshops



Mosul, 29 May 2025 - UNESCO and the University of Mosul celebrated the conclusion of three training workshops held over the course of one month, with the participation of 32 staff members

from the Central Library at the University of Mosul.

The workshops were organized in collaboration with the Sacred Abbasid Shrine, Division of Intellectual and

Cultural Affairs, and took place from 4 to 28 May 2025.

The training sessions focused on Digital Archiving, Digital Repository Management, and Authority Control, and were held as part of the "Restoring Mosul University Library" project, funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) and implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Mosul University.

UNESCO reaffirms its full commitment to providing all necessary support to ensure the full automation and digitization of the Central Library, and to guarantee equitable access for all learners to the valuable knowledge resources.

UNESCO's new Representative to Iraq meets with the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities of Iraq

Baghdad, 11 June 2025 - UNESCO's new Representative to Iraq, Dr. Alexandros Makarigakis, met with H.E. Dr. Ahmed Fakak Al-Badrani, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities of Iraq.

The meeting reaffirmed UNESCO's commitment to strengthening cooperation in safeguarding Iraq's rich cultural heritage.



Education

UNESCO hosts Education Sector Coordination Group meeting in Baghdad

Baghdad, 24 April 2025 - The UNESCO Office for Iraq, as the Secretariat, convened the latest meeting of the Education Sector Coordination Group (ESCG) at the Prime Minister's Office Advisory Commission (PMAC).

This high-level meeting brought together key stakeholders from across Iraq's education landscape, including representatives from the Prime Minister's Advisory Office for Education, PMAC, and Director Generals from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR), the Ministry of Education (MOE), and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA). The European

Union (EU), UN agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR), and international organizations such as GIZ, Terre des

Hommes (TDH), Save the Children, the Italian Cooperation Agency, and the British Council including the Iraq Civil



UNESCO hosts Education Sector Coordination Group meeting in Baghdad *(continued)*

Society Education Forum (ICSEF) also participated in the meeting.

The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Majeed Kamel Abdullah, Director General of Cultural Relations at the Ministry of Education and Secretary-General of the Iraqi National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science, alongside Mrs. Shumoos Jabir, representing the European Union.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Abdullah emphasized the vital role of partnerships in delivering quality, inclusive education for all Iraqi children. He called on all education stakeholders to support the effective implementation of the Iraq National Education Strategy. Mrs. Shumoos echoed this message, underscoring the

importance of coordinated efforts to ensure the right to education for all, particularly in light of the recent census data highlighting the number of out-of-school children.

Dr. Tap Raj Pant from UNESCO also addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of aligning efforts with the Iraq National Education Strategy and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) to guarantee the right to quality education for every child.

During the meeting, participants reviewed progress on action items from the previous ESCG session and shared updates on key achievements in education programmes. UNESCO, UNICEF, Save the Children, GIZ, and the British Council presented ongoing initiatives, while representatives from

MOHESR, MOE, and MOLSA provided updates on national efforts. ICSEF outlined its objectives and ongoing activities, identifying opportunities for collaboration. Save the Children International shared progress on the implementation of the Multi-Year Resilience Programme (MYRP).

The ESCG serves as a platform to align resources, coordinate sector-wide interventions, and ensure strategic and technical dialogue among education stakeholders. Its mission is to support the implementation of the Iraq National Education Strategy and contribute to achieving the objectives of SDG 4, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Rebuilding dreams: how a restored campus became the catalyst for women's education in Anbar

Anbar, 11 May 2025 - Not long ago, the English and History Departments at the College of Education for Girls at Anbar University stood as silent witnesses to decades of neglect: cracked walls, overcrowded classrooms crammed with ever-growing numbers of female students, and library shelves blanketed in dust. For 25 years, Alaa Abdullah Mufreh, this was the harsh reality of pursuing education in post-conflict Iraq.

Alaa runs her hand across the smooth surface of a new desk in the English Department's lecture hall, smiling as she reflects: "Now, when sunlight streams through the windows during our Shakespeare discussions, I finally feel the university believes in our future too."

Dr. Ammar Abdul Wahab, Head of the English Department confirms: "Today, the University of Anbar has gained global recognition in international rankings, and I firmly believe it is steadily advancing toward a brighter and more distinguished future."

Walls no longer hold back dreams

The rehabilitation and extension project, completed in late 2024 with funding from

the Swedish government through UNDP, has transformed the college into a vibrant regional hub. This transformation extended beyond physical infrastructure to achieve:

- Unprecedented increase in capacity.
- Significant improvement in exam pass rates
- Enhanced academic life through.
- Intellectual debates across departments and innovative literary forums among students.

Inas Mohammed Ibrahim, 24 years, a History Department student, described the radical transformation: "Last semester, we took turns sitting on the edges of the lecture hall. Now, we enjoy spacious areas that facilitate comfortable

Professor Ismail Mujbil Hamad, 50 years, Professor in the Department of History, said: "We previously struggled with scheduling conflicts that sometimes forced us to cancel lectures. Today, the college implements advanced teaching models I only read about it in international journals. The facilities are now fully compatible with modern equipment, opening broader educational horizons."

The student Alaa Kamel, 21 years, shares: "The new language lab allows me to analyze texts with greater precision and clarity. Now I plan to complete my studies and apply for the Master's degree at this same college."

The Lasting Impact

The College of Education for Girls at Anbar University has undergone a remarkable transformation following the rehabilitation and expansion of the History and English departments. The college has transitioned from dilapidated buildings to a vibrant educational institution, now welcoming 250 to 300 students annually from Anbar, neighboring provinces, and Baghdad. The changes extend beyond merely expanding classrooms and equipping them with the latest technologies, including a computer lab and a medical clinic. The college now thrives with an academic and cultural life filled with intellectual dialogues permeating through the new halls and courtyards.

Today, the college serves as a launchpad for aspirations, with many students aiming to pursue higher studies and join the college, reflecting a renewed confidence in their ability to compete globally.

One of the professors at the college said "This transformation is not just about renovating walls; it is about rebuilding a whole generation." One of the professors at the college.

With the increased capacity for students and expanded educational space, the campus stands as a testament to how investment in education can unleash the potential of the community. The confident strides of female students through the new hallways symbolize a challenge to stereotypes and the building of a brighter future for Iraq.



TVET graduation in Mosul

Mosul, 25 May 2025 - UNESCO marks the graduation of 100 young men and women from Mosul who completed Technical and Vocational Education and Training courses in plumbing, construction, electrical installation, and hospitality. These practical, hands-on programmes

strengthen youth employability and provide pathways to sustainable livelihoods. With the generous financial support of the European Union, the initiative contributes to post-conflict recovery by empowering Mosul's youth with skills tailored to local market demands.



Strong partnerships for a sustainable future

Baghdad, 29 May 2025 - Two days ago, the International Trade Centre in Iraq met with Dr. Ahmed Saad, Director General of the Regional and Provincial Affairs Department at the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Iraq, to discuss the achievements of the SAAVI project funded by the EU and its continuing impact.

The meeting highlighted the valuable support provided by the ministry's offices in Baghdad, Basrah and Mosul, which contributed mainly to enabling the ICC to carry out a national awareness campaign on agribusiness. As a result, more than 43,000 young men and women have been reached in Iraq, and more than 4,200 of them have received specialized training through the "Safe Training" entrepreneurship program. Among them, 2,000 participants have submitted plans to grow their businesses, and more than 210 promising entrepreneurs have been funded with financial grants to turn their ideas into realistic projects.



Sustainability remains at the core of our work in Iraq, and one of the most prominent achievements in this context is the success of transferring the "Safe Training" training platform to Iraqi institutions, ensuring local ownership and long-term sustainability. ✨

The Iraq International Trade Center expresses its sincere appreciation to Dr. Ahmed Saad and his team for their leadership in guiding this transition, and for their continuous efforts in creating new opportunities for youth in various parts of Iraq.

The implementation of a group of important educational projects in Al-Zubair District discussed in Basra

Basra, 03 June 2025 - The Director General of Basra Education, Mr. Abdul Razzaq Faisal Abdul Hamid, received in his office this morning, Tuesday, June 3, 2025, Dr. Tap Raj PANT the Chief of Education Department at UNESCO, and Engineer Adham Abdulwahhab Al-Mashaykhi the National Project Officer, in the presence of Mr. Muslim Abdul Karim, Director of the Planning Department at the Directorate.

During the meeting, ways of cooperation between Basra Education and UNESCO were discussed regarding the implementation of a group of important educational projects in Al-Zubair District, targeting (131) primary schools in cooperation with the ENI Oil Company and Al- Zubair oil Company, and TVET3 project which targeting Al-Basra vocational school for girls in cooperation with the EU, and AICS project targeting schools in Basra



in cooperation with the Italian cooperation. these projects are part of a development plan that seeks to improve the educational environment and develop the capabilities of educational staff.

The upcoming projects include multiple axes, including the rehabilitation of school buildings, training of educational staff, the development of modern teaching methods and techniques, and the implementation of

The implementation of a group of important educational projects in Al-Zubair District discussed in Basra *(continued)*

alternative energy projects to support the sustainability of the educational infrastructure.

In turn, the Director-General welcomed the visiting delegation, emphasizing the importance of this partnership with UNESCO in supporting the education sector in Basra Governorate. The DG

praised the organization's role in promoting sustainable education and developing its environment, and expressed the directorate's readiness to fully cooperate with the organization's projects related to the education sector. For his part, Dr. Tap Raj expressed UNESCO's willingness to provide the

necessary technical and logistical support to implement projects in accordance with international standards, and the organization's commitment to supporting the efforts of the Basra Education Directorate to advance the educational process.

UNESCO Office for Iraq organizes a training workshop on the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in Baghdad

Baghdad, 22 June 2025 - With the funding support from the European Union and as part of the Equitable Quality Education in Iraq: Improved Teaching and Learning and Enhanced Educational Management (ITALEEM) programme, the UNESCO Office for Iraq organized a three-day training workshop on the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in Baghdad from 17 to 19 June 2025. As an important milestone to strengthen the capacity of the use of EMIS in Iraq, the workshop brought together 26 Master Trainers (13 women) from three General Directorates of Education in Baghdad: Rasafa 1, Rasafa 2, and Karkh 2. The training was delivered by five Ministry of Education Master Trainers, with technical support from UNESCO and iMMAP.

Participants acquired essential skills to effectively use EMIS and address technical issues reported by schools through the call center/help desk.



These Master Trainers will train 5,456 teachers at the 2,728 schools in Rasafa 1, Rasafa 2 and Karkh 2 on utilizing the EMIS platform, including submitting support requests through the help desk system. UNESCO has

been and will continue supporting the Ministry of Education in the effective use of EMIS in planning, management and implementation of inclusive and equitable education by means of accurate and up-to-date data.

SRSG for Iraq and Head of UNAMI Dr. Al Hassan engages with a group of youths from various provinces across Iraq

Baghdad, 27 May 2025 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, engaged with a group of youths from various provinces across Iraq, hearing from them their hopes and aspirations for the future of the country. He was briefed about 'Nurturing Future

Makers', a youth development and empowerment project organized and led by Rudaw's Bestoon Talk presenter and journalist Bestoon Khalid.

SRSG Al Hassan encouraged the youth to continue the good work and focus on what unites and brings prosperity and shun what divides: "It is refreshing to hear from these energetic youth about

their vision and how they can positively impact the course of the country. Their work promoting Iraq's advancement is in line with the goals of the United Nations on sustainable development, and this is something we wholeheartedly encourage and applaud."



Message from SRSG for Iraq, Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, on the occasion of Eid al-Adha

Baghdad, 06 June 2025 – Message from the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, on the Occasion of Eid al-Adha:

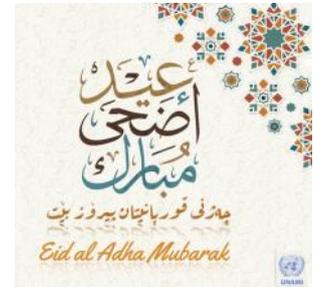
“Dear sisters and brothers in Iraq, On the occasion of the blessed Eid al-Adha, I am pleased, on behalf of the United Nations in Iraq, to extend to you my warmest congratulations and sincerest wishes, praying to Almighty God to return it upon Iraq and its generous people with goodness, prosperity, and blessings. Iraq has witnessed significant

achievements on various fronts, with a notable improvement in security and stability, in addition to numerous steps, programmes, and projects adopted by Iraq in pursuit of sustainable development. We hold great hope that Iraq will continue to advance along this path.

At the United Nations, we are extremely happy with the progress Iraq has made and look forward to preserving these gains and transforming Iraq into a new and advanced phase of service provision that meets the aspirations of the Iraqi

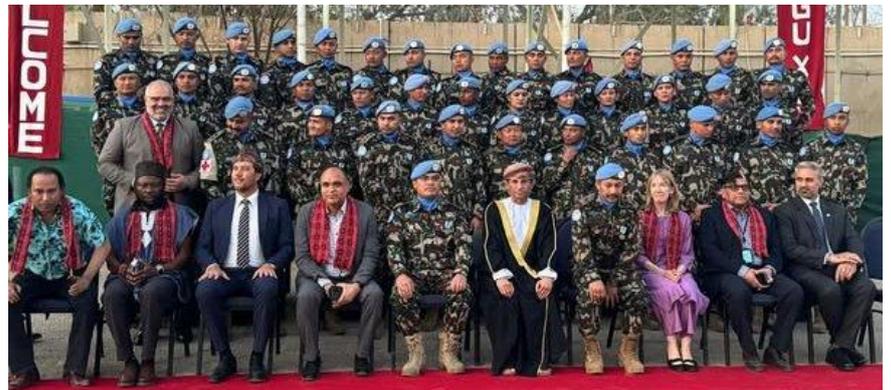
people.

Wishing Iraq continued wellbeing, and may you always celebrate this occasion in safety, dignity, and prosperity.”



SRSG for Iraq and Head of UNAMI Dr. Al Hassan awards United Nations Medals to the 14th Nepali Guard Unit serving in Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 19 June 2025 - Today, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, awarded United Nations Medals – for the final time – to the 14th Nepali Guard Unit serving in Kirkuk, ahead of their repatriation as part of UNAMI’s planned withdrawal. The unit reflects Nepal’s leading role in global peacekeeping, ranking first worldwide in the number of women deployed and contributing nearly 6,000 uniformed personnel to UN missions.



Message from SRSG for Iraq, Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, on Islamic New Year 1447

Baghdad, 26 June 2025 – Message from Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI Iraq on Islamic New Year 1447:

“Peace and blessings of Allah be upon you, Brothers and sisters, dear people of Iraq.

At the outset of this new Hijri year, 1447, it gives me great pleasure to extend to you my sincerest congratulations and blessings. I pray to the Almighty (Glorified be He) to make it a year of goodness, security, and peace for you and for all of humanity.

This occasion, with all that it represents, is not merely a commemoration of the passage of time.

Rather, it is an opportunity to renew the pledge and determination to advance along the path of justice and development, and to promote the values of humanity and enduring principles.

In this new year, we turn to the Almighty, Exalted in His Power, asking that goodness, contentment, security, and peace prevail in Iraq and throughout all of humanity.

We also call upon all the people of Iraq, from all backgrounds and affiliations, to embrace unity and reject division and discord, to strengthen the bonds of national unity, to turn the pages of the past and all that they carried, and to move forward toward a brighter future filled with hope — a future in which justice prevails, and human rights and equality in citizenship are upheld for all.

Wishing you a blessed and prosperous year.”

