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Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2576 \(2021\)](#), in which the Secretary-General was requested to report every three months on progress made towards fulfilling the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The report covers key developments relating to Iraq and provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Iraq since my previous report of 3 August 2021 ([S/2021/700](#)) and the briefing to the Security Council by the Special Representative for Iraq and Head of UNAMI on 25 August 2021.

II. Summary of key political developments

A. Political situation

2. Parliamentary elections were held in Iraq on 10 October 2021. The elections were preceded by the dissolution of the Council of Representatives on 7 October. The elections began with a special voting day on 8 October for Iraqi security forces personnel, internally displaced persons, prisoners and detainees. On 11 October, the Independent High Electoral Commission announced partial preliminary results for all governorates. On 13 October, the results of 8,547 polling stations selected by lottery for manual counting, as provided in the electoral law, were added to the overall preliminary results. On 16 October, the Commission stated that it had completed the cross-checking and manual count of 3,681 polling stations which had been unable to send results electronically on election day owing to technical issues. The Commission also announced the full preliminary election results, with a total voter turnout of 43 per cent. In a statement, the Commission reiterated its impartiality and outlined the legal appeals process for disputes regarding the preliminary election results.

3. Following the announcement by the Independent High Electoral Commission of partial preliminary election results, the President of Iraq, Barham Salih, and the Prime Minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi, issued social media statements on 11 October congratulating the winners of the elections and calling for the formation of a government that would promote the aspirations of the Iraqi people and protect the interests of the State. Earlier, on 10 October, on social media, Mr. Salih thanked the Government, the security services, the Commission and “international observers” for creating the requirements for the “success” of the elections, while Mr. Al-Kadhimi



stated that he had succeeded in fulfilling “our promise and our duty in securing fair elections”.

4. Initial political reactions to the announcement of preliminary election results varied across the country. Several political parties and actors rejected the partial and complete preliminary election results, while others expressed concern about perceived election irregularities and called for a manual recount. On 16 October, the Shia Political Coordination Framework (a grouping of Shia political leaders which includes the Fateh Alliance, State of Law Coalition, the National State Forces Alliance and others) announced its “full rejection” of the complete preliminary election results. On 17 October, Muqtada al-Sadr announced on social media his acceptance of the preliminary election results. On the same day, the political bureau of the Kurdistan Democratic Party issued a statement welcoming the announcement of the complete preliminary election results.

5. On 14 October, Mr. Al-Kadhimi, during a regular Council of Ministers session, called on all those wishing to appeal the election results to do so in accordance with the legal framework. This was echoed in a joint statement on 15 October by Mr. Salih and the President of the Supreme Judicial Council Judge Fa’iq Zaidan, who called on all parties to adopt a “responsible attitude”, calm tensions through dialogue and avoid escalation to maintain peace and security, affirming that “the law [would] have a final say” after all complaints and appeals were addressed.

6. On 6 October, the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America issued a joint statement in support of the early elections, on 10 October, in Iraq. On 11 and 12 October, a number of countries issued congratulatory statements, including China, France, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States.

7. On 12 October, the European Union issued a preliminary statement by its election observation mission in Iraq, in which it noted, among other things, that “the elections were technically well-managed, competitive, and the largely calm electoral campaigns enabled voters to make informed choices” and also that “the elections recorded low turnout”. The League of Arab States (LAS), which had deployed international observers for the elections, released a preliminary statement on 11 October in which it commended the security forces for “providing a safe environment that allowed Iraqis to carry out their constitutional duty freely”. LAS stated that the “voting process was smooth in most of the centres and stations visited by the mission”, while also noting the “low turnout of young people”.

8. Prior to the elections, the Government of Iraq and relevant authorities worked to complete the preparatory process for the elections. The Prime Minister, during a meeting of the Council of Ministers on 7 September, confirmed that the cabinet had reached “full readiness” to hold the elections as scheduled and that the Government had “completed all requirements of the technical and security electoral process”. On 11 September, the Prime Minister chaired an extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers in the presence of the Chair of the Independent High Electoral Commission and the chiefs of the security services, which was “devoted to providing support for the elections”. The Prime Minister stressed the importance of the elections and highlighted the role of all State, security and civil institutions, as well as the Iraqi security forces, in promoting a safe and enabling environment for voters and candidates.

9. On 15 September, Mr. Salih convened a meeting with Iraqi political leaders to present an Electoral Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct set out values and guidelines for ethical and professional conduct among all actors participating in the

electoral process aimed at encouraging a conducive environment for voters and candidates. The preparation of the Code was coordinated by the Office of the President and the Independent High Electoral Commission with support from UNAMI. The Code was subsequently signed by the political leaders in the presence of the President, the Prime Minister, the Chair and members of the Independent High Electoral Commission, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. On 20 September, further signing ceremonies were held for candidates in each governorate.

10. In the lead-up to the elections, political actors publicly encouraged voter participation. At the National Dialogue Conference, held under his auspices in Baghdad on 25 and 26 August, the Prime Minister called for participation and support for the elections. Separately, in a statement published on 10 September, the President of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Nechirvan Barzani, urged “all parties to ensure civic and peaceful election campaigns” and also called for a “strong renouncement of slander and unfounded smear attacks against candidates, especially against women”.

11. On 8 September, Mr. Salih, during a meeting with the Chair and the other board members of the Independent High Electoral Commission, highlighted the responsibility of political and social actors to encourage high voter turnout. He also spoke of the need to ensure that elections were free and fair, with voters able to choose their representatives without “fear of fraud or manipulation”. He commended the efforts of the Commission and noted the important oversight role of the judiciary.

12. During the thirteenth annual Islamic conference on countering violence against women, organized by the Al-Hakim Foundation, held on 11 September, the Prime Minister emphasized the role of the Ministries of Interior and Justice in protecting women’s rights in Iraq and called on women to participate widely in the elections. The call was supported by the Electoral Code of Conduct, which was written to be gender sensitive. Its aim was to enhance women’s electoral participation by urging political and electoral entities to refrain from defamation and gender-based violence targeting women candidates.

13. On 29 September, the Office of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani issued a statement encouraging all “to participate consciously and responsibly” and not to underestimate “the value of their votes” and also emphasizing that the Grand Ayatollah did not support any candidate or electoral lists. On the same day, the President and the Prime Minister, among others, issued statements echoing the Grand Ayatollah’s call.

14. On 27 August, Muqtada al-Sadr announced his intention to return to the electoral process, from which he had publicly withdrawn on 15 July. This decision was welcomed by the three presidencies, leaders in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and other political leaders. However, the Iraqi Communist Party, the Iraqi Republican Gathering and the Iraqi National Dialogue Front, all registered for the elections, maintained their previously announced withdrawals. Several political and protest groups continued their calls for a boycott of the elections.

15. During the reporting period, the Government of Iraq promoted dialogue on anti-corruption efforts. With the cooperation of LAS, the Government hosted an international conference on the recovery of looted funds on 15 and 16 September, attended by Ministers of Justice from Arab States. Addressing the participants, the President emphasized the importance of the conference and described corruption as an “impediment to any nation’s economic and social development”.

16. The Government maintained measures to curb the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, including a nightly curfew from midnight until 5 a.m., and reduced staffing in most ministries, alongside a national vaccination programme. On 31 August, the Council of Ministers approved a COVID-19 response and recovery

plan that had been prepared by the Ministry of Planning in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). On 5 September, the Prime Minister chaired a meeting of the Supreme Committee for Health and National Safety at which mechanisms to restart in-person teaching at universities were approved.

17. On 14 September, the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq, in line with the commitment in its Cabinet agenda to “emphasize establishing a decentralized system of power”, granted autonomous administration status for Sawran and Zakhu Districts, formerly part of Erbil and Dahuk Governorates.

B. Relations between Baghdad and Erbil

18. Implementation of article 11 of the 2021 Federal Budget Law, which governs the budget share of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and the requirements for its payment to Baghdad, remained stalled. Nevertheless, the federal Government made three advance payments of 200 billion Iraqi dinars (approximately \$137 million) each to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq on 11 July, 29 August and 4 October. During a meeting with media outlet directors on 2 September, Mr. Al-Kadhimi noted the delay in implementing the 2021 federal budget and stated that the federal Government would continue to send monthly transfers of 200 billion Iraqi dinars to the Kurdistan Regional Government until the end of 2021.

C. Security situation

19. Da’esh continued to conduct asymmetric attacks during the reporting period, primarily in Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninawa and Salah al-Din Governorates. From 25 August to 9 October, a total of 157 attacks against security forces in Iraq were attributed to Da’esh. Da’esh also continued to target off-duty security personnel, community leaders and civilians who were accused by Da’esh of collaborating with Iraqi authorities. In addition, four improvised explosive device attacks targeting power infrastructure in Diyala, Kirkuk and Salah al-Din governorates were attributable to Da’esh.

20. On 5 September, the Security Media Cell of the Office of the Prime Minister reported that a Da’esh attack to the south-west of Kirkuk had led to the death of several police officers. It was later confirmed that 13 police officers had died as a result of the attack. The Prime Minister chaired an emergency meeting of the National Security Council the same day to discuss security developments and coordinate an appropriate response. The Office of the Prime Minister reported that, during the meeting, he had instructed the security services to improve coordination and ordered an investigation. The Minister of Defence led a delegation to the Governorate on 8 September to investigate the incident and assess security coordination.

21. On 11 September, the spokesperson for the international counter-Da’esh coalition reported via social media that “Coalition forces at Erbil airbase were attacked by two unmanned aircraft systems”. The coalition spokesperson added that “force protection counter-measures were used to defeat the drones” and that there had been no injuries. No claims of responsibility were made.

22. From 25 August to 12 October, 12 attacks involving improvised explosive devices were reported to have targeted trucks of Iraqi companies contracted to carry supplies for the counter-Da’esh coalition, in Babil, Dhi Qar and Qadisiyah Governorates.

23. In response to Da’esh activity, the Iraqi security forces conducted ongoing counter-terrorism operations. As part of this, on 11 October the Prime Minister

announced that an Iraqi intelligence operation had led to the capture of Sami Jasim, whom he described as being in charge of Da'esh's finances and a deputy of the group's deceased leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

24. On 18 October, Mr. Al-Kadhimi announced via social media the arrest of the "terrorist Ghazwan Alzawbaee", allegedly responsible for a suicide car bombing in Karradah district in central Baghdad on 11 January 2016 that reportedly killed approximately 300 people and wounded 250.

25. On 16 September, the Security Media Cell reported via social media that "a meeting was held between the Iraqi Military Technical Committee ... and its United States counterpart ... within the framework of technical security talks, which were agreed upon in the ... strategic dialogue and the plan to transition to a non-combat role for the international coalition forces" according to the outcomes of the strategic dialogue held in July 2021. The two sides reiterated that the presence of the United States forces and the international coalition forces was at the invitation of Iraq. The sides agreed to hold regular sessions to discuss the "remaining steps to secure the transition to a non-combat role".

26. During the reporting period, the Ministry of National Defence of Turkey reported ongoing operations against Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) targets in northern Iraq.

D. Regional and international developments

27. On 28 August, Iraq hosted the Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership under the auspices of the Prime Minister. The conference was attended by the heads of State of Egypt, France, Jordan and Qatar; the Vice-President of the United Arab Emirates; the Prime Minister of Kuwait; and the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Representatives of other countries and international organizations, including the Secretaries-General of the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Gulf Cooperation Council, as well as my Special Representative, attended as observers.

28. In a final statement, conference participants welcomed the "diplomatic efforts [of Iraq] to reach ... common ground at the regional and international levels". In the statement they noted the renewed support of participants to the Government of Iraq, including its efforts to strengthen State institutions; hold representative parliamentary elections with international monitoring; combat terrorism; conduct economic reform; and ensure the return of internally displaced persons. The participants acknowledged common challenges faced by the region, including the need for continued cooperation to confront the COVID-19 pandemic and to strengthen efforts to address climate change.

29. Subsequently, on 21 September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs chaired a follow-up meeting of foreign ministers from the participating countries in New York on the margins of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly. As indicated in a joint communiqué issued on 23 September, the participants agreed on the "establishment of a follow-up committee by Iraq and Jordan, in cooperation with France". It was also decided that the committee would "coordinate with the participants of the Baghdad Conference in order to support Iraq and address common and regional challenges". It was decided that the "next Baghdad Conference would be held in Amman". The participants reiterated their common support for the people and the Government of Iraq and underlined the importance of continuing to strengthen the regional dialogue.

30. At a press conference on the margins of the Baghdad Conference, held on 28 August in Baghdad, in relation to collective efforts against Da'esh, the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, noted the need to “work both on the fight against terrorism and regional stability”. During his visit to Iraq, he also travelled to Mosul and Erbil.

31. The Government welcomed the following high-level visitors to Baghdad for discussions on strengthening bilateral ties, political and security developments, including continued cooperation to counter Da'esh and reconstruction efforts in Iraq: the Speaker of the Jordanian Parliament (1–5 September); the Minister of Interior of Saudi Arabia (4 September); the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (6–8 September); the Commander of the United States Central Command (9 September); and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States (14–16 September).

32. Mr. Salih attended the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly from 19 to 24 September. On the sidelines of the General Assembly, he held bilateral meetings with other high-level officials, including the President of Cyprus, the Foreign Minister of France, the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Foreign Minister of Sweden, the President of Turkey and the President of the United States.

33. On 12 September, the Prime Minister travelled to the Islamic Republic of Iran, where he was received by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi. The Office of the Prime Minister reported that the visit showed the “importance that Iraq attaches to strengthening cooperation between the two countries and his aspiration to strengthen the bilateral partnership”, including through the expansion of trade and economic ties. The Prime Minister met separately with the First Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly and the Secretary of the National Security Council.

34. The Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Mohammed al-Halbousi, visited Egypt on 15 and 16 September. He met separately with the President, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, the President of the Senate and the parliamentary Speaker. The Council of Representatives reported that the meetings included discussions on enhancing prospects for strategic cooperation. The Speaker stressed the importance of parliamentary cooperation in Arab, regional and international forums. He also met with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Speaker of the Arab Parliament and the Grand Imam of the al-Azhar Mosque. On 26 and 27 September, the Speaker was in the United Arab Emirates for meetings with the Speaker of the Federal National Council, Saqr Ghubash, and the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. On 4 October, the Speaker met with the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in Ankara.

35. During the reporting period, the Minister for Foreign Affairs visited the Russian Federation to meet with government officials and, on 26 August, co-chaired a session of the Iraqi-Russian Joint Committee with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Yury Borisov. According to a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, the session covered economic, energy and agricultural cooperation, among other issues. On 30 August, the Minister for Foreign Affairs went to Austria to participate in the European Forum Alpbach for security and cooperation. During his visit, he met with his Austrian counterpart, the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and others.

36. On 16 September, the Minister was hosted by the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Riyadh. In an address to the Ministerial Council, he highlighted

potential economic, commercial, investment and security cooperation between Iraq and the Gulf Cooperation Council. While in New York from 19 to 29 September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs met with counterparts from a range of Member States; participated in the annual consultative meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States on 20 September; and attended a meeting of the Tripartite Coordination Mechanism with his Egyptian and Jordanian counterparts on 23 September. On 9 October, the Minister for Foreign Affairs travelled to Serbia, where he met separately with the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Nikola Selaković. He also delivered a speech at the Non-Aligned Movement summit in Belgrade on 11 October.

III. Update on the activities of the Mission and the United Nations country team

A. Political activities

37. In advance of the 10 October parliamentary elections, the Special Representative continued her regular engagement with the three Presidencies, political party leaders, parliamentarians, the Independent High Electoral Commission, religious and community leaders and other civil society actors, as well as media outlets. Discussions during these meetings focused primarily on electoral preparations, enhanced technical support by UNAMI to the Commission and the deployment of United Nations monitors.

38. On 15 September, the Special Representative participated in the signing ceremony for the Electoral Code of Conduct, which was supported by UNAMI. Addressing the event, she encouraged Iraqi political leaders to adhere to the principles of the Code of Conduct to support a conducive environment for credible elections.

39. In line with the mandate of UNAMI to conduct a strategic messaging campaign to inform and update Iraqi voters on electoral preparations, the Special Representative recorded video messages and held press conferences and multiple interviews with Iraqi media outlets. She also participated in a “digital dialogue” with Iraqi voters from all governorates and abroad.

40. Addressing the Iraqi media, the Special Representative outlined measures put in place by the electoral authorities of Iraq to mitigate the risk of fraud. She also emphasized the responsibility of all concerned, including political parties and candidates, to abide by the principles and rules of the electoral process. She further stated that all Iraqis should be free to exercise their democratic and electoral rights and highlighted United Nations support for the country’s electoral process.

41. On 11 September, the Special Representative took part in the thirteenth annual Islamic conference on countering violence against women, organized by the Al-Hakim Foundation and attended by the President and the Prime Minister. During her speech, she emphasized that gender-based violence in politics and elections ranged from the escalation of harassment; to intimidation; sexual, psychological and physical violence; to gender-biased scrutiny by the public and the media. She underlined the importance of institutionalizing work to enhance security for women in politics and elections.

42. On 2 October, the Special Representative travelled to Nasiriyah and Basrah, where she met with local authorities, as well as with civil society representatives. In her meetings, she acknowledged the importance of a conducive electoral environment, while also highlighting the importance of every vote.

43. On 8 October, the special voting day for Iraqi security forces, internally displaced persons, prisoners and detainees, the Special Representative travelled to

Erbil and Dohuk as part of the United Nations broader monitoring efforts. On election day on 10 October, she visited a number of polling stations in Baghdad.

44. The Special Representative continued discussions with the political leadership of the federal and Kurdistan Regional Governments. She reiterated to both sides the need to establish an institutionalized dialogue as a forum to discuss outstanding issues, contributing to a positive and constructive relationship. She also called for the urgent implementation of the Sinjar agreement to bring peace and stability in the area.

45. Meanwhile, the Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance also engaged with the Independent High Electoral Commission and attended the second and third polling day simulation exercises on 23 August and 22 September, respectively. In addition, she visited Mosul, Erbil, Kirkuk, Diyala and Karbala', holding meetings with local government, political party representatives, minorities, civil society and governorate offices of the Commission. She urged all parties to contribute to the success and credibility of the elections.

46. The Deputy Special Representative engaged with Iraqi stakeholders to encourage women's participation in the upcoming elections. She met with members of the Iraqi Women's Network, women candidates, the Director General of the Iraqi Women Empowerment Directorate and the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, discussing the challenges impeding women's electoral participation as voters and candidates, in addition to difficulties facing civil society activists and organizations working on women's rights.

47. The Deputy Special Representative visited polling centres in Baghdad during the special voting day. On election day, she travelled to Kirkuk and monitored polling centres throughout the governorate.

B. Electoral assistance

48. UNAMI provided advice and technical support to the Independent High Electoral Commission as it prepared for the parliamentary elections. As at 1 October, the United Nations had 126 additional electoral personnel in country, including 49 international staff, under the technical assistance project implemented by UNAMI with UNDP support.

49. In response to Security Council resolution [2576 \(2021\)](#), UNAMI also implemented a project, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), that provided for the deployment of 150 United Nations international electoral experts and approximately 550 support personnel in advance of, and on, election day.

50. Relevant details of the United Nations electoral assistance role in the context of the parliamentary elections held in Iraq on 10 October are presented in the detailed summary report ([S/2021/932](#)) requested by the Security Council in operative paragraph 3 of resolution [2576 \(2021\)](#).

C. Human rights and rule of law developments and activities

51. During the election campaign period, UNAMI documented instances of election-related incidents. These primarily consisted of various forms of threats and intimidation against candidates and their campaign teams, both in person and online, as well as incidents of attacks on candidates or campaign meetings, including the detonation of an explosive device at a campaign event in Salah al-Din Governorate on 7 October, which killed one boy and injured four other persons. Owing to the small

number of such incidents, UNAMI has been unable to establish any discernible patterns of violations towards particular groups, or specific geographical areas where violations have been concentrated.

52. Women and minority candidates also raised concerns about campaigning in a difficult pre-electoral environment. In particular, women candidates reported defamatory messages on social media. Many women, minority and independent candidates also highlighted that their political posters and banners were damaged or destroyed.

53. UNAMI remains concerned about the lack of progress on issues related to accountability and redress for crimes perpetrated against demonstrators and political and civic activists by unidentified armed elements. There is also a concerning pattern of intimidation of those publicly advocating for accountability in such cases. On 2 September, the uncle of an activist and human rights lawyer abducted from Maysan Governorate in October 2019 by unidentified “militia” was the victim of an attempted targeted killing. This incident follows the assassination, in March 2021, of the missing activist’s father, who was a vocal advocate for accountability for his son’s disappearance. On 30 September, the judge leading the criminal investigation into the activist’s disappearance was also targeted by unknown gunmen, who opened fire on his vehicle as he travelled to court.

54. In August, UNAMI and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights released a joint report entitled “Human rights in the administration of justice in Iraq: legal conditions and procedural safeguards to prevent torture and ill-treatment”. In the report, risk factors for ill-treatment and torture in detention are identified and recommendations provided on the elimination of potential causes of ill-treatment and torture aimed at preventing torture in places of detention in Iraq.

55. As part of its ongoing dialogue and engagement with the judiciary, UNAMI and the Supreme Judicial Council jointly distributed 650 posters to courts and police stations throughout Iraq aimed at informing detainees and relevant authorities of the procedural rights of suspects in detention and during criminal investigation.

56. On 30 August, the Government carried out the death penalty on seven prisoners convicted of capital offences, mainly related to terrorism. Since the beginning of 2021, UNAMI has documented at least 19 cases in which the death penalty was implemented.

57. UNAMI has expressed concern to the relevant authorities over the absence of a duly appointed Board of Commissioners for the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights after the expiry of the previous Board’s four-year term of office in June. On 5 September, the Council of Representatives wrote to the State Council indicating its intention to constitute a committee of experts to select a new Board of Commissioners in accordance with procedures established under Iraqi law. UNAMI has since advocated for the selection and appointments process to be carried out in a transparent and expeditious manner in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

58. UNAMI continued its ongoing social media campaign to raise awareness of the human rights impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and to disseminate information on health protection measures. The campaign included the dissemination through social media of 20 cartoons by a female Iraqi artist and the distribution by 129 community volunteers in 10 governorates of 17,000 posters detailing COVID-19 prevention measures in seven minority languages.

59. On 16 September, the Council of Ministers adopted the by-laws for the Yazidi Survivors Law. The by-laws outline the application process for survivors to access the benefits to which they are entitled under the law and the administrative

arrangements to be established for the Directorate of Survivors Affairs to enable it to meet its obligations and provide mechanisms to protect survivors as they access the benefits under the law.

60. From 1 July to 30 September, UNAMI documented 69 incidents, resulting in at least 246 civilian casualties (83 deaths, including 13 boys, 8 girls and 1 woman, and 163 injured, including 7 boys). A total of 193 civilian casualties (68 deaths and 125 injuries) were attributed to Da'esh and 19 civilian casualties (five deaths and 14 injuries) to unidentified armed elements. During the reporting period, the Ministry of National Defence of Turkey reported ongoing operations against PKK targets in northern Iraq. According to information verified by UNAMI, there were 11 civilian casualties (six deaths and five injuries) in six incidents of aerial strikes and shelling. UNAMI also received reports of the displacement of civilians and damage to agricultural lands in Dahuk Governorate. The Ministry of National Defence of Turkey has previously stated that, in determining targets, the "utmost sensitivity and attention is accorded to protect the properties and lives of the civilian population and the environment". On 30 August, two civilian deaths (children) and seven civilian injuries at a camp for internally displaced persons in Dahuk Governorate were attributed to a PKK improvised explosive device.

D. Humanitarian assistance, stabilization and development

61. As at 9 October, the 2021 humanitarian response plan was 44 per cent funded, having received \$265 million out of the \$607 million required. Approximately 850,000 people were reached with some form of humanitarian assistance, out of the 1.5 million people targeted.

62. As at September 2021, approximately 1.2 million people still lived in displacement in Iraq, including 174,388 people hosted in 25 camps administered by the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and 8,258 people in two camps in other parts of Iraq.

63. Access has improved for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) following the establishment of an online system for access authorization letter applications, which became operational in early 2021. However, the letters are still not universally recognized by all local security actors.

64. The Government of Iraq has facilitated two rounds of voluntary returns from Hawl to Jeddah 1 Camp in Ninawa Governorate. The first, on 25 May, and the second, on 29 September, led to the return of 211 households (864 individuals) in total. On 21 September, an initial 22 households departed Jeddah 1 Camp with their designated "sponsor" (a community member, usually a relative), with most returning to areas of origin in Anbar, Ninawa and Salah al-Din Governorates. As at 6 October, a total of 27 households had departed from Jeddah 1 Camp to their areas of origin, while 184 households remained in the camp.

65. From 25 August to 1 September, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) issued nine birth certificates and 22 public distribution system ration cards to internally displaced persons living in Jeddah 5 camp in Ninawa Governorate, as part of IOM support for families. This enabled access to schools and government services.

66. To address displaced persons' difficulty in accessing documentation, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) collaborated with the Ministry of Interior to conduct civil documentation missions and support the rehabilitation of the Civil Affairs Directorate offices in several governorates. On 1 September, the rehabilitated Qayarah Civil Affairs Directorate centre in Ninawa Governorate was staffed and opened, providing 300,000 displaced persons with the ability to obtain and renew civil documentation.

67. To enhance protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, UNHCR conducted a two-day training course from 8 to 9 September for staff and partners in Kirkuk on protection against sexual exploitation and sexual harassment. On 12 and 13 September, UNHCR conducted a train-the-trainer session for the Directorate for Combating Violence Against Women in the Kurdistan Regional Government.

68. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continued to work closely with the Government of Iraq in the roll-out of vaccines obtained through the Government's self-financed COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility programme. Iraq has received nearly 18.5 million vaccine doses, including 8.6 million doses through the COVAX Facility. According to the Ministry of Health and Environment, as at 7 October, a total of 8,139,363 doses had been administered, of which 4,993,114 (21.1 per cent of the population) were first, and 3,146,249 (13.3 per cent of the population), were second doses.

69. To facilitate returns to areas of origin, the Funding Facility for Stabilization of UNDP has completed 2,994 projects since 2015 aimed at restoring essential services and civilian livelihoods, building municipal capacity and fostering cohesion in the five governorates liberated from Da'esh. The Facility's funding gap for 2021 is approximately \$150 million.

70. On 5 September, IOM met with the Public Prosecutor of the Supreme Judicial Council to discuss support for vulnerable internally displaced persons. At the meeting, options were explored for assisting men and boys, most of whom had formerly been detained but had now completed their custodial sentences and faced potential rejection by their communities. It was agreed to have a pilot programme led by IOM legal teams, with an initial caseload of approximately 15 individuals. In the pilot, those individuals' legal cases would be followed up with authorities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, federal authorities in Baghdad and authorities in their areas of origin, to map and ultimately resolve legal obstacles to return. UNDP completed its second community security integration pilot, delivering 12-week long vocational training courses to 75 male and 28 female former volunteer fighters from the Yazidi community.

71. UNOPS continued to run the Iraq Information Centre on behalf of the humanitarian country team, to help beneficiaries to address basic needs. Through its free and confidential hotline, the Centre provides beneficiaries with critical information about humanitarian assistance, as well as a mechanism for reporting issues related to humanitarian assistance or the abuse of power. From 25 August to 5 October, the centre received 26,482 calls, predominantly about cash assistance, protection and legal/registration assistance.

72. UNOPS concluded the first phase of the digitalization of the public distribution system project in August 2021. The aim of the project is to transform the system from a paper-based to a digital platform, including through the World Food Programme (WFP) designed "Tamwini" mobile phone application.

73. Some 21,000 people benefited from WFP rural resilience building interventions, including rehabilitation of canals and establishment of home food gardens in Anbar, Dhi Qar, Ninawa and Salah al-Din Governorates, while over 2,600 beneficiaries were reached through various vocational training courses, toolkit supply, cash transfers and market linkages in Maysan Governorate. WFP supported 186,088 internally displaced persons and 68,599 Syrian refugees with food assistance, including cash-based transfers, electronic vouchers and in-kind food distributions.

74. The Mine Action Service cleared 713,579 m² of areas in Anbar and Ninawa Governorates, largely agricultural lands that had been contaminated with explosive ordnance, to enable returns and livelihood activities. The Service also cleared

61,908 m² of legacy minefields from previous conflicts in Basra Governorate. Explosive ordnance risk education was provided to 9,438 individuals, including 5,922 returnees in Anbar and Ninawa Governorates and 478 internal displaced persons in the Jeddah 5 camp.

75. The International Institute for Educational Planning of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, the World Bank and Iraqi ministries organized a workshop in Erbil from 12 to 16 September to finalize the National Education Strategy for Iraq 2021–2031. In partnership with UNICEF, UNESCO has developed an educational management information system, which will be launched in nine general directorates of education between 2021–2023. On 25 August, 1,500 Internet devices and Wi-Fi subscriptions were distributed to governorates and schools to operationalize the system. UNESCO is providing laptops for the 3,000 schools included in the first phase and has provided training for school faculties.

76. As part of the “Revive the spirit of Mosul” initiative, UNESCO and partners organized prevention of violent extremism training activities for more than 1,000 teachers, parents, principals and other school administrators in Anbar and Ninawa Governorates.

77. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) updated the protocol on the clinical management of rape, at the request of the Ministry of Health and Environment. Train-the-trainer sessions on the clinical management of rape were conducted in August and September. Some 4,200 girls and boys accessed and participated in educational and training programmes on peacebuilding, social cohesion, employability skills and sexual reproductive health rights, in UNFPA-renovated youth centres. Through the programmes of the Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster, 55,920 people were reached and services provided in 13 governorates in August and September.

78. UNICEF, WFP and the International Labour Organization (ILO) engaged in a strategic partnership with the Government of Iraq to reform the social protection system to improve conditions and regulations of the public service, upgrade financial administration and enhance the services provided by public institutions.

79. The International Trade Centre (ITC) continued its activities through the Strengthening the Agriculture and Agri-food Value chain and Improving trade policy in Iraq project. ITC worked with public and private sector stakeholders to strengthen agriculture and agri-food value chains and improve trade policy, with the goal of fostering sustainable growth, diversification and job creation. The workplan of the project was officially endorsed at the first meeting of the project steering committee, chaired by the Ministry of Planning on 7 September 2021.

80. To boost women’s electoral participation, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) provided technical support to the Supreme Committee on Women’s Political Participation, set up by the Council of Ministers to enhance women’s participation in the parliamentary elections.

81. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) continued to provide technical support to the Government of Iraq under the Iraq national adaptation plan project, funded by the Green Climate Fund. Cross-sectoral working groups from key line ministries were established in September to develop sector-specific adaptation plans. On 5 June, the Government reaffirmed its contribution to climate action under the Paris Agreement with the adoption of its nationally determined contribution document by the National Committee on Climate Change, which is currently pending formal endorsement by the Council of Ministers. The nationally determined contribution was prepared with support from UNDP and UNEP.

IV. Security and operational issues

A. Update on security arrangements

82. The Department of Safety and Security monitored developments throughout Iraq and implemented risk management measures to enable United Nations operations. Regular security advisories and alerts, including broadcasts related to COVID-19, continued to be disseminated to keep United Nations personnel informed of the precautionary measures in place.

83. The Department has provided extensive support for United Nations electoral activities. This has included the monitoring, collection and analysis of security information and assessment of related threats and associated risks; the preparation and coordination of emergency procedures and contingency plans; liaison with host Government authorities; security assessments of locations hosting United Nations personnel; provision of security briefings and training; and the issuance of United Nations identification cards. On election day, the Department monitored the situation, tracked United Nations personnel movements, disseminated information and advisories and was prepared to coordinate emergency response activity.

84. The Department supported an average of 34 field missions per day across the country, with assessed risk levels ranging from medium to high. A total of four low and three very high-risk missions were conducted during the reporting period. Close coordination and engagement with the host Government continued to ensure the proper flow of information and the necessary security support for United Nations operations, in particular, movements and access authorizations to regions still affected by COVID-19 containment restrictions.

B. Mission facilities, logistics, aviation, financial and legal issues

85. The Mission continued refurbishment and construction projects in the United Nations Integrated Compound in Baghdad, regional offices and the forward support base, while maintaining strict health and security protocols.

86. To support the deployment of election experts and supporting staff, UNAMI provided the necessary accommodation, office, telecommunications and aviation support across Iraq. Additionally, UNAMI continued to provide logistical and administrative support to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in the delivery of its mandate.

87. In collaboration with WHO, UNAMI continued its COVID-19 vaccination campaign for United Nations personnel and dependents in Iraq. As at 11 October, the Mission had administered about 4,880 first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

V. Observations

88. I welcome the largely peaceful conduct of the parliamentary elections in Iraq and commend the people of Iraq for making their voices heard through the ballot box in their quest for reform, accountability and a better future. I also acknowledge the commitment of the Government of Iraq to hold early parliamentary elections and the extensive efforts made by the relevant electoral and security bodies to implement an orderly electoral process.

89. As the electoral process is being completed, I urge all stakeholders to show patience and respect for the electoral rules and timelines, while the Independent High Electoral Commission and other relevant electoral bodies tabulate the election results and resolve any electoral disputes that may arise through established legal channels with a view to an expeditious ratification of final election results.

90. In the upcoming post-electoral period, I call upon all stakeholders to actively contribute to a smooth and peaceful government formation process, which is key to ensuring continuity in governance. This can be achieved first and foremost through the timely formation of a new government that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Iraqi people.

91. I reiterate my call to the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to expedite the full implementation of the 2021 Federal Budget Law and urge both governments to resolve outstanding key issues through institutionalized, regular and structured dialogue.

92. Efforts by the Government of Iraq to maintain regional stability through diplomatic means are highly commendable. I welcome the recent holding of the Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership. The conference is a clear example of the commitment of the Government of Iraq to engage constructively with the region, and of the commitment of regional countries to strengthen relations with Iraq. I encourage its participants to follow up on what has been agreed, with the hope that it contributes positively to regional stability and cooperation.

93. I encourage the Government of Iraq to make progress on issues related to accountability and redress for crimes perpetrated against demonstrators and other civil society actors. Impunity for human rights violations and abuses erodes public trust and threatens democratic space. In this light, I reiterate my call on the authorities to act decisively and to hold to account those responsible for targeting protesters, as well as political and civil society activists.

94. The development priorities of Iraq were highlighted by the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, signed on 5 September by the Government of Iraq and the United Nations. Work must now begin to deliver on the promises contained in the Framework to ensure that no Iraqi is left behind. This will be dependent on support and funding from Member States. I therefore encourage the continued commitment of the international community to the people of Iraq.

95. Finally, I would like to thank my Special Representative, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, and the United Nations staff in Iraq for their continued dedication to implementing the Organization's mandate during extraordinary times and under challenging circumstances.
