

UNAMI Herald

Volume 6, Issue 4

July — August 2019



UN SRSG visits Sinjar on 5th anniversary of Da'esh atrocities, salutes Yazidis' bravery, highlights continued suffering and reiterates call for unified administration and stable security structures



Sinjar, 4 August 2019 – Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Sinjar on the fifth anniversary of the gross atrocities committed by Da'esh against Iraq's Yazidi community. During the visit, she saluted the survivors' bravery, highlighted the continuing plight of the Yazidis and reiterated her call for urgent action to ensure stable governance and security arrangements.

In visits with Yazidi spiritual, political and local leaders as well as in separate commemorations in Baghdad and in Dohuk over the last three days, the Special Representative stressed time and again that the United Nations will not forget. It is

high time that the survivors, whose bravery we salute, be given the opportunity to return home and rebuild their lives in safety and dignity, she stated.

"Yesterday I visited Sinjar, once again – including Kocho. And yes, I continue to be shocked by the scars of horrific destruction still so visible", the Special Representative said. "I had the opportunity to speak with several survivors. They feel left out, they feel alone, they feel abandoned, and understandably so. While they call Iraq home, they wonder whether the authorities - in Baghdad and Erbil - consider them to be Iraqis. Their suffering continues, in so many ways, and years after the liberation of Sinjar".

In Kocho village, Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert met with local officials and heard from survivors, men and women who tearfully recounted their ordeal and sought help in locating their missing loved ones. Before walking across the village to pause and reflect at the site of a mass grave, she also toured an art exhibition presented by artists from other areas of Iraq in solidarity with their Yazidi countryfolk. Later, she travelled to the village of Solagh, where she delivered occupancy certificates of rebuilt homes to Yazidi families under a UN-Habitat project.

The destruction of houses in Sinjar as

well as the lack of ownership registration and occupancy documents are among the major obstacles to voluntary, dignified and sustainable returns. In the past years, UN-Habitat has rehabilitated more than 1,200 houses and delivered more than 2,800 occupancy certificates.

The continued suffering in Sinjar, several years after its liberation, prompted Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert to again travel to the area in northwestern Iraq. She drove home her call for urgent action to resolve security and administrative issues, including the unhindered flow of humanitarian assistance to enable safe and dignified returns.

"In the spirit of openness and with the desire to improve the lives of all affected communities, I ask the following questions today: Why do we still not have stable governance and security structures in Sinjar, so many years after it was liberated? Why are rival security actors still present? Why is humanitarian action still being obstructed by lack of access? Why do we still not have a unified administration?"

On Sunday, August 4, the Special Representative concluded her visit by stating that she sincerely hopes that soon the collective commitment will be reaffirmed, to turn the page and offer all those affected a future they can believe in.



In this edition ...

Security Council deliberated situation concerning Iraq

New York, 28 August 2019 – On its 8606th meeting the United Nations Security Council deliberated situation concerning Iraq. Here is the text (as delivered) of the briefing to the Security Council by SRSG for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert ... *More on page 3.*

UNAMI urges inclusion of women in politics and decision-making

Baghdad, 26 August 2019 – Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Alice Walpole, yesterday addressed the launch of a Regional Forum aimed at advancing women's rights in Iraq and across the Middle Eastern region, with participants from Iraq, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen. The forum is being held under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Iraq, with support from the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), UN Women, the Women's International League for Peace and the Dutch Embassy. *More on page 20.*



"Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability" workshop held in Anbar

Ramadi, Iraq, 07 July 2019 – At a three-day workshop from 4 to 6 July 2019, in the western city of Ramadi in Anbar Governorate, twenty-seven young Iraqi women and men from across the Governorate discussed how youth can play a role in addressing the challenges facing their communities. This was the fourth in a series of workshops under the theme "Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability", which are taking place in locations across in Iraq throughout 2019 organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister's Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association. *More on page 8.*

Government of Iraq contributes \$33m for stabilization activities in historic agreement

Baghdad, 28 August 2019 – The Government of Iraq has today signed an historic agreement with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), committing USD 33 million for stabilization activities across the country. *More on page 47.*



UNAMI Human Rights Office conducted several consultations with minority groups in Erbil and Duhok

Erbil, 29 July - 02 August 2019 - UNAMI Human Rights Office conducted several consultations with minority groups in Erbil and Duhok to assess their situation in the Kurdistan Region and explore ways that the Human Rights Office may support the government to address issues affecting minorities and fulfill its obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination. *More on page 24.*



UN's Hennis-Plasschaert recalls Yazidi suffering, urges swift actions to restore stability to Sinjar to allow Yazidis to return home

Baghdad, 1 August 2019 – Recalling the suffering of the Yazidis on the fifth anniversary of ISIL's onslaught on Sinjar District, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, lamented the current failure to bring about stability in the area. Stressing that stability is crucial for the stricken community to return home and rebuild its life, she called on Baghdad and Erbil to urgently find solutions that put the needs of the people first.

More on page 26.

UNAMI Herald is published bi-monthly by the Public Information Office of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq.

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Photos: UNAMI PIO, UNHCR, UN-CHR, UNICEF, IOM, OCHA, UN-FPA, WHO, UNESCO, UNOPS, UN Habitat, UN Photo, UN Women, UNIDO, UNMAS, UNDP, WFP and as credited.

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

Security Council deliberated situation concerning Iraq

New York, 28 August 2019 – On its 8606th meeting the United Nations Security Council deliberated situation concerning Iraq. Here is the text (as delivered) of the briefing to the Security Council by SRSRG for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert:

Madam President,
Distinguished members of the Security Council,

I would like to begin by recalling the historic importance of the Council's visit to Iraq on June 29. On that day in 2014, ISIL declared their so-called caliphate. A grim memory, but during your visit we instead celebrated Iraqi freedom and sovereignty, and we saluted the enormous sacrifices made in the fight against ISIL. You delivered important, well-received assurances of your continued support to Iraq and its people. And that was highly appreciated - by many! It was.

Now, Madam President, it may be unusual to immediately switch to funding concerns, but with your well-received assurances in mind, I feel the need to – once again – share our concerns regarding the continued underfunding of both the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) as well as the Humanitarian Response Plan, with gaps of over 300 and 500 million dollars respectively.

So, if you will allow me, I would like to use this opportunity to express my sincere hope for the ongoing and generous support of the international community: you know, progress has been made, but the road ahead is long and complex. And right now, due to the continued underfunding I just mentioned, Iraq's post-conflict humanitarian programming is being hindered. For example: vital health-care services are being suspended, IDP schools shuttered and food distribution cycles interrupted. Moreover, around 1.6 million IDPs are still desperately awaiting better times, are still waiting to return to their homes in safety and dignity.

Now, please don't get me wrong, as without a doubt, lots of good work has been done. Thanks to the many, many donor contributions, houses, roads, bridges and power lines have been rebuilt - to name but a few examples. And yes, meanwhile, 4.3 million people have returned home, but the pace has slowed, and outstanding needs are most acute in the health, electricity and water sectors.

Now, understandably, donors have been asking the Government of Iraq to demonstrate shared ownership by tak-



ing part in the financing of this work and rightly so. And I am pleased to report that - moments ago - the Government signed a cost-sharing agreement to begin making its own contributions to the Funding Facility.

Let me also briefly refer to the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, which took place almost a year and a half ago. The Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme (the RRP) is being implemented throughout the country, and resource mobilization efforts have yielded almost half of the required funding so far. We will continue to encourage development partners to fund the RRP, particularly through the UN Trust Fund.

Madam President, back to politics Iraq's leadership is hard at work building on progress made to date. As discussed during the Council's visit to Iraq, painting a grim picture is never a goal in itself – more importantly: it's not justified. Also, we cannot simply judge the current situation without putting it in the context of Iraq's past. Decades of trouble continue to impact the present, and we have not seen the end of it yet. It is equally important, however, not to sugar-coat the current circumstances: we can all agree on Iraq's great potential, but perseverance is key to make the most of this potential.

Now, one cannot expect the Iraqi government to create overnight miracles in dealing with the legacy of the past and the many challenges of the present. The harsh reality is that the government needs time to fight the many narrow partisan interests that are out there, it needs time to deliver.

Just as essentially, political parties and

other actors need to arrive at a common understanding that the country's interests should be prioritized above all else. Ultimately, it must be clear that a government cannot go it alone – it is a joint responsibility.

Madam President - as you know, the federal cabinet is now fully formed - aside from the Ministry of Education. And significant progress has been made on senior appointments to parliamentary committees. The Kurdish Regional Government is also up and running – with the critical Natural Resources portfolio still to be filled. I note that 3 Kurdish Regional ministers are women, as is the speaker of the Kurdish Regional parliament. At the federal level, unfortunately, not a single woman has been appointed yet.

Now, the good news is that the progress in both government formation processes in Baghdad and Erbil. This has created a positive momentum to advance negotiations between Baghdad and Erbil, also demonstrated by the establishment of a High-Level Joint Committee.

And I cannot deny: the expectations are high, in particular on key files - including Kirkuk, Sinjar and revenue sharing. On the latter, it is important that all parties acknowledge that - instead of counterproductive annual budget-battles - a comprehensive, lasting agreement is far more productive. And, it goes without saying that I am always ready to offer UNAMI's good offices in order to advance discussions towards consensus followed by action.

Regarding Kirkuk, I am very encouraged by the goodwill - demonstrated over the past months by all parties involved - to finally address the nor-

Security Council deliberated situation concerning Iraq *(continued)*

malisation of the situation in Kirkuk. As for Sinjar, I again travelled to the region earlier this month. And I continued, unfortunately, to witness great devastation and slow progress on the ground. Rival security actors and the lack of a unified administration remain the main obstacles for progress. And this situation also greatly restricts humanitarian action. I therefore continue to appeal to all those feeling challenged, the federal and Kurdish authorities in particular. Indeed, it is high time to put aside partisan interests to bridge differences and to place - without further delay - the needs of the people first.

Madam President, turning to the economy

The government is increasingly recognizing the urgency of reform, notably in broadening the revenue base beyond hydrocarbons, and increasing the role of the private sector in areas ranging from infrastructure development to job creation.

Discussions at the senior-most levels focus on enhancing governance, better managing oil revenue, protecting the investment environment from corruption and reforming the banking sector to pave the way for more foreign direct investment and public-private partnerships. That is good as all this is becoming more urgent, especially as a higher budget deficit looms with rising expenditures and oil price volatility. Within this context, we encourage the Iraqi government to accelerate its structural reform, fostering macro-economic and financial stability as well as promoting sustainable, inclusive growth.

Now, in terms of regional politics, Madam President, we continue to operate in



a perilous context, yet, the Iraqi leadership must again be commended for its unwavering commitment to multilateral diplomacy. With great dedication, Iraqi leaders are tirelessly engaging regional and international actors to ensure that their country is a meeting ground for stability and not a venue for proxy conflicts. And how right they are. With this in mind, we should be lucid and recognize that current tensions could well deal a huge blow to all national and international endeavours to rebuild a stable and prosperous Iraq. So, we must spare no effort in avoiding this prospect.

I am also very encouraged by the government's determination to bring all armed actors under state control. Recent orders have been met with broad support across the political spectrum - good news - but we are in the early days of implementation, and the next phase will prove crucial. Clearly, zero tolerance for any armed actor outside

state control is the way forward.

And yes, it's very true that further work on Security Sector Reform will be necessary: an effective, efficient and financially sustainable security sector is critical to protect Iraq against existing and emerging threats. With the Ministers of Interior, Defence and Justice in place, I sincerely hope that the government will now speed up the re-configuration of its national security architecture - in terms of structure, capabilities and resources.

Also important is the rapid enactment of the Joint Security Mechanism. It will pave the way for joint operations along disputed boundaries. Inadequate coordination will continue to give ISIL a margin of manoeuvre. In other words: enhanced operational performance on the ground between federal and Kurdish regional forces is not a nice to have but a necessity.

Madam President,

Within the context of domestic security, I would like to commend the bravery of Iraqi security forces. In the aftermath of ISIL's territorial defeat, they continue to hunt down remaining ISIL fighters - for example within the framework of Operation Will of Victory, carried out throughout the country in the past weeks.

The issue of returning ISIL fighters, including their family members, from Syria to Iraq continues to pose major challenges. Unfortunately, as of this time, we still have no clarity on numbers, start date, screening/security arrangements and/or hosting facilities upon return. As I have stressed before, if not suitably addressed, this issue has the potential to impact not only Iraq but also the wider region - and far be-



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yond.

Now, also important to note, is the fact that issues of due process and accountability cannot be limited to the courtroom only. And a structured dialogue is required to precisely define how the government of Iraq will handle this process, which will in turn inform the modalities of UN assistance.

I would also like to emphasize the paramount importance of robust safeguards for detention, due process and fair trials. Complying with human rights obligations does not only demonstrate commitment to justice and accountability, it is also in my view a necessary building block for reconciliation and social cohesion. What is more, it would reduce the risk of history repeating itself. We are well aware that a variety of grievances – including unfair trials and detainee abuse - have been exploited by ISIL to fuel its violent agenda. And whether we like it or not: at this moment in time, too many communities continue to feel marginalized. As a consequence, many people remain vulnerable to extremist messaging.

For me, this is one of the most important reasons...to establish a perma-

nent presence in Mosul, and I am pleased to report that our Mosul office will open its doors in early September.

Madam President,

Unfortunately, as discussed before, rampant corruption is not being wiped out at once. And as I said last time: achieving tangible results is crucial. A recent call to lift the immunity of Members of Parliament accused of corruption, could be a move in the right direction. But again the final result is what ultimately matters.

On the elections, the Iraqi Council of Representatives recently amended the Governorate Elections Law. And I have to say that certain provisions are of great concern, possibly leading to the disenfranchisement of many - otherwise - eligible voters. Also, the transparency and accountability of electoral institutions and processes are not sufficiently guaranteed at present.

Now, while these elections - expected in April 2020 - are critical and overdue, I have made it clear that free, fair and credible elections are key to the revival of public trust. In other words: UNAMI will continue to highlight the im-

portance of guaranteeing the right of universal suffrage and the need for transparency and accountability of electoral institutions and processes. All key to inclusiveness and credibility of these elections.

Now, Madam President,

With your permission, I would now like to turn to the issue of missing Kuwaiti, third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives.

I am pleased to report a (significant) breakthrough. Some samples of human remains, exhumed last March from a burial site in Iraq's Muthanna governorate, have now been confirmed as belonging to some of those Kuwaitis we have been seeking. DNA analysis is continuing on further human remains. I can also confirm that, earlier today, over 40.000 Kuwaiti books belonging to the Amiri and National Archives were handed over by the Government of Iraq to the Kuwait authorities.

Now, as always, I would like to commend, within this context, the ongoing constructive cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait under the aegis of the International Committee of the Red Cross, with the invaluable assistance of the Tripartite Commission.

I truly hope that the recent discoveries will finally bring some relief to the families of the missing, to whom we extend our deepest sympathies.

Now, Madam President, in closing, a few more words,

I would like to underline that Iraq's daunting challenges did not arise overnight, nor are they solely the product of Iraqi actions. As such, they will not be resolved tomorrow. In other words: Iraqis must press ahead in unity and with an engaged international community at their side.

Thank you very much.



UN Representative Hennis-Plasschaert urges continued funding for Iraq's post-conflict recovery, welcomes government efforts to spare Iraq regional tensions, calls on political actors to work together to face the country's challenges

New York / Baghdad, 29 August 2019 – Briefing the UN Security Council on the situation in Iraq, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, urged the international community to continue its critical support for Iraq's post-conflict recovery. She welcomed the government's multilateral diplomacy efforts in the context of regional tensions, and called

on Iraq's political actors to work together to tackle priorities, including placing all arms under state control, strengthening institution-building and enacting reforms.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert recalled "the historic importance" of the Security Council's visit to Baghdad on 29 June 2019, saying the Council members delivered "important, well-received assurances of your continued support for

Iraq and its people".

The Special Representative said that the underfunding of the post-conflict stabilization and humanitarian response, with gaps of approximately 300 and 500 million dollars respectively, is hindering the country's recovery. She welcomed the Government of Iraq's signing of a cost-sharing agreement on 28 August 2019 to begin making its own contributions to the UNDP Fund-

UN Representative Hennis-Plasschaert urges continued funding for Iraq's post-conflict recovery ... (continued)

ing Facility for Stabilization, expressed sincere hope for the continued and generous support of the international community, and encouraged the development partners to continue their funding to the Recovery and Resilience Programme (RRP), particularly through the UN Trust Fund.

Although 4.3 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have returned home, the pace has slowed, and outstanding needs are most acute in the health, electricity and water sectors, she said. "Around 1.6 million Internally Displaced Persons are still desperately waiting to return to their homes in safety and dignity".

Iraq bears the scars of a heavy past while present challenges continue to slow progress, Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert said.

"The harsh reality is that the government needs time to fight the many narrow partisan interests that are out there, it needs time to deliver. Just as essentially, political parties and other actors need to arrive at a common understanding that the country's interests should be prioritized above all else. Ultimately, it must be clear that a government cannot go it alone – it is a joint responsibility".

She noted that some of the recent amendments to the Governorate Elections Law "are of great concern". The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), she added, will continue to highlight the importance of universal suffrage and the need for transparency and accountability of electoral institutions and processes. All key to the inclusiveness and credibility of these elec-



tions".

The Special Representative said the completion of government formations in Baghdad and Erbil and improved Baghdad-Erbil relations pave the way for deep discussions on the pending issues, citing encouraging signs as a result of the goodwill demonstrated by all the parties to address and normalise the situation in Kirkuk. She offered UN-AMI's good offices to advance discussions towards consensus followed by action. On Sinjar, she again urged the federal and Kurdistan Region authorities to promptly work towards bridging their differences for the sake of the residents of the area.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert welcomed government efforts to bring all armed groups under state control, stressing that security sector reform is a necessi-

ty. "Zero tolerance for any armed actor outside state control is the way forward".

The Special Representative commended Iraq's leadership "for its unwavering commitment to multilateral diplomacy" in their quest to make Iraq "a meeting ground for stability and not a venue for proxy conflict" in a perilous regional context. "With this in mind, we should be lucid and recognize that current tensions could well deal a huge blow to all national and international endeavours to rebuild a stable and prosperous Iraq. We must spare no effort in avoiding this prospect."

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert welcomed as a significant breakthrough the recent identification of the remains of a number of Kuwaitis missing since the 1990-1991 Gulf conflict. "I truly hope that the recent discoveries will finally bring some relief to the families of the missing, to whom we extend our deepest sympathies".

She also reported that on 28 August 2019, over 40,000 Kuwaiti books belonging to the Amiri and National Archives were handed over by the Government of Iraq to the Kuwaiti authorities. The Special Representative commended the bravery of the security forces who remain locked in a fight with the remnants of ISIL. She noted that the issue of returning former ISIL fighters continues to pose challenges for Iraq. A structured dialogue is required to precisely define how the Government of Iraq will handle this process, which will in turn inform the modalities of UN assistance, she said, stressing the paramount importance of robust safeguards for detention, due process and fair trial.



IOM: The women spearheading Peacebuilding and co-existence efforts in Diyala, Iraq

Baghdad, 30 June 2019 - A 5x13-metre hall with old wooden benches feels rather archaic and too small to be a place of worship, but it is just enough for the Christian community in Baqubah city, Diyala Governorate. Only 12 Christian families remain after years of violence, insurgency, and the ISIL threat in the city.

Um Al Mashurah Al Saliha Church was reopened in January 2019, after a group of Muslim youth volunteers, led by Asia, a young woman who lives in Baqubah, cleaned off the dust and dirt that had accumulated on its altar and benches for 15 years, breathing new life into the church and the community, and new hope for peace and the celebration of diversity in Baqubah.

Asia, now 26, is originally from Baghdad, but has lived in Diyala since 2007 after violence displaced her family from their hometown. She clearly recalls military parades for the black-dressed fighters of the then-called Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) in Baqubah, as well as executions.

"I saw horror with my own eyes. Rockets were fired by armed groups from the palm groves into residential areas. Our house burned, people died, and we could not go out in the evening at all," she explained.

Even as a 13-year-old school girl, Asia knew back then, that one day these armed groups would go, "because no one wanted them. They just terrified people."

A decade later, Asia is spearheading peacebuilding efforts in Baqubah, as Iraq recovers from the ISIL crisis. Together with a group of youth, she seeks to rebuild trust and social cohesion in her community - with the active participation of women and girls.

"I feel that if we do not achieve peace, the blood of all these heroes [who fought against ISIL] would have been shed for nothing," said Asia. She added "I believe that we, the youth, have an important role to play here. Opening that church is just part of these efforts, as we can only achieve peace when all groups feel their rights are protected. Christians are Iraqi citizens and need to have their rights protected, including the right to have their own place of worship."

Diyala was one of the most violent governorates in Iraq in the years leading up to the ISIL takeover of large swathes of Iraqi territory in 2014.

At the height of sectarian violence in Iraq between 2006 and 2007, Al Qaeda



The community centre hosts various discussions, trainings, and workshops about community activities that contribute to peace-building. Rafal Abdulazeez/IOM Iraq, June 2019

in Iraq tightened its grip on Baqubah, announcing the city had become the capital of their Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). The church was closed and many Christian families fled the town to other parts of Iraq or abroad. Only a dozen families remained, although covertly. ISIL never took control of Baqubah, but the group reached the edge of the city, just as they did in Baghdad before being stopped by the Iraqi forces in 2014. Many people fleeing other parts of Iraq displaced and settled in Diyala Governorate.

Asia's story with volunteerism and peacebuilding efforts begins with a small handicrafts business she started after finishing her studies in 2015. She sold items online via social media, which made her known to IOM.

The Organization hired her as a handicrafts trainer to train displaced and host community members in its Community Centre in Baqubah as part of social cohesion and peacebuilding activities in Diyala Governorate, funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Asia also took part in IOM's training on peacebuilding and volunteerism. She started an all-female volunteer group of ten, called Nisaa Halimat (Dreaming Women) in 2018 to work on relief activities for displaced persons and orphaned children, later focusing as well on women's rights and affairs, awareness campaigns and peacebuilding activities in Diyala.

"The group is all female. This is not to exclude men from our community activities, but to send a message that we can do it too. We can work, we are not weak, we don't need to be a man to

work and achieve something. We want to leave our own imprints on society."

During one discussion in the IOM Community Centre in Baqubah, Asia wondered why there were no Christian families in Baqubah.

"There are Christians in so many corners of Iraq, and I wondered why Baqubah had none. I was told that there were a few, but that they were marginalized and afraid because of the violence they had been exposed to in Baqubah. No one seemed to know much about them, but there was a church here."

Asia went to see the church but found it had been closed since 2006. She came back to the community centre with an idea that would contribute to rebuilding trust and relations between the Christian community and the rest of the city: to rehabilitate and reopen the church.

"I knew that would make the Christian families very happy. The Christian community council in Baqubah loved the idea, particularly because Muslim youth were reaching out and helping to reopen a church in Diyala, a governorate that had gone through a lot of sectarian violence. On top of it, all the volunteers were girls!"

Asia recruited her task force from the female volunteers who attended the community centre as well as others working with different non-governmental organizations and armed them with brooms and dusters and buckets of water. She also obtained the approval of the local government and security forces to open the doors of the church.

"Those who participated in the cam-

The women spearheading peacebuilding ... (continued)

paign were from everywhere in Diyala, across the ethno-religious groups of the governorate. I don't want to mention any groups by name because at the end of the day we are all Iraqis and all human beings."

The group started the cleanup in the church on 1 December 2018 at 6 am. The women worked in the dust, sweating, without taking a break. By 11 pm, the cleaning was finished, and the doors of the church opened. In the following weeks, the group also painted the facade of the church, fixed the electricity and water systems, put up new signs and furnished the service hall.

As a result of all this hard work, the Christian community held its first mass since 2006, on 1 January 2019.

"When the Christian families heard that the church had reopened, everyone was overjoyed; now we can pray and hold services in our own church, in the heart of our own community, among family and friends," said Rafid Jameel, a member of the Christian community who is also the church guard.

"It was hard for us to live here and see our church collecting dust and dirt. For 15 years it was closed, and no prayers or services were held here. We had to go to Baghdad for church services," he

added.

Asia and her group worked on reopening the church not for money or other gains, but for peace.

"I believe that God created humans and religions came later. When the first mass was held again in the church, I saw the jubilation on the faces of the Christian families. And for me, as a Muslim sitting here, sharing the moment and the religious rituals of which these families were deprived."

Written by Raber Aziz, with contribution from Rafal Abdullateef/IOM Iraq, June 2019

"Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability" workshop held in Anbar

Ramadi, Iraq, 07 July 2019 – At a three-day workshop from 4 to 6 July 2019, in the western city of Ramadi in Anbar Governorate, twenty-seven young Iraqi women and men from across the Governorate discussed how youth can play a role in addressing the challenges facing their communities. This was the fourth in a series of workshops under the theme "Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability", which are taking place in locations across in Iraq throughout 2019 organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister's Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association.

On the third and final day of the workshop, key local political figures including Anbar Governor Ali Farhan Al Dulaimi, Anbari MPs and members of Anbar Provincial Council, as well as



the Mayor of Ramadi, joined the young people to discuss their conclusions and proposals, which included a call for active participation by young people in local decision-making, strengthening of

the private sector to provide youth job opportunities and a greater focus on the environment. The session provided the politicians with a valuable opportunity to learn first-hand about the young peoples' concerns and to respond to them.

UNAMI's Deputy Special Representative for Iraq, Alice Walpole, who chaired the session, reminded participants that "Unfortunately, Iraq's youth are currently often neglected in political negotiations; denied a voice or a seat at the table. Yet, as witnessed elsewhere in the world, the catalytic energy that young people can bring to resolve political or social deadlock should not be underestimated. Young people are a wonderful source of innovation, ideas and solutions, and their efforts for change are key to the establishment of just, inclusive societies".

The activity is in line with UNAMI's mandate to support youth and their valuable contributions to Iraqi public life. Similar workshops were recently organised in Basra, Karbala and Babil.



“Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshop held in Najaf

Najaf, 15 July 2019 - Under the theme “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability”, a three-day workshop took place in Najaf Governorate from 11th to 13th July 2019. This was the fifth in a series of workshops taking place across Iraq throughout 2019 organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister’s Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association.

During the workshop, a group of twenty-two young women and men discussed a number of challenges identified as important by youth in Najaf Governorate. These included youth unemployment, the integrity of recruitment processes and how to foster job creation within the private sector; political participation and limited access to decision-makers by youth; greater local authority support for youth voluntary work; provision of services, particularly water and waste management; as well as youth freedoms and rights within the Governorate.

On the second day, a session was held with the Governor of Najaf, Mr. Louay al-Yasiri, who engaged in an open dia-



logue with the participants on these issues.

On the third and final day, an interactive session was held with a number of local politicians in the presence of the United Nations Deputy Special Representative for Iraq, Ms. Alice Walpole, who encouraged participants to speak their mind and contribute their ideas on how to overcome the challenges facing the country. “We will listen to them. Empowering young people, supporting

them, and ensuring they can fulfil their potential is important in every society. But beyond this, if we are to create a more peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Iraq, we need young Iraqis to lead,” she said.

The activity is in line with UNAMI’s mandate to support youth and their valuable contributions to Iraqi public life. Similar workshops were recently organised in Anbar, Babil, Basra and Karbala.



UN Women supported workshop on detecting early signs of conflict

Baghdad, 15 July 2019 – A 2-day workshop on detecting early signs of conflict was held July 12-13 by Women’s Voices for Peace and Conflict Prevention project, run by Iraq Minorities Council and Awan Organization in Ninawa with support of UN Women and Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund.



“Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshop held in Wasit

Kut, Iraq, 28 July 2019 – At a three-day workshop from 25th to 27th July 2019, in the city of Kut in Wasit Governorate, a group of 27 young Iraqi women and men from across the Governorate discussed how youth can play a role in addressing the challenges facing their communities. This was the sixth in a series of workshops under the theme “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability”, which are taking place across Iraq throughout 2019, organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister’s Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association.



During the workshop, the group discussed a number of challenges identified as important by youth in Wasit. These included social cohesion and peaceful coexistence; youth unemployment and job opportunities; women’s empowerment and protection of vulnerable women; improvement of health services in the Governorate; and strengthening the social responsibility and accountability of oil companies operating in Wasit.

On the third and final day, an interactive session was held with the representative of the Governor of Wasit and a number of local politicians, in which the issues identified by the youth were

discussed.

Mr. Khalid ElSawi, from the Office of Political Affairs, speaking on behalf of UNAMI, emphasized the key role of youth in building a peaceful and sustainable future Iraq, which will meet the aspirations of all its people. This cannot be done without the political, social and economic participation of young people.

The activity is in line with UNAMI’s mandate to support youth and their valuable contributions to Iraqi public life.

Similar workshops were recently organised in Basra, Karbala, Babil, Anbar and Najaf.



Sulaymaniya’s youth voice their opinions, aspirations and concerns at “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshop

Sulaymaniya, 25 August 2019 – The latest in a series of United Nations-sponsored workshops bringing together young Iraqis took place in Sulaymaniya in the Kurdistan Region this week, providing local youth activists with a platform to voice their aspirations for the future and discuss how they can contribute to tackling the challenges facing their communities.

The workshop in Sulaymaniya, under the theme “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability”, is the seventh such event taking place across Iraq throughout in 2019. The activities are organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister’s Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association. In Sulaymaniyah, the group of 13 young women and 9 young men deliberated over the key challenges facing their generation, including youth unemployment, the environment, access to local decision-making and the proliferation of weapons and drugs on the street.

The workshop concluded with an inter-



active session with senior local officials, including Sulaymaniya Governor Haval Abubakir, the Chairman and members of the Sulaymaniya Provincial Council and Members of the Kurdistan Regional Government, all of whom engaged in vigorous debate with the workshop participants.

The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Alice Walpole, who chaired this interactive session, welcomed the

participation of the youth and encouraged them to tell their stories, voice their concerns and work together with the local officials and the community to find creative solutions.

“Empowering young people, supporting them, and ensuring they can fulfil their potential is important in every society. But, beyond this, if we are to create a more peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Iraq, we need young Iraqis to lead,” she said.

The leadership of the United Nations, UNAMI, UNITAD and UN Country Team in Iraq had intensive political consultations.



Baghdad, 1 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with Mr. Mohammed Al-Karbouli, parliamentary member of the Security and Defence Committee and deputy head of the Iraqi Forces Alliance. They discussed current political and security developments in Iraq.

Photo courtesy of the media office of Mr. Al-Karbouli.



Baghdad, 01 July 2019 – The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with Mr. Saad Assem al-Janabi, the Head of the Iraqi Republican Rally Party. They discussed the current political and security situation in Iraq.

Screen capture courtesy of Al Rasheed Media.



Baghdad, 01 July 2019 – The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with the Head of the Al-Hikma National Movement, Sayyid Ammar al-Hakim. They discussed the current political situation in Iraq.



Kirkuk, 1 July 2019 - Acting Governor of Kirkuk, Mr. Rakan Saeed al-Jubouri, today received Mr. Mohammed al-Najjar, Senior Political Affairs Officer of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). Discussions focused on the plans for the provincial elections, supporting the principle of dialogue and coordination and communication between representatives of Kirkuk components, as well as support for the plans for restoring stability to the liberated areas. Mr. Al-Najjar stressed that UNAMI stands at equal distance from all components.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Acting Governor of Kirkuk.



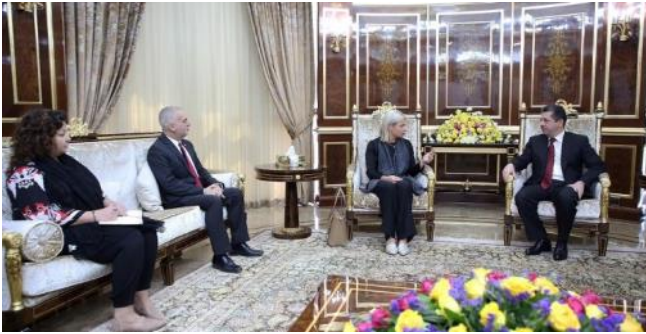
Erbil, 02 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today by the President of the Kurdistan Region, H.E. Mr. Nechirvan Barzani. They discussed the political and security situation in Iraq and in the Region including the formation of the new Kurdistan Regional Government cabinet, and Erbil-Baghdad relations.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the President.



Erbil, 02 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Kurdistan Regional Government Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Qubad Talabani. They discussed the political situation in Iraq and in the Region including the formation of new Kurdistan Regional Government cabinet, and Erbil-Baghdad relations.

Photo courtesy of KRG.



Erbil, 02 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Kurdistan Region Prime-Minister-designate, Mr. Masrur Barzani. They discussed the political situation in Iraq and in the Region including the formation of the new Kurdistan Regional Government cabinet, and Erbil-Baghdad relations.



Baghdad, 8 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with Head of the State of Law Coalition, Mr. Nouri Al-Maliki. They discussed the current political and security situation in the country and the region in general.



Baghdad, 8 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Iraq, H.E. Mr. Iraj Masjedi. They discussed the current political and security situation in the country and the region in general.



Baghdad, 8 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with Mr. Saeb Khidr, Yezidi Member of Parliament. They discussed the current situation of the Yezidi community in the country.



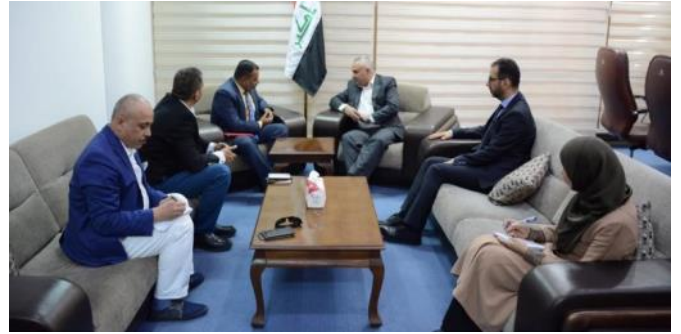
Baghdad, 9 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the National Security Adviser, Mr. Faleh Payyad. They discussed the current political and security situation in the country and the region.



Baghdad, 9 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the leader of the Fateh Coalition, Mr. Hadi Al Ameri. They discussed the current political situation in the country.



Baghdad, 9 July 2019 - An UNFPA delegation, headed by the Representative Mr. Oluremi Sogunro met with the Minister of Planning, Mr. Nouri Al Dulaimi, to discuss the upcoming celebration of the 25 Years of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD25) and the population census for Iraq.



Baghdad, 10 July 2019 – The Director of the UNAMI Office of Political Affairs, Mr. Manoj Mathew, met today with the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee (FRC) of the Iraq Council of Representatives, MP Sherko Meerwayes. They discussed the priorities of the FRC and how UNAMI can support the Committee.
Photos: Courtesy of the CoR



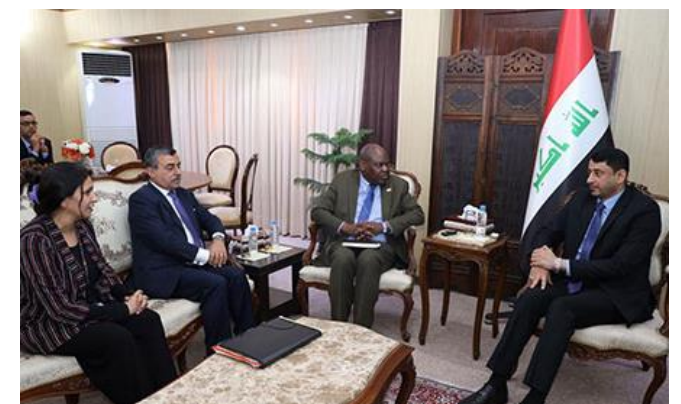
Baghdad, 11 July 2019 - The Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Hameed Al-Ghezi, met with Mr. Gerard Waite, IOM Iraq Chief of Mission in Baghdad. They discussed ways to enhance the bilateral cooperation in assisting the return of IDPs to their areas of origin and supporting them in recovery.



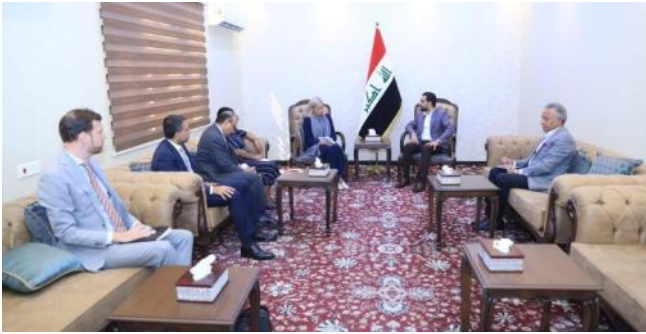
Baghdad, 15 July 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met with the Iraqi Deputy Prime-Minister for Economic Affairs and Minister of Finance, Mr. Fuad Hussein. They discussed the current political and humanitarian situation in the country as well as the stabilization and reconstruction efforts in the liberated areas
Photos courtesy of the Ministry of Finance.



Baghdad, 16 July 2019 – The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met today with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director, Dr. Ahmed Al-Mandhari. They discussed among other things, ongoing humanitarian and development work of the United Nations in Iraq and continued collaboration between the WHO Regional Office and the UN family in the country. Dr Adham Ismail, WHO Country Representative for Iraq, also attended the meeting.



Baghdad, 21 July 2019 – The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Iraq Representative, Dr. Oluremi Sogunro, met in Baghdad with the Secretary -General of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Hameed al-Ghazi, and the census Consultant, Dr Mehdi Al-Allak. During the meeting, the conveners discussed the 2020 census where Dr Sogunro reiterated UNFPA's support to the Government of Iraq and the Ministry of Planning in this regard. They also evoked the visit of UNFPA Regional Director for the Arab States, Dr Luay Shabaneh, to Iraq during which he will meet with government officials to discuss UNFPA country plan document for Iraq and the upcoming 2020 census.



Baghdad, 25 July 2019- The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, discussed today with Parliament Speaker, Mohammed al-Halbousi, the electoral law and the importance of free, fair and credible elections.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Speaker.



Baghdad, 28 July 2019 – The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Minister of Finance of Iraq, Mr. Fuad Hussein. They discussed the Governmental budget as well as the current economic situation in the country. Minister Hussein also toured the UNAMI compound and witnessed the ongoing construction works.



Moscow, Russian Federation, 29 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today in Moscow by the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov, and his Deputy, Mr. Sergey Vershinin. Discussions focused on the progress made in Iraq, the return of ISIL fighters and their families and regional security developments. Photos courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.



Baghdad, 31 July 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the newly appointed Ambassador of Germany to Iraq, Mr. Ole Diehl. They discussed the current political, economic and humanitarian situation in Iraq and the region and how Germany can support United Nations efforts in the country for the benefit of the Iraqi people.



Erbil, 04 August 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today by the President of the Kurdistan Region, H.E. Mr. Nechirvan Barzani. During the talks, SRSRG Hennis-Plasschaert spoke about her visit to Sinjar and stressed that the establishment of a unified administration and stable security structures was crucial for the stricken community to return home and rebuild its life. The discussion also touched upon the general political and security situation in the Kurdistan Region and in Iraq. Photo courtesy of the Office of the President.



Baghdad, 05 August 2019 – The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Alice Walpole, met today with Mayor of Tuz Khurmato Dr. Hassan Zine El Abidine. They discussed latest developments in the district, including current security, reconstruction and development challenges. Ms. Walpole was particularly pleased to hear of the removal of walls that had been used to divide neighborhoods in the town. Mayor Dr Hassan expressed his appreciation for UNAMI support for local efforts to build inter-community social cohesion in Tuz Khurmato by presenting a plaque to the DSRSG.



Baghdad, 06 August 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, accompanied by the Deputy SRSG for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Ms. Alice Walpole, met today with the Minister of Defense, Mr. Najah Al-Shammary. They discussed current political and security developments in the country and the region.



Baghdad, 07 August 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Ambassador of Canada to Iraq, Mr. Paul Gibbard. They discussed current political, humanitarian and security developments in the country and the region and how Canada can support United Nations efforts in Iraq for the benefit of its people.



Hawija, 19 August 2019 – The head of UNAMI Kirkuk Office, Ms. Laura Romanazzi, discussed political and security developments in the district of Hawija with the Mayor of Hawija, Mr. Sabhan Khalaf Ali al-Jubouri, the District Council chairperson, representatives of the District Council and of the local security forces. The Mayor expressed support for UNAMI's work, highlighted the need for continued humanitarian assistance for the displaced and underlined the importance of providing support for the returnees.



Erbil, 20 August 2019 – Mr. Ricardo Rodriguez, Head of UNAMI Regional Office (Erbil), met with the newly appointed Minister Safeen Dizayee, Head of the Department of Foreign Relations in the Kurdistan Region Government. UNAMI's work in the Kurdistan Region and Iraq were discussed.



Baghdad, 22 August 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (DSRSG) and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met with Hameed N. Al-Ghizzi, the Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers. During their meeting, the DSRSG and Secretary-General discussed the best mechanism for reporting on ongoing activities to ensure transparency in delivering aid, especially for the 1.8 million people still displaced by the war against Daesh (ISIL).
File photo courtesy of CoM.



Erbil, 27 August 2019 – The Director of the UNAMI Office of Political Affairs, Mr. Manoj Mathew, met with the newly appointed Minister Safeen Dizayee, Head of the Department of Foreign Relations in the Kurdistan Region Government. Latest political developments and UNAMI's work in the Kurdistan Region and Iraq were discussed.

Photo courtesy of DFR.

UN Special Representative in Iraq condemns killing of a Turkish diplomat and Iraqi civilian in armed attack in Erbil

Baghdad, 17 July 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert strongly condemns the killing of a Turkish diplomat in an armed attack in Erbil in the Kurdistan

Region, in which an Iraqi civilian was also killed and another injured.

“This heinous attack cannot be justified under any circumstance and must be soundly condemned. I express my sincere condolences to the families of the

victims and wish the injured a speedy recovery. I urge maximum restraint and intensified efforts by the authorities to conduct a thorough investigation, apprehend the culprits and bring them to justice”.

Gender

Delegation of the Australian Embassy and UNFPA visited the Women and Girls Treatment Center in Duhok and the Australia-supported Women centres in Khanki and Mamrashan IDP camps

Duhok, 9 July 2019 - The First secretary at the Australian Embassy in Iraq and UNFPA visited the Women and Girls Treatment Center in Duhok and the Australia-supported Women centres in Khanki and Mamrashan camps for IDPs. They met with women and girls attending the recreational and psychosocial activities and the adolescent programme.



Ministry of Health of Iraq delegation visited the Women and Girls Treatment Centre in Duhok

Duhok, 10 July 2019 - A Delegation from the Ministry of Health of Iraq visited the Women and Girls Treatment Centre in Duhok to hear about the best practices and lessons learnt from the rollout of the Clinical Management of Rape in Kurdistan Region in order to replicate it in Baghdad and Kirkuk. The project is supported by the Canadian and Swedish Embassies in Iraq and facilitated by UNFPA.



The United Nations Inter-Agency Gender Task Force in Iraq held its strategic planning meeting

Baghdad, 10 July 2019 - The United Nations Inter-Agency Gender Task Force in Iraq today held its Strategic Planning Meeting in Baghdad, Iraq. Organized and led by the UN Women Iraq office, participants from the UN country team and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) discussed how best to develop a common UN Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy.



Iraqi lawmakers sat face-to-face with survivors of sexual enslavement by ISIL who described ways to acknowledge and redress their suffering

Erbil, 11 July 2019 - In 2014, thousands of women and girls were captured and sexually enslaved by ISIL. Most of them were Yazidi. Many of those who survived these atrocities have so far received little institutional support.

IOM - UN Migration Agency, with the support of UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Australian Department of Home Affairs, is supporting the Iraqi and Kurdish Regional Governments, civil society organizations, and survivors to engage in the process of developing a framework and

mechanisms for the provision of reparations to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

At an IOM workshop on 11 July 2019

in Erbil, Iraqi lawmakers sat face-to-face with survivors who described ways to acknowledge and redress their suffering.



UN Women in Iraq organized a workshop for the Committee entrusted with drafting the 2nd Iraq National Action Plan

Sulaimaniyah, 21 July 2019 – UN Women in Iraq organized a workshop for the Committee entrusted with drafting the 2nd Iraq National Action Plan (INAP) on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in Al-Sulaimaniyah in the period 18-24 July 2019.



First shelter for women survivors of Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Basra to be open

Basra, 21 July 2019 - UNFPA and the office of the Basra Governor with the civil society held a meeting to discuss the opening of the first shelter for women survivors of Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Basra.

The shelter, funded by Canadian and Swedish Embassies in Iraq, will provide a place of temporary protection and support for women victims of GBV.



First issue of Women Parliamentarians quarterly newsletter was issued

Baghdad, 22 July 2019 - First issue of Women Parliamentarians quarterly newsletter was issued by Caucus of Iraqi Women Parliamentarians with UN Women support.



Issue 1
April-June 2019

Women
Parliamentarians

A quarterly newsletter issued by the Caucus of Iraqi Women Parliamentarians supported by UN Women Iraq

Caucus of Iraqi women parliamentarians: a qualitative step to support women's causes

Deputy Ala Talabani
Head of the caucus
With God's blessing, we offer you the first issue of the newsletter of the Caucus of Iraqi Women Parliamentarians. This caucus came to life on 15 October 2018. Among its goals, it aims to enhance the participation of Iraqi women parliamentarians in the political decision-making process, particularly in relation to women's and children's issues. In addition, its objectives include contributing to legislating and amending laws that guarantee women's



parliamentarians, mainly House Speaker Mohammed Al-Halbousi and his deputies Hassan Al-Kutbi and Dr. Basim Habbal, who offered us all possible backing to ensure the success of our mission. They have repeatedly expressed their support and encouragement, something that motivates us to forge ahead in our pursuit to ensure the success of our caucus. On this occasion, we offer our appreciation and gratitude to UN Women Iraq Representative Ms. Dina Zorba for all her support since the early stages that we embarked



Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers stresses need to determine official channels dealing with women's file in Iraq

Baghdad, 22 July 2019 – The Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, Hameed Al-Ghazzi, stressed the need to determine the official channels that are dealing with United Nations agencies in Iraq, including those concerned with managing women's issues. During a meeting with UN Women Representative in Iraq, Dina Zorba, the Secretary General expressed keenness to tackle conflicting roles in the women's file and to name the official agencies concerned with it. He also called for defining the duties of each official agency and demarcating their roles, with the aim of pushing forward the process of empowering women in political, economic, social and other fields. For her part, Ms. Zorba reviewed Unit-

ed Nations efforts supporting Iraq's decisions and plans to empower women in various fields, including in the political arena, in addition to the country's ratification of international conventions

on peace and security. Ms. Zorba underlined the importance of supporting government efforts aiming to enhance the culture of empowering women.



Training workshop on gender-based violence in Baserma camp

Erbil, 25 July 2019 - The Women's empowerment organization held an environmental training workshop on social-based violence and situation management from 24-25 July 2019 for teachers and staff of organizations working in the camp. The workshop was part of the project "Strengthening the resilience of Iraqi

women and girls and host communities in Iraq which was planned with the support of the United Nations Women's authority and the European Trust Fund (extended).



Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs staff participate in training workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting

Baghdad, 28 July 2019 – UN Women programme team on Sunday attended the first day of a three-day training workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting organized by the Baghdad Women Association for Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs personnel, carried out with the support of UN Women and the European Trust Fund "Madad". Eleven women and five men (16 participants) participated in the training activity, which covered various topics that included the concept of gender, gender

equality and justice, gender needs, strategic distribution of resources and gender-based violence.

Hiam Rashid Khudair, director of Human Rights Department in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) in Baghdad, emphasized the importance of the training activity, saying that "gender and gender responsive budgeting are relatively new concepts in the MoLSA."

Ms. Khudair underlined the need to give equal opportunities for women as

men and to empower them to get senior positions in their work.

"For this reason, staff members need to be trained on gender in every ministry... These notions are important to open the society and get more opportunity for women," she said.

Sattar Jaber Abd, assistant of Chief Engineering At MoLSA's Women Care Department, called for involving both men and women in such training activity.

"When you deliver assistance, it is important to know about the different needs between women and men and the various obstacles that they might face, which might be linked to cultural norms," he said.

Suher Muhammed Sajjan, a lawyer at the department of Care for People with Disabilities at MoLSA emphasized that gender equality is an important topic for the empowerment of women, especially widows and divorced women.

She highlighted the importance of such a training activity for staff in her department in order to offer female beneficiaries better services and to enhance their role in the society.



A workshop to follow up on an initiative on gender equality and women's rights initiated by male activists

Baghdad, 29 July 2019 - The Women Leadership Institute organized on 29 July 2019 at Falluja University in Anbar Province a workshop to follow up on an initiative on gender equality and women's rights initiated by male activists.

A total of 32 men and 11 women representing various sectors, including university students, took part in the workshop which aimed to give momentum to the initiative.

WLI Director Iman Abdul Rahman said the initiative, proposed by male activists taking part in activities organized by the institute, aims to support efforts exerted to boost women's role in society and work to remove obstacles facing women's active participation in all fields, be they social, economic or politi-

cal, on equal footing with men.

The participants debated various types of obstacles facing women and means of removing them.

The activity comes as part of the project

"Strengthening the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Iraq," which is supported by UN Women and the European Trust Fund "Madad".



National Committee Selects 12 Iraqi NGOs for WPHF funding

Baghdad, 3 August 2019 - The Iraqi Steering Committee for the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) approved funding for 12 national non-governmental organisations to implement projects supporting women's meaningful participation in peace building and conflict prevention all over Iraq.

The Iraq National Steering Committee is co-chaired by Dr. Thikra Alwash, the mayor of Baghdad – on behalf of Mr. Hameed Al-Ghazi, Secretary General of the Council of Ministers – and Ms. Marta Ruedas, Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), and includes as members representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs MOLSA, the Ministry of Planning MOP, the Department for Women Empowerment, and the representatives of the Embassies of Canada and the UK in Iraq, Austrian Embassy in Jordan in addition to UN Women. The WPHF in Iraq is managed by UN Women Iraq Country Office represented by Ms. Dina Zorba.

Each of the 12 organizations will receive funds in the range of 100,000-300,000 US dollars for two-year projects to be implemented all over the country. The total of 2,650,000 million US dollars come from the generous contributions of the governments of Austria, Canada and the United Kingdom.

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian

Fund (WPHF) is a global partnership that aims to accelerate action and stimulate funding for women's participation, leadership and empowerment in situations of conflict and humanitarian crises around the world. The fund is geared towards women's participation and leadership in conflict and post-conflict environments through the provision of financing.



Men, boys engage in activities to raise awareness of equality and fight GBV

Erbil, 3 August 2019 – Baghdad Women Association's Listening and Consulting Center in Seiji, Dohuk, began a series of activities aiming to engage men and boys in community awareness programmes.

The activities are carried out as part of the project "Strengthening the Resili-

ence of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Iraq", with the support of UN Women and the European Trust Fund "Madad".

The activities started by convening a meeting on 27 July 2019 to tackle gender issues and gender-based violence, with the participation of 22 men and

boys. This meeting was followed by an entertainment activity on 1st August that included songs and dance shows performed by young women and men in an expression of equality between the two sexes, according to a statement by BWA.

In addition, the activity included an art

Men, boys engage in activities to raise awareness... (continued)

exhibition of paintings expressing equality and shedding light on gender-based violence.

The activity also included speeches by representatives of participating societies expressing support for equality and highlighting the need to fight gender-based violence.

More than 100 women and men attended the event to contribute to the promotion and dissemination of the slogan of the activity: "In all rights".

On 14 August 2019, Tajdid Iraq organization held a similar discussion session for a group of young men in Mosul.



UNAMI urges inclusion of women in politics and decision-making



Baghdad, 26 August 2019 – Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Alice Walpole, yesterday addressed the launch of a Regional Forum aimed at advancing women’s rights in Iraq and across the Middle Eastern region, with participants from Iraq, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen. The forum is being held under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Iraq, with support from the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), UN Women, the Women’s International League for Peace and the Dutch Embassy.

DSRSG Walpole called on women representatives attending the Forum to use this unique gathering to learn from one another in facing the challenges and difficulties that continue to obstruct the advancement of women in the region.

She recalled that implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, remains a key priority for the (female) leadership of UNAMI and urged the Iraqi authorities to pursue a national action plan to enable the meaningful representation of women in political and decision-making processes in Iraq.

“Iraq, at this critical moment of its post-conflict development, simply cannot afford to ignore the energy and expertise of half its population” DSRSG Walpole underlined.

The Baghdad Regional Forum will include two days of interactive workshops on 26-27 August, discussing the role and achievements of regional mechanisms in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, reducing violence against women and empowering women in politics.



UNESCO develops a handbook for the protection of journalists in field

Baghdad, 30 June 2019 - UNESCO, in partnership with the Iraqi Communication and Media Commission (CMC), and the Ministry of Interior (MoI), organized the first roundtable with media outlets directors on preparing a new handbook on the relationship between journalists and police officers in field.

Recognizing the gravity of the safety of journalists issue, CMC and UNESCO hosted a one-day roundtable on preparing this handbook in co-operation with the representatives of media outlets, Ministry of Interior and Safety of Journalists Committee. This event is funded by the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC)-Netherlands, in the context of the promulgated recommendations, which emphasize the role of law enforcement authorities, legislatures, and the media in ensuring safe working conditions for journalists.

In the opening of the roundtable, the special adviser of the head of CMC, Muthad Ahmed, stated, "This roundtable will pave the way for the production of a practical guide for coordination between journalists who are working in the field and police officers, often in checkpoints to reduce the num-

ber of violations against journalists". In his opening remarks, Mr. Ahmed noted that the significance of having both the MoI and media owners' participants to share experiences and discuss challenges faced by the journalists and media workers in the field is a great opportunity for real reform.

Major General Saad Maan, the representative of the Ministry of Interior, said in his speech "The Ministry of Interior hopes that this handbook will raise the level of awareness among both parties highlighting the multiple duties of both journalists and police officers. The challenges and problems that have

occurred in the past can be avoided through such activities".

Dhea Subhee, UNESCO Iraq Office, said "These are the main challenges faced by journalists in the field and the suggested solutions by the media owners. UNESCO will ensure that great care is paid to these considerations as part of the safety of journalists mechanism".

This handbook, and the recommendations it contains, conceived by participants, with the invaluable support of IPDC, is considered one of the activation steps of the journalists protection mechanism in Iraq.



Round table on safety of journalists: live testimonies by the journalists

Baghdad, 15 July 2019 - A fruitful roundtable discussion was held to emphasize the challenges that journalists face in Iraq. Representatives from the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Communication and Media Commission (CMC), Council of Representatives (CoR) and the Deputy Ambassador of Netherlands in Iraq attended the roundtable meeting.

"I believe this roundtable that aims to create a handbook to coordinate the relationship between journalists and police is an effective practice", said Mr. Eric Strating Deputy Ambassador of Netherlands in Iraq. Mr. Strating added "clearly, the amount of crime against Iraqi journalists, male and female is a challenge that needs to be dealt with".

The journalists provided testimonies during the roundtable which subsequently led to an active discussion, the 30 journalists who attended the event highlighted the difficulties that they are facing in the field mostly by security forces.

This round table is the second event in terms of developing the handbook to

coordinate relations between journalists and police officers, which is within the framework of International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) funded by Netherlands. The round table was organized

in cooperation with CMC and MoI.

This activity is considered as one of the components of the "UN Action Plan for Safety of Journalists and Issue of Impunity in Iraq" which is led by UNESCO office for Iraq.



UNAMI Human Rights Office supports art exhibition for minority communities

Baghdad, 02 July 2019 - UNAMI Human Rights Office (HRO) in Baghdad hosted an exhibition displaying artworks created by representatives of minority communities throughout Iraq. The exhibition displayed works by 34 artists (including 3 women) from the minority communities of Shabak, Bahai, Christian (Chaldean, Armenian, Assyrian and Syriac), Yazidi, Kaka'i and Faili Kurds. During the exhibition many of the artists, including sculptors, painters and photographers, took the opportunity to showcase their work and to explain how the art reflects the strength, resilience and vibrancy of their respective communities. The thought-provoking exhibits reflected the strong contribution that minori-

ty groups make to Iraqi society through their varied cultures, traditions and beliefs.

The exhibition was organized as part of UNAMI HRO's ongoing efforts to pro-

mote understanding of the cultures of minority communities and to support those communities to overcome the constraints of discrimination and stigmatization.



IOM organized a workshop for representatives of Iraqi Kurdistan Region on standards and best practices in designing and managing reparation programmes for victims of grave human rights abuses

Erbil, 2 July 2019 - On the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict (observed annually on 19 June), IOM Iraq organised a workshop for representatives of Iraqi Kurdistan Region on standards and best practices in designing and managing reparation programmes for victims of grave human rights abuses. Victims' access to just and effective reparations are an important mechanism for overcoming the legacy of conflict, rebuilding trust between affected communities and institutions, and promoting lasting peace in post-conflict Iraq. The workshop was a part of the project 'Creating conditions for development

and implementation of Reparations for Survivors of Conflict Related Sexual Violence in Iraq' which IOM - UN Migration is implementing in partnership

with the United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict.



UN Human Rights provides technical support to drafters of Iraq's Universal Period Review report

Baghdad, 4 July 2019 - UN Human Rights provides technical support to drafters of Iraq's Universal Period Review report that will be submitted to the UN Human Rights Council in August 2019.



Head of UNAMI Human Rights met Ministry of Interior Inspector General

Baghdad, 9 July 2019 - The Director of the UNAMI Human Rights Office, Ms. Danielle Bell, met on Tuesday with the Ministry of Interior Inspector General, Mr. Jamal al-Asadi. The discussion focused on cooperation regarding visits to places of detention under the authority of the Ministry with a view to preventing torture and ill-treatment of detainees.

The Inspector General highlighted that one of the measures taken by the Ministry in this regard is to hand over the responsibility for conducting investigations to the High Judicial Council. He

also emphasized that the Ministry is exploring non-custodial measures to

address the issue of overcrowding in detention facilities.



Development of the framework for reparations to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence under way

Erbil 11 July 2019 - In 2014, thousands of women and girls were captured and sexually enslaved by ISIL. Most of them were Yazidi. Many of those who survived these atrocities have so far received little institutional support.

IOM, the UN Migration Agency, with the support of UN Action and the Australian Department of Home Affairs, is supporting the Iraqi and Kurdish Regional Governments, civil society organizations, and survivors to engage in the process of developing a framework and mechanisms for the provision of reparations to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

At an IOM workshop on 11 July 2019

in Erbil, Iraqi lawmakers sat face-to-face with survivors who described ways

to acknowledge and redress their suffering.



“Civil Documentation Project” supports thousands of Iraqis who lost their civic status, residency and identity documents due to conflicts

Baghdad, 4 August 2019 - Shouk was born last year. After having lost her other three siblings to the conflict, she is now Hisham’s only child.

Today, Shouk was issued her first-ever civil document.

This was possible thanks to the “Civil Documentation Project” launched by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, in partnership with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, to support thousands of Iraqis who lost their civic status, residency and identity documents due to conflicts. “My son went missing two years ago, and I was devastated, more so because I couldn't report it as I did not have any identification cards. We lost all our documents while fleeing Mosul 2 years ago, now I have new Identification cards, I feel relieved”. Gladis is displaced from Mosul in Hassansham camp.



Bill on Enforced Disappearances discussed in Baghdad

Baghdad, 22 July 2019 - Representatives of UNAMI Human Rights Office and the Independent High Commissioner for Human Rights (IHCHR), as part of their regular engagement, held a meeting at the latter's office and discussed issues related to enforced disappearances in Iraq, focusing on the Bill on Enforced Disappearances that had passed its first reading at the Council of Representatives on 29 June 2019. The participants discussed the need for wider consultations on the Bill among various stakeholders, including with the Human Rights Committee of the Council of Representatives, international and national NGOs, community-based organizations from the impacted communities and victims' groups, in order to make the Bill comprehensive



and in line with the Convention. The two entities agreed for continuous sup-

port and engagement in this area. Photo courtesy of IHCHR.

Representatives of the UNAMI Human Rights Office (HRO) met with parliamentary legal and technical advisers to coordinate specialized human rights training

Baghdad, 28 July 2019 – Representatives of the UNAMI Human Rights Office (HRO) met with parliamentary legal and technical advisers to coordinate specialized human rights training for the members of the Council of Representatives' Human Rights Committee. The training will focus on working with the UN Human Rights Council, Universal Periodic Review, and Human Rights Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures.



UNAMI Human Rights Office conducted several consultations with minority groups in Erbil and Duhok

Erbil, 29 July - 02 August 2019 - UNAMI Human Rights Office conducted several consultations with minority groups in Erbil and Duhok to assess their situation in the Kurdistan Region and explore ways that the Human Rights Office may support the government to address issues affecting minorities and fulfill its obligations under the



Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination. 51 representatives of religious and ethnic minorities, government authorities and NGOs including 17 women participated in the discussions. Unlike Federal Iraq, Kurdistan Region enacted a law for the protection of minority rights in 2015. That Law recognizes all minorities in the region. Representatives of minorities who participated in the discussions were appreciative of the Government's efforts to protect their rights through enactment of the law but urged the Government to create an implementation mechanism so that the law make a difference in their lives. Other crosscutting challenges facing minorities in the KR raised by partici-

pants include: discrimination stemming from the constitution which only recognizes Islam, Christianity, and the Yazidi and Sabeen Mandeian religions neglecting the rest; civil documents referring to most of minorities as Muslims; property confiscation; protection issues; discrimination and stigmatization; and islamization of the school curriculum among others. Some of the



UNAMI Human Rights Office conducted several consultations with minority groups in Erbil and Duhok (Continued)

proposed solutions include; engagement with the Ministry of Interior to solve the issue of being referred to as Muslims when they are not, enactment/amendment of law to remove discrimination including in the constitution, international protection for people living in disputed territories and removal of different factions of government forces and militia, and rehabilita-

tion of infrastructure destroyed during armed conflict among others. A working group composed of government, civil society, the UN and minority representatives has been created to coordinate structured advocacy efforts on issues raised during the discussions. UNAMI Human Rights Office discussed the status of minorities in the Kurdi-

stan Region also with the Kurdistan Region Independent Commission for Human Rights and jointly identified specific steps to enable the implementation of recommendations on the promotion of historic diversity of religions made by the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination.



Short Film festivals on minorities and human rights continue to attract attention all over Iraq



Baghdad, 31 July 2019 - In Kut, the center of the Wasit Governorate, on 3 July 2019, UN Human Rights conducted a short film festival on minorities and human rights in Iraq with 50 participants (three being women) including representatives of the Faili Kurdish and African descent minorities, human rights defenders, NGOs, journalists and media, a Sunni Imam, youth volunteers, the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights (Wasit branch), police, provincial council, the Prime Ministers reconciliation and peaceful coexistence Committee, two local female civil society members, and Zubatia district council.

Panelists discussed human rights concerns raised in the short films as well as other human rights issues affecting them. Human rights issues highlighted in the films included enforced disappearances, forced marriage, identity and displacement, access to education, and the impact of corruption on rights including the right to life. The was the 32nd screening of the films, as UN Human Rights Iraq continues to show the best short films on minorities and hu-

man rights from the 3By3 Film Festival to audiences across Iraq.



At the Youth Center in **Alqosh District**, on 16 July 2019 the festival was attended by 35 Christians and Yazidis, mostly women, including students, activists, and representatives of women associations and NGOs.



In **Basra** UN Human Rights in collaboration with the Palace of Culture and Arts of the Ministry of Culture conducted a short film festival on 17 July 2019 with 56 men and women from the African descent, Sabeen and Christian minority communities, civil society, human rights defenders, novelists, artists, NGOs, media, persons with disabilities and the staff of the Office of Ministry of

Culture, sport and youth, and members of the Journalists' Syndicate and the Bar Association.

The most popular film according to the audience was a Najaf film called Cinderella.



Short Film Festival on Minorities and Human Rights in **Karbala** city was held on 31 July 2019. 113 participants (40 being women), including students, a member of parliament, a blind disabilities activist, a theatre director, human rights activists, film directors, police, tribal sheiks, religious sheiks, representatives of women associations and NGOs, at the Karbala Chamber of Commerce attended the screening.

Panelists, including a woman who is gender adviser to the Karbala governor, a cinema director, a human rights defender, and a former governor of Karbala discussed human rights concerns raised in the short films as well as other human rights issues affecting Karbala. It was the 35rd screening of the films, as UN Human Rights Iraq shows the best short films on minorities and human rights from the 3By3 Film Festival to audiences across Iraq.

UNAMI Human Rights Office conducts training on national and international fair trial rights

Kirkuk, 20 August 2019 - The Human Rights Office (HRO) of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Iraqi Bar Association-Kirkuk Chapter today jointly conducted a training session on "Understanding national and international fair trial guarantees." Nine defence lawyers, including one woman, participated in the training, which was followed by an interactive plenary discussion. The training is the third of a series of training sessions lined up this year for members of the Iraqi Bar Association in Kirkuk.

The training included a presentation on the rights of an accused person under Iraqi law and procedure, which was delivered by a prominent Iraqi criminal law expert and professor. It also includ-

ed a presentation by HRO on the international fair trial guarantees as provided for in Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

The training stressed that justice deliv-

ered in accordance with domestic and international standards human rights standards is the most effective way to ensure accountability, uphold the rights of victims and prevent future violations.



Human Rights—Yazidi's Suffering

UN's Hennis-Plasschaert recalls Yazidi suffering, urges swift actions to restore stability to Sinjar to allow Yazidis to return home



Baghdad, 1 August 2019 – Recalling the suffering of the Yazidis on the fifth anniversary of ISIL's onslaught on Sinjar District, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, lamented the current failure to bring about stability in the area. Stressing that stability is crucial for the stricken community to return home and rebuild its life, she called on Baghdad and Erbil to urgently find solutions that put the needs of the people first.

Five years ago, Da'esh swept through the region in northern Iraq in a campaign of terror that spared no one, forcing entire villages to flee. The group killed and abducted thousands of unarmed Yazidi men, women and children - many of whom remain missing to this

day. Today, several years after the liberation of Sinjar, the Yazidi homeland remains rife with instability and unacceptable living conditions.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert, who recently spoke out about the awful situation in Sinjar following a visit to the area, emphasized at today's commemoration in Baghdad that the tragic suffering the community endured must not be forgotten. The best tribute to the victims, she said, is to ensure this does not happen again and that the survivors are given the opportunity to move on with their lives in safety, security and dignity.

In her remarks, the Special Representative recalled witnessing first-hand the shocking conditions of the Yazidi survivors, who continue to live in tents in inhumane conditions on the moun-

tain they fled to. To stress her point, Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert will soon visit Sinjar again to meet with Yazidi survivors, show solidarity and follow up on efforts to restore normality to the area. The Special Representative noted that the path towards lasting peace, development and prosperity is long and complex, but added that stable governance and security structures are a crucial first step that is still lacking years after the liberation of Sinjar.

"In memory of all victims and their loved ones, I would like to say to all those feeling challenged, including the authorities here in Baghdad as well as in Erbil: please, set aside your differences or partisan interests. And please, place - without any further delay - the needs of the people first."

"It is our shared responsibility to memorialize the horrific and grave violations that may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Yet this sacred memory must not be static: the most powerful form of remembrance is the one that compels us to act."

The Special Representative added: "As we pay our tributes and honor the past - we must also look towards the future and thus take decisive action. Decisive action to facilitate and accelerate the reconstruction of affected areas, enabling the safe return of the people, as a very first priority to cope with deep tragedy."

UNITAD marks the 5th anniversary of the attacks in Sinjar



Baghdad, 3 August 2019 - Five years ago today, on 3 August 2014, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) - also known as Da'esh - launched an attack on the Sinjar region in Iraq's northern Nineveh Governorate. Sinjar was home to the majority of the world's Yazidis, a distinct religious group whose beliefs and practice span thousands of years.

The Sinjar attack was part of a larger assault, beginning in June 2014, during which ISIL attempted to rend the vibrant tapestry of the many ethnic and

religious communities living in the Nineveh plains, including Yazidis, Christians, Shi'as, Turkmen and Shabak. So too did ISIL target members of the Sunni community who stood in opposition to its corrupted ideology. The Yazidi community was subjected to unimaginable horrors, with reports quickly emerging of mass killings, rape, sexual enslavement, torture and the forced recruitment of children.

The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh / ISIL (UNITAD)

is mandated by the United Nations Security Council to support domestic efforts to hold ISIL (Da'esh) accountable by collecting, preserving and storing evidence in Iraq of acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Through our work to date with the Yazidi community, and with all groups impacted by the crimes of ISIL in Iraq, we have heard a common call: the individuals responsible for these atrocities must be brought to justice. The Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD, Mr. Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, speaking on the fifth anniversary of the ISIL (Da'esh) attack on Sinjar, emphasised, "UNITAD embodies the commitment of the international community and the Government of Iraq to not only honor the victims of Da'esh crimes, but to take action to hold those responsible for the crimes they have wrought."

On this anniversary of ISIL's attack on the Yazidis of Sinjar, UNITAD reiterates its commitment to work with all communities in Iraq in order to deliver meaningful accountability for the mass atrocity crimes perpetrated by ISIL (Da'esh) in Iraq. It is essential that perpetrators of mass atrocity crimes are not permitted to escape punishment and crucial that survivors of such crimes have their expectations for justice met.

UNITAD

UNITAD reports strong progress in first half of 2019

New York, 16 July 2019 – Significant progress has been made in the work of the UN Investigative Team responsible for investigating ISIL crimes reported Mr. Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, Special Adviser and Head of the Investigative Team to the Security Council on Monday. Mr. Khan noted that digital, documentary, testimonial and forensic evidence is now being collected in order to support the prosecution of members of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) for their atrocity crimes committed in Iraq.

In the last two weeks alone, UNITAD had gained access to more than 600,000 videos related to ISIL crimes, as well as over 15,000 pages of internal ISIL documents. Initial investigative work focused on three areas, he noted, citing attacks committed by ISIL against the Yazidi community in the Sinjar district in August 2014, crimes committed by ISIL in Mosul between 2014 and 2016, and the mass killing of unarmed Iraqi



air force cadets from Tikrit Air Academy in June 2014.

In a positive development, the Team was now identifying and strengthening channels for potential use of this evidentiary material in domestic proceedings in Iraq in line with the Terms of Reference of the Team, while a number

of other States had approached the Team with requests for support. Mr. Khan noted that the Team anticipated being able to provide tangible support to at least one ongoing case within the next two months.

"We have sought to ensure that the experiences and voices of survivors,

UNITAD reports strong progress in first half of 2019 *(continued)*

witnesses and communities are placed at the centre of its work,” he said, noting that all communities — Shia, Sunni, Yazidi, Christian, Kaka’i, Shabak and Turkmen — have been impacted by the crimes of ISIL.

Stressing that the Investigative Team’s cooperation with the Government of Iraq has remained crucial in the delivery of its mandate, he said that tangible evidence of collaboration can be found in the collection of forensic material from mass grave sites and the transmission of evidentiary material to the Team by Iraqi national authorities. Going forward, the Team’s work re-

mains dependent on the continued support of the Security Council and the international community more broadly. Through engagement with victims, cooperation with national and regional actors and dialogue with religious bodies, two fundamental realities have been revealed, he said. First, that the scale and barbarity of the crimes committed by ISIL have ultimately served not to divide but to unify. Second, the ultimate success of the work of UNITAD will depend on the Investigative Team’s ability to draw on its independent, impartial status in order to harness this unity of purpose and make its

work the product of a collective endeavour — a partnership between the Council, the victims and survivors of ISIL, national authorities and local actors, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions.

Council members welcomed the “remarkable progress” that UNITAD has achieved in a short period of time and welcomed the cooperation between the Investigative Team and the Government, as well as its engagement with survivors, witnesses, religious groups and local communities.

Survivors of ISIL terror in Iraq want justice, not revenge, says head of UN investigation team

United Nations, New York, 15 July 2019 - The scale and barbarity of the crimes committed by ISIL have ultimately served not to divide but to unify, Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, head of the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), told the Security Council on Monday.

Mr. Khan was delivering his second report on the activities of UNITAD, during which he confirmed that his team has made “significant progress” in implementing its’ mandate, and that he expects investigators to provide concrete support for at least one case before the national courts, marking an “important milestone” in the delivery of their mandate.

The team, he said, had heard harrowing accounts of “mass killings, of entire families erased and of women and girls taken as slaves”.

He added that their courage in coming forward served to underline both “their continued heroism and the urgency with which we must work in order to deliver meaningfully on the promise made to them”, referring to the 2017 Security Council resolution that led to the creation of UNITAD.

The message of the survivors — from Shia, Sunni, Yazidi, Christian, Kaka’i, Shabak and Turkmen communities — is that ISIL fighters must face justice, not revenge, he stated.

‘Significant progress’ being made

The progress that Mr. Khan referred to during his briefing includes putting in place core staffing, facilities and evidence collection practices; the employment of 79 staff members in Iraq — including criminal investigators, analysts, witness protection experts and



forensic scientists — 55 per cent of whom are women; and the collection of documentary, digital, testimonial and forensic material is now being collected. Initial investigative work is focused on three areas: attacks committed by ISIL against the Yazidi community in the Sinjar district in August 2014, crimes committed by ISIL in Mosul between 2014 and 2016, and the mass killing of unarmed Iraqi air force cadets from Tikrit Air Academy in June 2014.

In the last two weeks alone, said Mr. Khan, UNITAD has gained access to more than 600,000 videos related to ISIL crimes relevant to investigative work, as well as over 15,000 pages of internal ISIL documents originally obtained from the battlefield by leading investigative journalists.

The Investigative Team, continued Mr. Khan, has received crucial support, from the Government of Iraq, Iraqi national authorities, and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Going forward, the team’s work remains dependent on the continued support of the Security Council and the international commu-

nity more broadly.

The ultimate success of the work of UNITAD, concluded Mr. Khan, will depend on the investigative team’s ability to draw on its independent and impartial status in order to make its work the “product of a collective endeavour”: a partnership between the Council, the victims and survivors of ISIL, national authorities and local actors, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions.

“It is only through such unity, and through our common recognition of the scale and gravity of the crimes committed by ISIL, that meaningful accountability can be achieved”.

By UN News.





New York, 20 July 2019 – The Special Adviser Karim A.A. Khan QC met today with the United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres. They discussed progress made by UNITAD to date and underlined gratitude to all parts of the UN family for their support in the early stages of UNITAD's work.

UN Photo.



Diyala, 30 July 2019 – The Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), Mr. Karim A.A. Khan QC, met with the Deputy Governor of Diyala, Mr. Karim Agha and key officials during a visit to the province to discuss future cooperation. In a joint press conference Special Adviser Khan stressed the importance of accountability for Daesh crimes, unity and cooperation. UNITAD also visited the village of Tawakul, one of the affected areas by Daesh attacks.

Humanitarian

Two schools rehabilitated in Mosul

Mosul, 4 July 2019 - In time for the new school year, more than 1,200 students in Mosul Al-Jadida welcome the completion of rehabilitation work on their schools - Al-Shafi boys school and Al-Maather girls school. Damaged in 2017 liberation from ISIL, they now offer students sports facilities and bright new classrooms.



“Painting Tells Stories”, a one-day art exhibition organized in Dohuk



Dohuk, 18 July 2019 - Drawing and painting have long been outlets for thoughts, feelings and fears. This was the motivation behind “Painting Tells Stories”, a one-day art exhibition organized in Dohuk on 18 July 2019 by IOM Iraq’s Psychosocial Team. Visitors gathered at Nawroz Park in downtown Dohuk, to enjoy live music and view the beautiful paintings done as part of a reconciliation and community stabilization activity organized by IOM Iraq. IOM Iraq has offered this activity to its beneficiaries since the beginning of the Da'esh crisis. It provides opportunities for artistic expression and brings together displaced persons (IDPs) and host community members in an effort to support integration and coexistence.

Chinese embassy delivers gifts to Palestinian refugees in Baghdad ahead of Eid al-Adha

Baghdad, 6 August 2019 - China's embassy in Iraq today delivered gifts to Palestinian children and assistance to a community center in eastern Baghdad ahead of Eid al-Adha.

In a ceremony at Haifa Community Center in Baladiyat district, China's Ambassador to Iraq, Zhang Tao, jointly with Palestinian Ambassador in Iraq, Ahmed Aqil, and United Nations Higher Commission of Refugees (UNHCR) Representative in Iraq, Ayman Gharai-beh, handed over toys and sports equipment to Palestinian children and pro-

vided computers to support the community center.

China has provided assistance of 2 million U.S. dollars to the Palestinian refugees in Iraq through UNHCR to provide medicine, medical aid and scholarships for Palestine refugees in Iraq in addition to projects like rehabilitation of Haifa Community Center, also known as Haifa Club.

With funding from China Aid, UNHCR has been providing assistance to over 6800 Palestinian refugees in Iraq since 2017.



UNHCR continues to assist the returnees

Baghdad, 28 July 2019 - UNHCR distributed in partnership with Medair-Int essential non-food items to the 338 families that returned to Gulat village in Sinjar. UNHCR continues to assist the returnees to the vacated villages of Sinjar District and monitor returns.



IOM Iraq hosted a technical meeting on Integrated Return and Readmission Management

Baghdad, 30 July 2019 - IOM Iraq hosted on 28-29 July a technical meeting on Integrated Return and Readmission Management, attended by representatives from the ministries of interior, migration and displacement, justice, foreign affairs and education.

Also last week, IOM Iraq hosted a Technical Working Group Meeting on Integrated Return and Readmission Management, attended by representatives from the Government of Iraq and the Central Statistical Office.



Fire broke out in Chamishlo Camp in Zakho in Duhok Governorate

Erbil, 7 August 2019 - At least 20 tents, and their contents, were burned yesterday after a destructive fire rapidly spread in Chamishko Camp that shelters more than 5000 displaced Iraqi families. According to police and fire brigade teams that were called to the area, the fire incident which was caused by an electrical malfunction left no casualties. UNHCR and its partner, QANDIL, along with the camp management (BRHA Duhok) dispatched teams to the affected sector in the camp to proceed with a rapid assessment and assisted the affected families.



31 Yazidi families were resettled in France by IOM Iraq and France Diplomatie

Erbil, 08 August 2019 - On Thursday, 31 Yazidi families were resettled in France by IOM Iraq and France Diplomatie. The group boarded their flight in the early hours of 8 August and flew safely from Erbil International Airport to Toulouse-Blagnac.

The families — 31 women and their children — were victims of the atrocities committed by ISIL. They will now settle in different departments across



France and receive protection, security, education and medical-social support. This operation follows the resettlement of 20 Yazidi families in May 2019, as part of the Humanitarian Admissions Programme launched by French Presi-

dent Emmanuel Macron.

President Macron has pursued this policy with the support of 2018 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad, who advocates for vulnerable Yazidi women worldwide.



NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq held a meeting in Erbil

Erbil, 21 August 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met today with Country Directors and other members of the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI). They discussed problems faced by humanitarian organizations assisting the 1.8 million displaced Iraqi people as a result of the war with Daesh (ISIS). The NGOs, both Iraqi and international, work with the Government to deliver essential services to families living in camps and other settings while helping them find solutions that will allow them to return to their communities of origin.



DSRSG/RC/HC Ruedas discussed with the KRG Minister of Interior Ahmed the humanitarian situation in the Kurdistan Region

Erbil, 21 August 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (DSRSG) and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met today with the new Minister of Interior in the Government of the Kurdistan Region, Mr. Rebar Ahmed. Ms. Ruedas congratulated the Minister on his appointment, and they discussed the humanitarian situation in the Kurdistan Region, where more than one million displaced people live as a result of the war against Daesh (ISIS). The Minister expressed his government's commitment to continue working with the UN and other humanitarian organizations to protect these families until

they can return to their communities, where they face continuing problems

such as destroyed homes, lost livelihoods, insecurity, and threats.



A living from honey

Baghdad, 30 June 2019 - This year the bees in Mada'en, Baghdad, are exceptionally aggressive and attack without much provocation.

That's according to Abdulqadir, 32, who started a beekeeping business in the Iraqi capital a year and a half ago; he already sounds like an expert of the trade.

"It is important for bees to be in an agricultural area in order to survive, and to achieve better quality of honey," he added. "I harvest honey four times per year, once during winter — because the bees go into hibernation — [and] three times during the active season," he added.

Abdulqadir started his beekeeping business with 20 beehives in early 2018 with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Prior to the launch, he went through a two-month beekeeping vocational training with IOM as part of the reintegration package he received after returning voluntarily from Germany.

Abdulqadir, married with two kids, originally left Mada'en in August 2015, hoping to find a better life in Europe. In 2008, he was shot several times by terrorists in his hometown; some of his wounds healed, but for years he commuted between Mada'en and Baghdad for treatment of one wound in his left toe that couldn't be patched up.

"The toe was deformed due to the bullet wound and every three months I had to go to hospital to remove the nail because it hurt so much as the nail grew out of flesh," Abdulqadir explained.

He traveled to Turkey first, and he paid a smuggler to get him to Greece from there. After a perilous 21-day journey including travel by sea; treks through dense forests; hitchhiking on buses and trucks across the borders of Macedonia, Croatia and Austria; and spending the thousands of dollars he had put together from selling his taxi and other household items; Abdulqadir finally made it to Germany.

"The most dangerous part of the journey was the sea. It [takes] only one hour to cross from Turkey to Greece but it felt so long, like a never-ending journey, because we were on this inflatable boat in such high waves; it was terrifying," he recounted.

Despite the sacrifices he made to reach German soil, three months of life in a camp there made him realize that he did not fit in.

"People have a very different lifestyle there that does not go with our own culture. And I missed my family back



in Iraq who were in critical conditions," Abdulqadir said. "I had already gone through one hearing for my asylum application but did not wait for a second hearing, and decided to voluntarily come home."

He did, however, get the chance to see a doctor about his toe while in Germany. "They took out the toe nail completely; it is gone forever and I will never have a nail on my toe again, but the pain is gone forever which is very good," he explained.

In February 2016, Abdulqadir bought a ticket and boarded a plane to Erbil; from there he travelled to Baghdad by land. Upon arrival, a friend referred him to IOM for support and he was immediately enrolled in the beekeeping vocational training. In 2018, IOM supported Abdulqadir with a small grant to open his beekeeping business

Up from the original 20 hives he now has 30, and he gets around 150 kilograms of pure honey from every harvest. An agent collects the honey from him, which ends up in the local markets including Sama Mall and the Mansour, Karkh and Rasafa marketplaces in Baghdad. Customers come from as far as Najaf and Karbala governorates in south-central Iraq to buy honey from him wholesale.

I really enjoy doing this, it has had a positive impact on my mental and psychological state. When you sit at home with nothing to do you get depressed. I feel like I have my own kingdom when I stand here in the middle of all these beehives," he explained.

Asked if he would like to irregularly migrate again, Abdulqadir replied. "I wouldn't think of it anymore, but traveling? Yes, definitely."

Since 2012, 24,942 Iraqis who returned from Germany and other European Union countries have benefited from IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration services support that includes one or more of the following services: reception and in-kind assistance, case management, economic orientation and coaching sessions, vocational training, job placement as well as business support for creation and expansion of small and medium enterprises.

IOM's assistance to Abdulqadir was funded by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), through the German Corporation for International Development (GIZ) and the German Center for Jobs, Migration and Reintegration in Iraq (GMAC).

Written by Raber Aziz, with contribution from Rafal Abdulateef/IOM Iraq



First provincial level SDG Committee inaugurated in Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 02 July 2019 - The acting Governor of Kirkuk, Mr. Rakan Al-Jubouri, inaugurated on Tuesday the first provincial level Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)-Committee. Mr. Al-Jubouri thanked all development partners from the Government, Civil Society, NGOs and the United Nations for working together to achieve the 230

targets and 169 indicators related to the 17 SDGs before the deadline of 2030.

The Committee will be responsible for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Kirkuk and consists of all the relevant Directorate-Generals and Civil Society actors. Also established were a Steering Group, a

Technical Group and a Data Collection Group, which report to the National SDG Committee at the Ministry of Planning in Baghdad.

During the inauguration meeting, UN-AMI's Development Coordination Office (DCO) gave a presentation on the SDGs, Agenda2030 and the Voluntary National Review. "Interest for Sustainable Development Goals in Kirkuk is enormous", said Martijn Dalhuijsen, DCO Liaison Officer: "We are asked to present to a different group every day. In addition to power point presentations, we also use sport as a tool to raise awareness for the SDGs. Our K-1UN Team stands ready to play soccer or volleyball using a colourful SDG-themed ball!"

The acting Governor of Kirkuk fully backed the new SDG-Committee and requested for the collection of base-line data, so that the full progress for implementation of the 17 Goals can be measured during the entire 2020-2030 timeframe.



Minister of Planning, visited the Geographical Info Systems Division of the Central Statistical System

Baghdad, 2 July 2019 - H.E. Dr. Nouri Al Dulaimi, Minister of Planning, visited the Geographical Info Systems Division of the Central Statistical System and reviewed the progress of the Main National Platform for Construction and Development. This Platform was developed with technical support from UN Habitat.



IOM donated a vehicle to the shelter of victims of trafficking in Baghdad

Baghdad, 3 July 2019 - In the framework of the project "Strengthening Community Policing in Iraq," funded by the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IOM donated a vehicle to the shelter of victims of trafficking in Baghdad.



FAO conducts a training program for the eradication of RP Weevil

Baghdad, 3 July 2019 - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture in Iraq, and with the participation of experts from across the region, held a two-day workshop and training program for the eradication of Red Palm Weevil (RPW) in Iraq from 1 to 2 July in Baghdad.

The training focused on strengthening the national institutional capacities and technical capabilities of all stakeholders, particularly the ministry of agriculture staff and farmers to enforce the appropriate phytosanitary measures and pest management practices; to combat the infestation and eliminate the further spread of the pest. Session also covered theory and practice on the eradication of red palm weevil by international protocols.

RPW infestation was first recorded in Safwan, Basrah Governorate of Iraq during October 2015. Since the first report of RPW in Safwan Province / Basrah Governorate, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) in coordination with Basrah Agriculture Directorate has immediately taken several legislative and management measures to control the pest. The solution revolved around monitoring, management and eradication to curtail the problem which has been considered as the 1st phase of the national action plan to deal with this sudden infestation in Iraq.

Mr Mustapha Sinecure, FAO Representative a.i in Iraq welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of the technical cooperation programme (TCP) for the eradication of

RPW, a key pest of date palm detected in Safwan, Basra Province of Iraq during 2015. The Project facilitated capacity building of the ministry of agriculture staff and other stakeholders on the control of RPW through 10 Workshops and understanding of RPW management strategies from several International Experts. The Project also organised a joint Inception Workshop in Erbil involving Iraq, Iran, and Kuwait. Iraq will also participate and benefit from future FAO Programs on RPW conceptualised during the donor meeting held in Abu Dhabi during March 2019.

Dr Hussein Ali Saud, Ministry of Agriculture Adviser for animal resources activity appreciated the achievements of the Project which has succeeded in containing the spread of RPW but cautioned about the existing risk of future invasions of RPW from neighbouring countries. Mr Al Saud highlighted the

importance of the phytosanitary measures activated by MoA against RPW and hoped that the Project would be extended beyond 2019.

Mr Thaer Yaseen, Regional Plant Protection Officer, FAO-RNE, Cairo presented the outputs and activities of the FAO Program for the Eradication of Red Palm Weevil in the NENA Region to intensify governance, monitoring, scientific research, capacity building, and coordination. He assured continuous support from FAO for the eradication of RPW in Iraq, including the strengthening of regional cooperation with Kuwait.

Following the training and consultations, participants agreed on several recommendations to contain and control RPW which has been instrumental in preventing the spread of this pest in the rest of the governorates of the Republic of Iraq and to enhancing regional cooperation to control this pest.



Norway reaffirms commitment to stabilizing Iraq with new contribution

Baghdad, 3 July 2019– The Government of Norway and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed a partnership agreement today for USD 9 million (NOK 75 million) to support stabilization and recovery efforts for Iraq post-ISIL.

Norway's contribution will be channelled through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) which finances fast-track initiatives in areas liberated from ISIL. This is Norway's 10th contribution to FFS since 2015, bringing its total contributions to USD 45,000,000 (NOK 376,200,000). Norway is the 7th largest contributor of the 27 donors that fund the FFS.

Based on priorities identified by the Government of Iraq and local authori-

ties, FFS helps quickly repair essential public infrastructure, boosts the capacity of local government, and provides short-term employment opportunities.

“Our biggest priority at the moment is to focus on areas that were the longest-held territories by ISIL and the last to be liberated,” says Resident Representative of UNDP, Zena Ali-Ahmad.

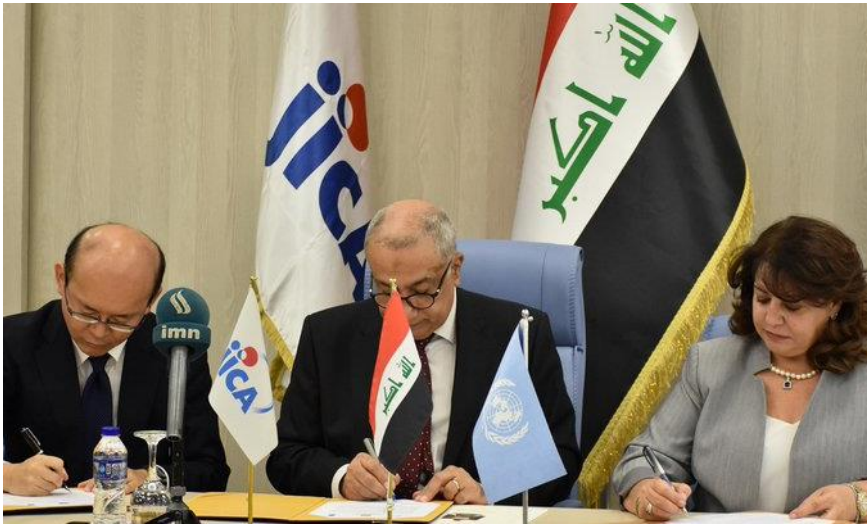
“These areas have experienced lower returns, and through UNDP and partners' stabilization efforts we're working hard to bring people back home. This generous contribution from Norway is critical in helping us achieve this important objective.”

“Our gratitude goes to the Government of Norway for all the support, and for reaffirming its commitment to not only

stabilizing Iraq but securing long-term prosperity for its people,” adds Ms Ali-Ahmad.

At the request of the Government of Iraq, UNDP established the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) in June 2015 to facilitate the return of displaced Iraqis, lay the groundwork for reconstruction and recovery, and safeguard against the resurgence of violence. This is done through rehabilitating essential infrastructure and restoring basic services. To date, UNDP's Funding Facility has implemented more than 2,500 projects in key critical areas of Anbar, Salah al-Din, Diyala, Kirkuk and Ninewa, with another 600 in the pipeline, pending additional funds.

JICA (Japan) and UNDP partnership agreement to accelerate the projects for socio-economic development in Iraq



Baghdad, 7 July 2019 - Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and UNDP announced a renewed agreement and commemorated the 10th anniversary for their partnership to accelerate the implementation of socio-economic infrastructure projects in Iraq to improve the economic recovery and living condition of Iraqi people in key sectors such as electricity, water and sanitation, oil, irrigation, transportation, industry, health and communication. The GoI welcomes the reinforced

partnership between JICA and UNDP. Since 2008, JICA has signed 31 loan agreements, total amount of which is JPY 830 billion (equivalent to USD 7.7 billion), with Iraqi Government for economic and social infrastructure projects and programs in Iraq to improve daily lives of Iraqi people. In order to ensure accountability, transparency and efficiency in project implementation, the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Government of Japan/JICA jointly established a monitoring mechanism called

Monitoring Committee (M/C) in 2008. UNDP has undertaken the supporting role to assist and advise the M/C based on the partnership agreement between JICA and UNDP.

Under this partnership, UNDP has been working alongside JICA and the Government of Iraq (GoI) on project monitoring and capacity development. UNDP identifies bottlenecks pertaining to project implementation, providing analyses and recommendations for action on cross-cutting issues to the M/C to accelerate project implementation.

The M/C is the longest continual committee in the GoI system as the 43rd M/C Meeting was held on 4th July 2019 in Baghdad with Iraqi ministries to update the progress and find the solutions for challenges that the projects face in order to accelerate the project implementation and deliver the public services to the Iraqi people.

The GoI, JICA and UNDP reconfirm all parties' continual efforts to enhance this tripartite collaboration mechanism to expedite the improvement of national strategic infrastructures, which will contribute to better public services as well as to the private sector development for more and better job opportunities.

DSRSG/RC/HC Ruedas highlighted the importance of SDG Goal 16 in a post-conflict setting

United Nations, New York, 9 July 2019 - During the High-level side-event on Sustaining Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) High-level Political Forum, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, highlighted

the importance of SDG Goal 16 in a post-conflict setting, and noted that this meant addressing many layers of activities at once, including humanitarian, stabilization, recovery and development, as well as exploring synergies between humanitarian/development activities and political/security. Despite the many challenges in a post-conflict

setting, successes have been achieved on the road to Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

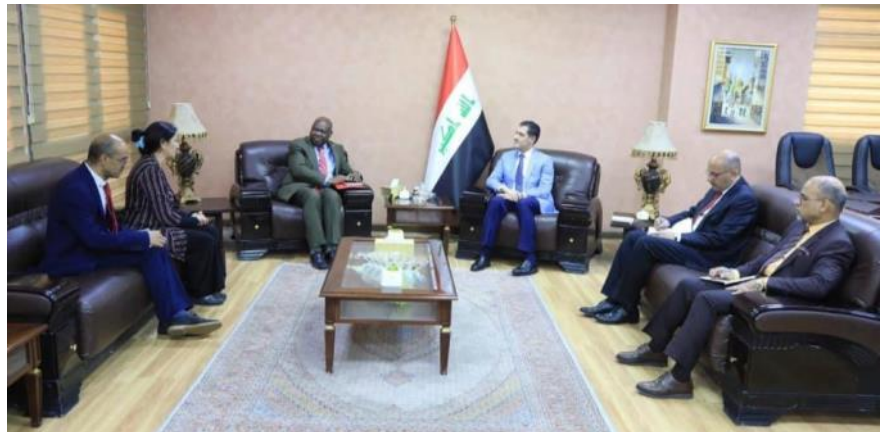
"The UN "pillars" are not separate. In Iraq, we are all working together to support the country's reconstruction efforts and prevent relapse into conflict", added Ms. Ruedas.



UNFPA in Iraq delegation met with the Minister of Planning; discussed the population census for Iraq 2020

Baghdad, 9 July 2019 - A United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) delegation, headed by the Representative Dr Oluremi Sogunro, met with the Minister of Planning, Dr. Nouri Sabah al-Dulaimi, to discuss the upcoming celebration of the 25 Years of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD25) and the population census for Iraq 2020. The talks focused on the preparations for the ICPD celebration on 28 July under the auspices of his Excellency.

During the meeting, UNFPA Representative and the Minister discussed the planning for the implementation of the 2020 population census in a timely manner and the means of support that can be provided by UNFPA and the UN



agencies in Iraq. The officials also discussed Iraq's participation in the high-level conference in Nairobi in November to advance the implementation of ICPD action plan.

Photo courtesy of Ministry of Planning.

Health, sport, nature: Key sites in Mosul reopen after damage by ISIL

Mosul, 11 July 2019 - Al Rabee Primary Healthcare Center, the Al Muthana Sport and Youth Center and the East Mosul Nursery Plantation were officially reopened today by the Government of Ninewa, following their rehabilitation by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

"While a lot of work remains to be done in Mosul, the opening of these three projects shows the strength and resilience of the city - one that's well on its way to recovery after experiencing immense hardship under ISIL's control," says UNDP's Resident Representative in Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"Al Rabee is one of 24 healthcare centers and hospitals rehabilitated by UNDP in Mosul and provides critical healthcare services to communities across the city," she says.



"The Al Muthana Sport and Youth Center is an opportunity to reengage our youth. Sport and organized youth activities go a long way in keeping young people feeling healthy, recognized and valued, so this facility is extremely important.

"And plants produced by the Nursery will not only beautify the city, but they also hold great symbolism - representing new life and restored hope for the people of Mosul."

Rehabilitation of Al Rabee Primary Healthcare Center was funded by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and furniture for the Center was provided by a financial contribution from Poland. Rehabilitation of both the Sport Center and Nursery Plantation was supported by The Netherlands.

"The completion of these sites wouldn't have been possible without the generous contribution of our donors. We're extremely grateful to the UAE, Poland and The Netherlands for their continued support to stabilizing Iraq," adds Ms Ali Ahmad.

Approximately 827 stabilization projects have been completed or are underway by UNDP in Mosul, including restoring water and electricity networks, rebuilding educational institutions and healthcare facilities, providing employment for locals to clear rubble from streets, and rehabilitating 15,000 houses.

About the projects

Al Muthana Sport and Youth Center is a public sporting facility and a hub for organized youth activities. At 6700m², it includes multi-purpose courts for

basketball, volleyball, tennis and handball. Under ISIL's occupation it was used as the militant group's primary training base.

East Mosul Nursery Plantation is the main source of plant supply to government departments. The area covers 56,000m² and consists of greenhouses, net shades, open spaces and admin buildings. Prior to ISIL's occupation, the nursery would produce 250,000-300,000 plants per year.

Al Rabee Primary Healthcare Center is one of the largest in West Mosul. Before ISIL's occupation, the Center served some 500 patients per day in a catchment area of about 39,000 people. Today it receives about 100 patients per day, however this number is expected to increase as more people return home.



Steering Committee of Headway Programme promotes resilience actions for vulnerable communities in Iraq

Erbil, 11 July 2019 – The Steering Committee of the Headway programme met in Erbil on 11 July 2019, to discuss and review the implementation of actions that will benefit nearly 430,000 vulnerable people, as well as advance social stability and growth in Iraq. Launched in February 2019, Headway aims at empowering Syrian refugees, local host communities and internally displaced people (IDPs) in areas affected by the crisis through involving them in practical solutions to rebuild their lives.

The European Union's (EU) Regional Trust Fund, MADAD, is funding the Headway programme with €10 million over a period of two years. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) are jointly implementing the programme.

The Steering Committee endorsed the programme's workplan, identifying priority actions to be implemented in four governorates: Duhok, Erbil, Ninewah, and Sulaimaniyah. Actions include the rehabilitation of housing units and small-scale community water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure in the Ninewah plains, and the financing of intensive job-generating projects to increase self-reliance of vulnerable refugees, host communities and IDPs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I).

Programme Manager of MADAD, Ms. Sarah Spencer-Bernard, reaffirmed: "The EU is a longstanding partner of your country. This illustrates in tangible terms the commitment we have to assist the authorities of Iraq to reconstruct cities and towns, to make areas safe for the return of those who have had to flee their homes and to allow communities to heal and prosper. The Iraqi people have suffered enough, and the country is on the cusp of entering into a renewed phase of state-building. This multi-pronged initiative will join the dots between the various reconstruction components, and significantly improve the resilience of host and refugee populations."

Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq, Ms. Zena Ali-Ahmad, said: "Building long-term resilience for vulnerable communities is one of our top priorities. Not only do we want them back on their feet after all the suffering they had to endure, but we also want to support them in leading productive and prosperous lives for the sake of their children. With critical funding from the



EU and MADAD, the Headway programme will ensure we are heading in the right direction."

Head of UN-Habitat Iraq, a.i., Ms. Yuko Otsuki, highlighted the importance of the Steering Committee meeting for the Headway programme. She stated that UN-Habitat will continue to work with the communities in the selected governorates to build the resilience through this programme and support the municipal authorities to enhance local organizational capacities for the planning and implementation of the programme.

The Steering Committee is the programme's decision-making body and is comprised of representatives of the Federal and Regional Ministries of Planning, as well as the Governors of the aforementioned Governorates where the programme is currently being implemented. Members also include

UNDP and UN-Habitat, along with the EU Trust Fund, MADAD and the EU Delegation to Iraq as donor representatives.

The Governors and authorized representatives signed the Charter of Principles that sets out an agreed framework that will govern the implementation of the Headway programme. The guiding principles include participation and inclusivity, transparency and accountability, human rights, gender equality and protection of the most vulnerable.

The Headway programme's activities are currently making steady progress as a result of close collaboration among all partners. The programme is due to run through the end of 2020.

The programme fact sheet can be downloaded through this link: <https://bit.ly/2J4h8Ta>.



The draft Iraq Country Programme 2020-2024 was discussed between UNDP and its partners

Baghdad, 11 July 2019 - The draft Iraq Country Programme 2020-2024 was discussed between UNDP and its partners, including Government Agencies, UN Agencies, development partners, private sector and civil society at a meeting held in Baghdad today.



In Basra: Oil in abundance, but little water to drink

Basra, 16 July 2019 - "I like water especially in summer" says 7-year old Sajaa, a student of Al-Hamzah School for Girls, in the district of Abu al-Khasasib, Iraq.

Iraq's southern city of Basra was once a thriving port city. In its heyday, it was described as the "Venice of the east" due to the numerous canals and bridges all over the city.

The comparisons with Venice are long gone.

Today, the situation is bleak. Basra's canals are polluted with filth, algae and bacteria. The riverbanks are blanketed by mounds of rubbish and heaps of plastic. An air of resignation hovers in parts of the city where poverty has a firm grip and the unemployment rate is one of the highest in Iraq.

Last summer, the city was rocked by violent protests when tens of thousands of people were hospitalized after drinking contaminated water. The tragedy is that while Basra is where most of Iraq's oil riches originate, children and vulnerable families have died of thirst.

I recently visited Basra to see what has changed since the summer of 2018 and found that, although some improvements have been made towards upgrading the city's antiquated water and sanitation infrastructure, a lot of the underlying issues that led to the crisis have yet to be addressed.

Al-Hamzah School for Girls, in the dis-

trict of Abu al-Khasasib. At the peak of the crisis last year, UNICEF trucked in safe drinking water to schools in the areas most affected.

Historically, Basra's fresh water supply has come from the Shatt Al-Arab River which is a confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers—both of which have seen a decreasing flow due to low rainfall and increased temperatures over the last couple of years as well as the construction of dams in neighboring countries.

As water levels dropped in the Shatt Al-Arab, saltwater from the Gulf of Arabia entered the river and dramatically increased the salinity levels in 2018.

In 1997, anticipating the looming water crisis and the issues around the Shatt al-Arab, the government created the al-Badaa Canal as an alternative source of fresh water. However, during the crisis last year, fresh water from this canal was not able to meet the demand. Shockingly, one reason for this was because of leaking pipes.

"A lot of the water pipes in Basra were laid out in the 1950s and have received insufficient maintenance. It's estimated that water leakage is as high as 45 per cent of the total water supply," UNICEF's Water and Sanitation Specialist, Ali Rishn explained.

The archaic water and sanitation infrastructure is failing to keep pace with

rapid urbanization. Basra's population has swelled to an estimated 4.6 million people, but it only has one waste treatment plant operating at 40 per cent capacity.

"The rest of Basra's waste is dumped in the open canals which feed into the Shatt al-Arab river, further compounding the crisis," Ali added.

At the peak of the crisis, vulnerable families had no choice but to buy bottled water even as they spent money on medical care for family members who had fallen sick from the contaminated water, said Zamzam, an elderly matriarch who supports a family of eleven on her widow's pension of approximately \$200 a month.

"What we have seen in Basra is heart-breaking. Vulnerable families have been pushed further into debt and poverty by spending a disproportionate amount of their income to buy drinking water. In today's Iraq, no child should struggle to find safe drinking water," said Hamida Lasseko, UNICEF's Representative in Iraq.

Water stations maintained by UNICEF and supported by OFDA are a source of safe drinking water for children and families here.

In support of the Iraqi government, UNICEF has made significant investments in upgrading the water and sanitation infrastructure in Basra, including rehabilitating three key water treatment plants, installing new pumps in water treatment plant—doubling the facility's capacity and bringing relief to approximately 750,000 people.

Building on previous investments, UNICEF is supplying mechanical parts that are crucial for the proper functioning of water treatment plants, rehabilitating treatment facilities to treat wastewater from Basra city center before being pumped into sewage collection network instead of rivers.



By Laila Ali, Communication Specialist, UNICEF Iraq.

Round table on water crisis in Basra held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 21 July 2019 – The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, participated today at a roundtable on water crisis in Basra, hosted by the Netherlands Embassy in Iraq, featuring Minister of Water Resources, Jamal Al-Adely, Deputy Minister of Health & Environment, Jasim Al-Falhi, Mr. Sadiq Al-Maliki, from the Prime Minister's Office, and Belkis

Wille and Lama Fakih from Human Rights Watch (HRW).

Earlier today, HRW issued its "Basra is Thirsty" report on the water crisis. Ms. Ruedas welcomed this important report and its recommendations.



Emergency risk communications training held in Basra

Basra, 23 July 2019 – The World Health Organization (WHO) office in Iraq together with the Ministry of Health of Iraq conducted an emergency risk communications training for technical teams, the media and influencers from Basra and Missan at AL-Mawane'a teaching hospital in Basra to enhance coordination and response of communication efforts in PHE. The training was supported by the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).



FAO organized multi-stakeholders' consultation on strengthening the food control system in Iraq

Baghdad, 25 July 2019 – Under the patronage of His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Representation in Iraq and in collaboration with FAO Regional Office for Near East and North Africa, a two-day Multi-Stakeholders Consultation on Strengthening the Food Control System was held in Iraq from 24-25 July 2019.

The workshop focused on strengthening the food control system competencies, institutional oversight and technical capabilities of all stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture, Health, Planning as well as Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Trade staff to propose the appropriate strategic and appropriate food safety activities toward progressive improvement of food control

functions.

In his welcoming address, Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq, greeted all participants from Iraqi ministries. "The main objective of this workshop is to look into the food safety systems in Iraq and to discuss the strengths, weakness, and mechanisms to collect and analyze information through-out multi-stakeholders consultation on strengthening the food control system in Iraq. The key question is how to address the relevant stakeholders' capacities and introduce an integrated food safety system in Iraq. The common review and analysis of food control system competencies in Iraq will inform what actions and funding are required to achieve a sustainable food safety control system in Iraq," Dr. EL Hajj Hassan said.

Dr. Hussein Ali Saud, Advise to Iraqi Minister of Agriculture for Livestock Activity, emphasized that FAO is a key partner of the Ministry of Agriculture and he does appreciate stated efforts to accomplish an integrated food safety system in Iraq. He expressed the importance of food safety and proper access to safer food for the citizen. Dr. Saud called for uniting efforts to produce a unified working paper that serves the agricultural sector and the process of providing safe, nutritious and wholesome food for the citizens which is one of the main tasks of the Ministry of Agriculture Mr. Saber Mansour, Regional Food Safety Specialist, FAO-RNE, Cairo, presented the international principles and guidelines to design and operate strong national food control system. "The national food control systems play a pivotal role in protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade". Mr. Mansour said.

This workshop was attended by 39 participants from all concerned Iraqi ministries. Following the group discussions, participants made fruitful recommendations and prioritized various needs for capacity building. The endorsements and priorities set by the participants will therefore guide future investment and improvement of the national food control system in Iraq to meet international food safety standard.

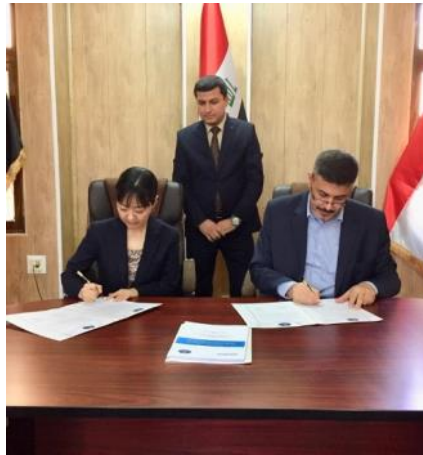


Joint final report on the ownership of residential compounds for Yazidi occupants in Sinjar, at the Cabinet table soon

Baghdad, 29 July 2019 - Mohammed Taher Al-Tamimi, Director-General of the NGO Directorate of the Council of Ministers, and Ms. Yuko Otsuki, Head of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in Iraq, signed a document of finalizing the joint report on the mechanisms of ownership of housing units for their Yazidi occupants in Sinjar District, which was part of the practices of the former regime in the injustice and oppression of this authentic Iraqi component.

Al-Tamimi and Otsuki praised the efforts of the joint technical and legal team from the two parties, who hold meetings and collected data from stakeholders for more than eight months. It is worth mentioning that this important step comes as part of the stabilization in areas that have been at-

tacked by the terrorist Da'esh and in line with the government effort for repatriation and compensation of those affected by the former regime's policies. This document aims at obtaining a de-



cision from the Council of Ministers regarding houses ownership for the Yazidis who were deported in 1975 from their villages and forced to live in 11 forced compounds, deprived of the right to own their houses.

During the meeting, the two parties reviewed the work of the UN-Habitat throughout Iraq, particularly in Sinjar, both in terms of rehabilitation of houses (over 2,000 so far), and the urban infrastructure that's been provided to ensure the return of Yazidis to their areas and ensure that the Yazidis themselves are involved in the reconstruction process, including women and survivors.

In addition to the rehabilitation of houses in Sinjar, 1,064 houses that were totally or partially destroyed in Sinuni and the neighboring villages have been rehabilitated.

Senior officials from Ministries and from the Federal Board of Supreme Audit attended a workshop on institutional performance management and audit-related issues

Baghdad, 30 July 2019 - To enhance the Public Institutions twenty-five senior officials from 3 Ministries and from the Federal Board of Supreme Audit attended a workshop on institutional performance management and audit-related issues, as part of UNDP in Iraq Public Sector Modernization Programme (IPSM).



FAO field visit to Al-Jazeera irrigation project and meeting with Local government and community leaders in Rabiaa, Ninawa Governorate

Ninawa, 31 July 2019 - The Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Iraq, Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, accompanied by FAO delegation, conducted a field visit to Al-Jazeera irrigation project, which aims at restoring water supply for food production and livelihoods in Ninawa.

FAO delegation met with the Cash for Work beneficiaries and implementing partner and also met with the local government and community leaders in Rabiaa.

They discussed FAO activities and programmes in Ninawa, as well as the needs of the farmers and how FAO can

support the agriculture sector for the benefit of the people of Iraq. Dr. El Hajj Hassan assured that FAO will be

providing the necessary support to improve the agriculture sector in Rabiaa region.



Inception workshop on Monitoring and Reporting on selected SDG indicators under FAO's custodianship held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 31 July 2019 - Today, under the patronage of His Excellency Dr. Nouri Sabah Al Dolaimi, the Minister of Planning of Iraq, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with FAO Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa organized one day Inception Workshop on Monitoring and Reporting on selected SDG indicators under FAO's custodianship.

This workshop was attended by participants from all concerned Iraqi ministries. Following the discussions, participants made fruitful recommendations and prioritized various needs for capacity building on monitoring and reporting selected SDG indicators under FAO custodianship.



Council of Ministers Secretary-General received UNDAF project proposals

Baghdad, 01 August 2019 – Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Hameed Al-Ghazi, received a copy of the most important projects proposed under UNDAF program in Iraq from the Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Marta Ruedas. DSRSG Ruedas assured that "UN aim is to see the framework agreement translated into programs targeted to strengthen the ability of state institutions to effectively respond to the needs of Iraqis especially for vulnerable groups in the provinces through providing services and jobs for the unemployed people".



FAO Representative met with the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources in Kurdistan Region

Erbil, 1 August 2019 - The Representative for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Iraq, Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, accompanied with FAO delegation met with the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources of Kurdistan, Ms. Begard Talabani. They discussed FAO activities and programmes being implemented in Iraq, as well as the challenges that Kurdistan faces in the field of agricultural and water resources and how FAO can support the agriculture sector in region for the benefit of the people. Dr. El Hajj Hassan assured that FAO will make efforts to provide the necessary support to improve the agriculture sector. At the end of the meeting, Ms.

Talabani thanked the FAO delegation and expressed its readiness to cooper-

ate fully with the organization for the development of the agricultural sector.



UNFPA & the Government of Iraq celebrate the 25 years of the International Conference on Population and Development

Baghdad, 1 August 2019 – Twenty-five years ago, 179 world leaders promised women to empower and protect them and improve their access to reproductive health services at the International Conference on Population & Development, ICPD, in Cairo.

On 28 July 2019, under the patronage and attendance of His Excellency, Dr Qusay Al-Suhail, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Iraqi Statistical Association, in collaboration with UNFPA, hosted a seminar on the 25 years of ICPD, in presence of UNFPA Regional Director for the Arab States, Dr Luay Shabaneh.

Throughout the seminar, academics, experts, and demographers discussed the progress made in Iraq and the ways forward to guarantee women, youth and adolescents have access quality education and reproductive health services, including family planning, and ensure all forms of discrimination against women and girls are eliminated.

The most important findings from the research papers submitted were the decrease of infant and child under five mortalities, the decrease in the fertility rate from 7 to 3.6. The papers acknowledged the major steps taken in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq which put further restrictions on polygamy and suspended the use Iraq's Penal Code's article 111 regarding "honour" killings.

Celebrations continued the next evening under the patronage of His Excellency, Adil Abdul Mahdi, Prime Minister of Iraq.

On 29 July, UNFPA and the Ministry of Planning, under the guidance and at-

tendance of His Excellency, Minister of Planning, Dr Noori Sabah al-Dulaimi, held a conference and dinner at the PM's Guest House to celebrate not only 25 years of the ICPD, but also World Population Day and 50 years since the establishment of UNFPA.

During the event, Mr Abdul Mahdi announced the launch of the planning process of the 2020 census, noting that it has been more than 30 years since the last comprehensive census. He also declared that the census would be conducted using digital technology for accuracy of data to help the Government initiate programmes aimed at improving the quality of life of the population in Iraq. UNFPA Regional Director, Dr Shabaneh, who was also present at the conference, applauded the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government for the efforts exerted to conduct the census

and reiterated UNFPA's commitment to providing technical support during all stages of the 2020 census, and ensure the data are widely utilized and disseminated for development.

Dr Shabaneh promised to continue to work with both governments, donors, and civil society to achieve zero preventable maternal death, zero unmet need for family planning and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices.

The event was attended by representatives from ministries, parliamentary committees, diplomats, donor community, civil society, and UN agencies, including Mr Ayman Gharaybeh, UNHCR Representative to Iraq, on behalf of Ms Marta Ruedas, the UN Resident Coordinator in Iraq, and the UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Ms. Alice Walpole.



UN, Ministry of Planning sign Memorandum of Understanding on Iraq Reconstruction and Recovery Trust Fund

Baghdad, 1 August 2019 – The Ministry of Planning and the United Nations signed today a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish the Iraq Reconstruction and Recovery Trust Fund in support of the Government's Recovery and Development Framework.

Iraqi Minister of Planning Dr. Nouri

Sabah al-Dulaimi signed on behalf of the Government of Iraq. Marta Ruedas, the Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator, signed on behalf of the United Nations.

The MoU falls in the framework of coop-

eration, is in line with the Iraqi government's commitments under the provisions of the Kuwait Conference in 2018, and will help in articulating the international community's pledges made at that time.

Ms. Ruedas said: "This Fund is a way to channel the commitments from the Kuwait International Conference for Reconstruction of Iraq. We are pleased to continue supporting the Ministry of Planning and the Government of Iraq in the implementation of this agenda as well as the longer-term Sustainable Development Goals".

The Trust Fund is in support of the Government's Recovery and Development Framework as defined in the Recovery and Resilience Programme and for the required policy and programme support to the Government's achievement of its SDGs targets and its Vision 2030.



UN-Habitat holds ceremony to hand over occupancy certificates to support housing, land and property rights of Yazidi returnees in Sinjar

Sinjar, Iraq, 3 August 2019 - The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) handed over more than 200 occupancy certificates to Yazidi returnees to Sinjar, a move aimed at facilitating the return of the displaced community.

The Yazidi population in Sinjar has suffered decades-long systematic discrimination, limiting access to their land and houses, making them vulnerable to forced evictions, relocations and land disputes. These factors have made it challenging for returnees to access official documents to prove their ownership and occupancy rights when reintegrating in their communities or when applying for compensation for damaged properties.

At a ceremony at the village of Solagh, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, delivered occupancy certificates to a number of beneficiaries and a Yazidi community representative (Mukhtar).

“The handover of occupancy certificates is a very concrete way to contribute to a better and dignified return of many people,” Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert said at the ceremony.

“We all know how important housing, land and property rights are, in particular for minorities, and it’s about time to document that what is yours is yours; that you own it,” she said, adding that the United Nations family will continue to support the Yazidis and other communities.

Mr. Muslim Qazimi, UN-Habitat Programme Manager, highlighted that more than 2,800 certificates have been issued and distributed to Yazidi beneficiaries since 2016, and an additional 5,000 certificates will be delivered by September 2020. The project covers different communities, but it is the Yazidi community whose property rights are most often challenged. UN-Habitat is working with the Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Justice and concerned local authorities to issue a legal decree to formalize the occu-

pancy certificates issued by UN-Habitat as full land ownership titles approved by the Federal Government of Iraq.

Combined with rehabilitation of war-damaged houses and basic infrastructure, issuance and delivery of occupancy certificates is a major step forward for reconstruction and reconciliation in Iraq.



FAO Representative in Iraq met with the Iraqi Minister of Water Resource; rehabilitation of the irrigation schemes in Iraq discussed

Baghdad, 05 August 2019 - Dr. Salah Al Hajj Hassan, FAO Representative in

Iraq, met with the Iraqi Minister of Water Resource, Dr. Jamal Adili. The meet-

ing focused on the cooperation between FAO and the Ministry in the field of rehabilitation of the irrigation schemes in Iraq, as well as the establishment of Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) to prevent flooding danger. The Minister reiterated his appreciation for the efforts of the organization in the restoring of Al-Jazeera Irrigation scheme in Ninawa governorate.

Dr. El Hajj Hassan assured that FAO will be providing the necessary support to strengthening national capacities in water management in general and dealing with the agricultural component of water scarcity in particular.



IOM Partners with Asiacell to support economic recovery in Iraq



Erbil, 05 August 2019 — The ISIL conflict displaced 6 million people in Iraq, disrupted the national economy and limited employment opportunities for citizens. Sixty per cent of jobs in Iraq are in the private sector, within Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs); very large numbers of those businesses experienced loss as a result of the conflict and need support to rebuild.

In Fallujah, for example, an International Organization for Migration (IOM) market assessment found that 69 per cent of construction businesses and 66 per cent of food-related businesses saw their workshops looted or burned between 2014 and 2017. Mosul and numerous other areas also showed high levels of damage and limited access to finance—challenges that EDF is designed to help businesses overcome.

On Monday (05/08), IOM Iraq signed a memorandum of understanding with telecommunications company Asiacell to support innovation under the Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) — a livelihoods programme that contributes to economic recovery and private sector revitalization through tailored support

to Small and Medium Enterprises.

The innovation component (EDFi) supports early-stage tech businesses and tech start-ups in Iraq that can contribute to the local economy and create jobs for young people in the tech sector.

“We strongly believe that the engagement of the private sector is a necessary condition for successful and sustainable economic recovery and job creation,” said IOM Chief of Mission Gerard Waite. “IOM Iraq looks forward to a long, productive collaboration with Asiacell, as we work to expand job creation and improve economic opportunities across Iraq.”

“Today marks the start of a strategic partnership between Asiacell and IOM that will bring the EDF-I into effect in Iraq,” added Asiacell CEO Amer Sunna. “Asiacell looks forward to contributing to the development of youth skills and capabilities, and setting the foundation for a powerful and sustainable economy.”

EDF aims to restore essential economic infrastructure by providing financial capital to SMEs in economic sectors that were successful prior to the conflict but suffered loss and damage and

have a high demand for labour. By targeting key sectors and providing necessary funding, the EDF encourages rapid but also large-scale job creation. The fund has received hundreds of applications since the pilot phase was launched in September 2018, and 142 business grants have been approved to date.

“After the liberation of Mosul, I sold a small plot of land that I owned and tried my best to reopen my factory,” explained Moufaq Ahmed Mohamed, an EDF beneficiary and owner of an oxygen plant. “I started with only two workers. Later, I received a grant from IOM which enabled me to buy a generator which is crucial to my work.”

“[Before that] I frequently lost hours of work due to sudden power outages,” he continued. “This generator was a boon to my factory; I have been able to produce more, enabling me to hire more people and expand to 11 workers — which means feeding 11 families. This makes me very happy; this kind of support for the private sector contributes to the revival and rebuilding of Mosul.” EDF forms part of IOM’s work in support of the people and Government of Iraq (GOI) to promote sustainable recovery across the country.

IOM Iraq’s EDF is supported by the USA Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM); the European Commission’s Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO); KfW, the German Development Bank; the Government of the Netherlands; and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

GEF on sustainable land management for improved livelihoods in Degraded Areas of Iraq will be launched soon by FAO

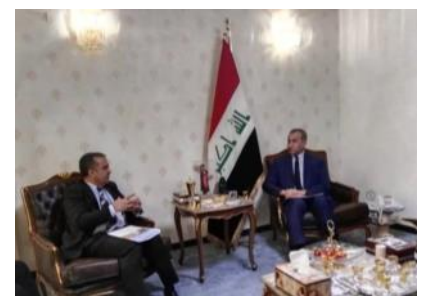
Baghdad 7 August 2019 - Dr. Jassim A. Al-Falahi, Technical Deputy of the Ministry of Environment, received the Representative for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Iraq, Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan. During the meeting, they discussed the implementation of the GEF on sustainable land management for improved livelihoods in Degraded Areas of Iraq, which will be launched soon by FAO in collaboration with the Minister of Environment and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The project objective is to reverse land degradation processes, conserve and

sustainably manage land and water resources in degraded marshland ecosystems in Southern Iraq for greater access to services from resilient ecosystems and improved livelihoods.

The two sides agreed to hold an inception workshop for launching this project in the first week of September. Also, the GCF project proposal was discussed, and it was agreed to have a quick following up. In addition, the impact of climate change, water pollution, and early warning systems were addressed. They agreed to have more in-depth discussion to bring further support to both data early warning

systems and food security data collection. Dr. El Hajj Hassan also raised the establishment of national framework and Dr. Al-Falahi fully supported the approach.



Iraqi Minister of Agriculture received FAO Representative for Iraq

Baghdad 7 August 2019 - Iraqi Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Sa'lih Hussein Al-Hassani, received the Representative for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Iraq, Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan. During the meeting, they discussed:

- FAO activities and programmes being implemented in Iraq, as well as the challenges that Iraq faces in the field of agricultural and how FAO can support the agriculture sector for the benefit of the Iraqi people in general and discussed the new EU-funded project in Ninawa, which supports smallholder farming families to diversify incomes, increase resilience, and provide nutritious and healthy diets in particular.

Also they touched upon the

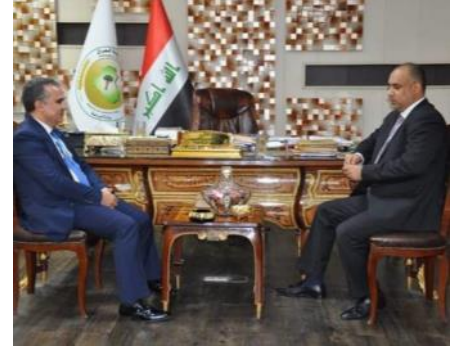
- New EU project for the south with consideration to ministry of agriculture priorities.

- Establishing a framework for the development of the agriculture sector supported by FAO.

- FAOR and the Minister agreed to visit Al-Jazeera Irrigation project in Rabiaa, Mosul for the inauguration ceremony of the five rehabilitated bridges with the His Excellency Iraqi Minister of Water Resources.

For his part, Dr. El Hajj expressed his thanks to the minister and his time for their cooperation and facilitation the food safety workshop which was held on 24 July at the ministry building. At

the end of the meeting, Dr. Al-Hassani expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the organization in increasing the resilience of farmers' livelihoods in crisis-affected.



UNFPA Director for the Arab region visit to Iraq; Advocacy efforts for the 2020 Population Census

Baghdad, 8 August 2019 – UNFPA Director for the Arab region, Dr Luay Shabaneh, concluded last week a four-day visit to Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. During the visit, Dr Shabaneh marked the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), World Population Day and UNFPA 50th anniversary with the Iraqi people and Government.

The Regional Director also held discussions with high level officials in the Central South area and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as part of UNFPA's advocacy efforts for the implementation of the 2020 Population Census.

He met with the Iraqi Prime Minister, Mr Adil Abdel Mahdi; the President of Iraq's Advisor, Mr Ali Shukri; the Second Deputy Speaker, Mr Bashir Al-Haddad; the Minister of Health, Dr Ala' Al-Alwan; the Minister of Planning, Dr Noori Al-Dulaimi; the Undersecretary at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Mr Faleh Al-Amiri; and the Head of the Central Statistical Organization, Dr Zia Kazem, as well as UN officials in Iraq.

In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Dr Shabaneh convened with President Nechirvan Barzani, as well as the Minister of Planning, Mr Dara Rasheed; the Minister of Health, Mr Saman Hussein Mohammed; and the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Ms Kwestan Mohammad, in the presence of the President's Chief of Staff, Mr Fawzi Hariri; the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Dr Aumed Sabah; the Head of the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office, Mr Sirwan Mohammed; the Director-General of Planning at the Ministry of Health; Ms Vian Jaf; and the Director-General of GD for Combatting Violence Against Women, Ms Kurdo Omer.

During his meetings, he received a positive response on the implementation of the census and both Governments agreed that the census should not be used for political gains but for development purposes. Conveners admitted that there might be some obstacles that can hinder the implementation of the census, however, expressed their readiness to discuss the concerns to reach an agreement that will serve first and foremost the interest

of the people of Iraq.

"I came to Iraq for two reasons: to celebrate the progress made by Iraq in women's reproductive health and rights since 1994 and to discuss the 2020 Census with key Government officials," said Dr Shabaneh.

"In the last 25 years, Iraq has made progress in reaching the goals of the ICPD in women's empowerment and rights by taking measures to decrease maternal death, infant and children under-five mortality, and fertility rate, which dropped from 7 to 3.6, despite the prevailing unrest in the country. In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, further restrictions were put on polygamy in resolution 62 while resolution 59 treated "honour killing" as a punishable crime," he added.

"Despite the remarkable progress achieved, yet a lot more needs to be done to achieve the unfinished business of the Programme of Action of the ICPD by ending preventable maternal deaths, ending gender-based violence and harmful practices, and ending the unmet need for family planning. Together with the International Community, UNFPA is committed to supporting the governments, civil society organisations, youth representatives, and community partners to achieve these goals," he concluded.

On the issue of the census, UNFPA Regional Director asserted: "We cannot fail the people of Iraq. After years of living in challenging social conditions and suffering from the repercussions of war, we will support the Iraqi people by helping them deliver accurate data and design people-centred strategies to help them achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and enhance the quality of their lives."



DSRSG/HC Ruedas visit to Ninewa Governorate



Mosul, 20 August 2019 - The United Nations Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, visited today Ninewa Governorate and met with government officials and displaced families.

Ms. Ruedas spoke with families who are living in tents near their destroyed homes in Hasansham U3, a camp near Mosul for almost 6,000 people displaced during the war against Daesh (ISIL).

The Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq met with representatives of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UN agencies in Bartella to discuss barriers to displaced families returning to their areas of origin as a result of the war against Daesh (ISIL) and ongoing threats and intimidation.

She also saw the new UN office in Mosul and discussed challenges facing NGOs and UN agencies managing

camps for internally displaced persons. While in Mosul, she met with the Governor of Ninewa, Mansoor Marid, and visited homes being reconstructed in Mosul with the assistance of UN-Habitat. Since 2017, UN-Habitat has

rehabilitated more than 1,100 damaged houses in Zanjilli, one of the poorest neighborhoods in Mosul. In addition to the Zanjilli project, UN-Habitat is rehabilitating schools and infrastructure while leading an effort with UNESCO to implement a plan for reconstructing Mosul's Old City, which is rich in historical and cultural significance.



“Support to Housing, Land and Property Rights for IDPs in Nineveh” training organized by UN Habitat



Baghdad, 21 August 2019 - As part of capacity development efforts, UN Habitat invited local counterparts and partners to participate in a training programme delivered by GLTN news (GLTN) experts under the project titled “Support to Housing, Land and Property Rights for IDPs in Nineveh”.

The Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-general and Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, said that it was fundamental to protect land and property rights to create the conditions for peace in conflict affected countries where land appropriation was used as an instrument of power and domination.

Young Yazidi women gain knowledge on their housing, land and property rights Sinjar, Northern Iraq

Sinjar, 20 August 2019 - "So many disputes have taken place because we do not have property documents...Now this can be prevented."

Layla Salu Alias, Borek resident, 21 years old.

"Our houses are not really our houses [...] because we have no documents. With this programme we are taking steps forward to solve this situation."

Najat Naadosh Ali, Borek resident, 21 years old.

Najat and Layla grew up in the Yazidi township of Borek (Mujama'at) in Sinjar, where their families were forcibly relocated in the 1970's, as part of the previous regime's discriminatory policies against ethnic and religious minorities. Both were only 16 years old when ISIL occupied Sinjar in 2014. Due to their religious beliefs, Yazidis were targets of violence, with many killed and captured. Family members were scattered during the displacement, either in Iraq or in other countries as refugees. As they returned to Borek, people added the absence of loved ones to the hardships of coming back to a town that is now lacking many essential services, such as running water and a constant supply of electricity. Moreover, Najat's and Layla's homes were damaged during hostilities; to this day they have not been able to repair them due to lack of

resources. As with every Yazidi family in Sinjar, they have never had any documents to prove they own their land, which often leads to unsuccessful compensation claims for destroyed or damaged property.

In 2018, UN-Habitat launched the programme titled "Support to IDPs Housing, Land and Property Rights in Nineveh, Northern Iraq" with the aim of supporting the sustainable return of the displaced population by contributing to the resolution of property claims. Families are visited by the UN-Habitat team to collect information and geo-spatial data to identify the plot. The claim is then digitally registered in a software based on Social Tenure Domain Model, through a specially tailored mobile application. Once the property claim verified, an Occupancy Certificate is issued. Layla's and Najat's household were surveyed at the beginning of 2019 and have now received their certificates. For most of these Yazidi families this is the first



time they possess any document that recognizes their rights over the lands they work and the houses they live in.

Awareness raising being a cornerstone for empowering communities, the programme intends to strengthen the knowledge on housing, land and property rights among Yazidi people. In line with UN-Habitat's gender-sensitive approach, in May 2019 a female-only session allowed 67 women to discuss, in a safe and friendly environment, what these rights mean to them.

As of July 2019, UN-Habitat has delivered Occupancy Certificates to 2,811 households in Sinjar, Ninewa Governorate, Northern Iraq.

Government of Iraq contributes \$33m for stabilization activities in historic agreement

Baghdad, 28 August 2019 – The Government of Iraq has today signed an historic agreement with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), committing USD 33 million for stabilization activities across the country.

Administered through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS), the contribution will be used to rehabilitate essential infrastructure and services like water, electricity, healthcare, housing and education in key areas of Ninewa, Anbar, Salah Al-Din, Diyala, and Kir-

kuk.

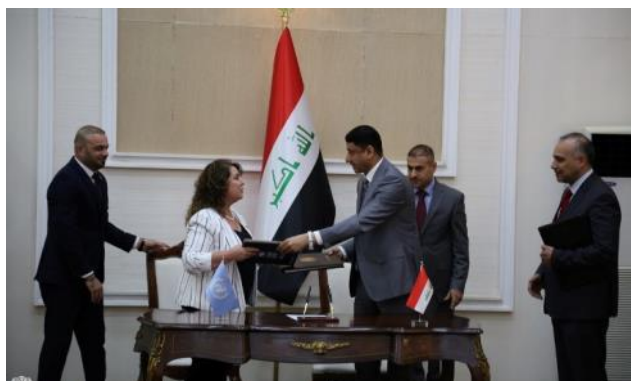
It places the Government of Iraq as one of UNDP's top 10 donors across its stabilization portfolio, and signifies the government's trust and confidence in its partnership with UNDP.

"We're extremely grateful for this contribution, which represents the Government of Iraq's unwavering commitment to stabilizing Iraq and encouraging the safe and dignified return of communities who fled the atrocities of ISIL," says UNDP's Resident Representative in

Iraq, Ms. Zena Ali Ahmad.

"The Government of Iraq has been a strong partner and leader within UNDP's stabilization efforts. Without their support, we wouldn't have been able to complete more than 2,000 stabilization projects benefiting more than 8 million Iraqis. We look forward to bolstering our partnership with this new agreement," adds Ms. Ali Ahmad.

The Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, His Excellency Mr. Hamid Al-Ghazi said: "Through this agreement, the Iraqi government seeks to implement projects in various affected geographic areas, while focusing on those areas that have experienced the most damage. "The agreement will mostly focus on infrastructure and water, electricity, health and other projects, as our provinces still need more infrastructure and support for basic services. The agreement also reaffirms Iraq's commitment to the strategic partnership with the United Nations Development Programme to restoring stability in the liberated areas, enabling displaced communities to return, and building and rehabilitating the infrastructure in the provinces that have been affected by the tragic circumstances that have passed through the country," added His Excellency Mr. Al-Ghazi.



A festival aimed at raising awareness on working together for a better society held in Mosul

Mosul, 3 July 2019 - In Mosul, youth leaders from Y-Peer Iraq, supported by IOM - UN Migration Agency, collaborated with Alkhadraa Community Policing Forum and 20 civil society organizations to hold a festival aimed at raising awareness on working together for a better society. During the festival, organizers explained how the Community Policing Forums (CPF) work, how people can discuss their community concerns with CPF members to find appropriate solutions, making their communities safer and more cohesive. IOM has been supporting Community Policing in Iraq since 2012. The Community Policing model is a migration management tool that supports the

prevention of exploitation of vulnerable populations and mitigates drivers of irregular migration. The programme's objective is to contribute to enhanced

peace, security and stability by connecting community, police and civil society actors while restoring accountable institutions.



IOM recently opened new Community Policing Office in Duhok

Baghdad, 30 July 2019 - IOM recently opened the 17th Community Policing Office (CPO) in Duhok, with support from Auswärtiges Amt (German Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs). CPOs provide a dedicated space for people to meet with trained community police officers.

As German Consul General Barbara Wolf explained, "Community policing enhances contacts between citizens and law enforcement institutions and helps with building trust. I congratulate all partners in setting up the new community policing office in Duhok which further extends the existing network of community policing fora all over Iraq supported by Germany since 2016."

Community policing helps improve peace and security, which contributes to manage safe, orderly and regular migration. According to the Duhok Police Director, it's working.

"We at the Department of Police in

Duhok take community policing seriously and extend support to them in any way we can, as per guidance from the Ministry of Interior," he stated. "And the result is, as you can see, the

situation in Duhok is very safe and secure. And part of this success is because of the good relationship between the security and police forces and the citizens."



IOM Migration Management Unit delivered a training on community policing for community members

Baghdad, 8 August 2019 - IOM Migration Management Unit delivered a training on community policing for community members from 6-8 August 2019. 20 participants discussed how to analyze and address the root causes of safety and security issues.

"Women are involved in all spheres of life. The community policing forum provides a platform for women to address their problems; it is therefore important that a woman was elected as the CPF vice-president," said Duaa Al-Khayat, a participant in the community policing training.



In Iraq, IOM engages Government, community actors to tackle human trafficking

Baghdad, 2 August 2019 - Across Iraq, the instability and insecurity caused by years of conflict have left an environment where trafficking in persons (TIP) is a constant and real threat. It occurs in peacetime and is exacerbated during conflict and post-crises. Approximately 1.6 million people in Iraq are internally displaced. The 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan estimates that 6.7 million people are still in need of humanitarian assistance.

Many individuals and communities are vulnerable to human traffickers and migrant smugglers; these risks impact those communities affected by the conflict with the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), as well as migrants who have been trafficked into Iraq or are in irregular situations.

Between January 2018 and July 2019, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) assisted 108 Victims of Trafficking (98 women, 10 men). Most of them were foreign nationals, reflecting the nature of cases that are referred to IOM, and most were victims of either labour or sexual exploitation.

On Tuesday, World Day against Trafficking in Persons (WDATIP), the focus here was on creating an environment where government and civil-society actors could discuss pathways to combat the crime and provide meaningful protection to victims.

IOM, within the framework of the Strengthening Community Policing in Iraq project, organized the technical workshop “Building Networks to Better Identify and Assist Victims of Trafficking and Other Sexual Gender-Based Violence” for criminal justice actors, service delivery providers, and community members from across Iraq. The aim of this one-day workshop (30/7) was to develop a potential procedure for security and protection actors to identify, refer and assist victims of trafficking and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) using the community policing approach.

The foundation for Tuesday’s workshop was laid in Baghdad early last month, when IOM and Iraq’s Ministry of Interior organized a joint session for criminal justice actors on mainstreaming the Community Policing approach and protection principles into investigations of trafficking cases.

Community Policing focuses on supporting the Ministry of Interior and rebuilding trust between law enforcement officers and communities to re-establish the rule of law and create safe and secure environments where law



enforcement can better serve and protect the community.

“From a judiciary perspective, there are ambiguities at the practical level in the fight against trafficking in persons. We need to have more discussions and offer concrete results in providing protection to victims, in cooperation with international organizations,” Judge Ala’a Hussein, from the Baghdad Rusafa Investigation Court, said at the time.

As a direct outcome of the joint session, letters of recommendation were issued to the Higher Judicial Council suggesting waivers of fines for victims of trafficking who find themselves in irregular situations because of their trafficking experience and overstayed visas.

Also, on WDATIP, IOM Iraq’s Trafficking in Persons Awareness-Raising Roadshow stopped in Erbil.

Between 21 July and 21 August, IOM staff are traveling the country with representatives of the Government to conduct information sessions on trafficking in persons in selected governorates.

The Iraqi Parliament passed an anti-trafficking law in 2012 that put forth punishments for both sex and labour trafficking; however, it was only adopted in the Kurdistan Region in 2018. Through activities like the roadshow and targeted trainings for law enforcement officers and community members, IOM Iraq’s Migration Management Unit (MMU) is working to ensure the law’s proper application throughout the region.

“IOM lauds the Government of Iraq for paying more attention to address trafficking in persons as a form of transnational organized crime. IOM, with its strong network across Iraq, continues to support the Government of Iraq and society to combat trafficking in persons,” said IOM Iraq Chief of Mission Gerard Waite. “These methods include

developing and promoting a well-planned migration strategy, providing technical assistance, and capacity development that will lead to prevention, protection of victims, and prosecution of offenders.”

IOM Iraq conducts complementary counter trafficking initiatives supported by the US Government’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. These activities focus on raising awareness of TIP within at-risk communities, and training front liners to identify and safely refer victims of trafficking. IOM Iraq also provides comprehensive assistance to victims of trafficking, including items such as clothes and dignity kits, emergency cash assistance and services (legal, psychosocial and medical assistance, or assisted voluntary return and reintegration – either directly or through partners).

As part of the holistic response to counter trafficking, IOM assists government counterparts in strengthening Integrated Border Management and Community Policing, including supporting initiatives towards the UN Security Council 1325 Resolution on Women Peace and Security.

The project Strengthening Community Policing in Iraq is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO).



IOM presented its Community Policing work in Iraq to the new German Defense Minister

Baghdad, 20 August 2019 - IOM had the pleasure of presenting its Community Policing work to the new German Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer during her visit to Iraq. In coordination with the German Government's Ministry of Interior, Community Policing rebuilds trust between the community and law enforcement actors, a necessary step to prevent and address safety and security challenges and work towards stabilization. This approach also facilitates access to justice for those most vulnerable, such as female-headed households and victims of trafficking. IOM's Community Policing programme contributes to more resilient and secure communities, which also encourages safe returns of internally displaced persons. At the reception for Minister Kramp-

Karrenbauer, German Ambassador Dr. Ole Diehl explained: "Too many IDPs are still waiting to return to their homes. This is not possible without safety in their communities. Community Policing helps to provide security

and trust in liberated areas. Germany therefore proudly supports IOM's Community Policing approach with funding from the Foreign Office. This is an important component of our comprehensive approach in Iraq."



Iraq has another new Community Police Office in Basra

Basra, 22 August 2019 - Iraq has another Community Police Office (CPO) with the opening today of a new space in Basra, supported by the German Federal Foreign Office and in collaboration with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior. "It is great day for the community police in Basra as we inaugurate our new office. I would like to thank IOM for their efforts in making this possible," said Col. Tawfiq, Head of Community Police in Basra. "This will make it easier for people, including women, to come and speak to us," added 1st Lt. Hana'a Alwan. The new office is one of 17 across the country, will provide essential support

to vulnerable individuals, connect communities with law enforcement and support 12 Community Policing Fo-

rum previously established by IOM and the Ministry of Interior across the governorate.



Mine Action

Czech Embassy briefed on the extent of the explosive contamination in Iraq, along with summary of UNMAS response

Baghdad, 16 July 2019 - UNMAS Senior Programme Manager in Iraq, Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, recently met with Mr. Eduard Rehacek, the Second Secretary for Economy and Trade at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Baghdad. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the extent and nature of the explosive hazard contamination in Iraq, along with a brief synopsis on UNMAS response. The meeting included a discussion on the success of training and risk education initiatives, and how such activities enable a path towards a more self-reliant Iraq and informed citizenry.

Explosive hazards continue to hinder humanitarian and stabilization activities in the country, and stall prospective socio-economic development in the future. Thus far, the Government of the Czech Republic has played a pivotal role in rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts post-Da'esh, and has acted as a catalyst for the sustainable return of displaced communities. UNMAS would like to thank the Government of the Czech Republic for its ongoing and continued support to UNMAS explosive hazard management activities in Iraq.



UNMAS continues its training activities

Baghdad, 18 July 2019 - UNMAS recently held a two-day training course on 'Basic Humanitarian Mine Action Management' for local government stakeholders in Wassit, Iraq. The course provided participants with an

overview of the mine action sector and UNMAS activities in country. UNMAS Iraq also recently completed another round of explosive hazard First Responder (EHFR) training courses in Baghdad with female police officers.

UNMAS thanks German Embassy in Iraq for their support to capacity enhancement and gender mainstreaming initiatives!



Second meeting of the Explosive Hazard Management (EHM) sub-working group held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 8 August 2019 - The EU Delegation in Iraq, recently chaired the second meeting of the Explosive Hazard Management (EHM) sub-working group in Baghdad. UNMAS is thankful to EU Delegation and especially to Mr. Tomas Reyes Ortega for his role in supporting and facilitating EHM in Iraq over the past two years.



Healthcare

One Step Closer!

Baghdad, 01 July 2019 - Earlier in June, UNFPA and the Ministry of Health held a technical review workshop, supported by the Embassy of Canada in Iraq, to put the final touches on the family planning strategy for Iraq before submission for endorsement. Family planning means parents have a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children.



WHO Regional Director in Iraq to reinforce WHO support as country enters transition to development phase

Baghdad, 15 July 2019 - Regional Director for the World Health Organization's Eastern Mediterranean, Dr. Ahmed Al Mandhari, arrives to Iraq today to mark a major strategic shift in WHO's work in the country.

For many years, WHO's priority work in Iraq was focused on responding to urgent health needs as a result to the ongoing crisis. This year, WHO's focus will move from pure emergency response operations to both emergency and developmental activities that aim to rebuild the country's health system.

During his visit, Dr. Al Mandhari will review a number of significant health projects, focusing on achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by ensuring the delivery of essential basic service packages for all Iraqis. He will also review WHO's work with partners to ensure an uninterrupted health response for vulnerable populations, in addition to ensuring joint efforts to secure funds for the rehabilitation of health facilities and services.

"We have an ambitious vision for a modern health sector in Iraq," said Dr. Al Mandhari. "This vision will focus on scaling up priority programs that will have a direct impact on people's health," Dr. Al Mandhari added. "The new development phase is a challenge that we must be ready to stand together to achieve," noted Dr. Al Mandhari.

Over the past years, Iraq's health system faced enormous challenges as a result of shortages in basic and essential health services at primary health care level, limited pharmaceutical supplies, weakened health infrastructure, and limited human resources. This was compounded by the increased health needs of an estimated 1.6 million internally displaced people, a quarter of a million Syrian refugees, and four million returnees -- all of whom require primary, secondary, and tertiary health care intervention; a situation that put even more stress on the already ailing health system in the country.

"The health sector in Iraq faced many challenges during the past two decades and it needs a lot of attention and work to recover and resume normal service delivery in terms of quality, quantity, and easy access to health services," said Dr. Adham Rashad Ismail Abdel Moneim, Acting WHO Representative in Iraq. "WHO is working closely with the Ministry of Health and health partners to step up the recovery process and mobilize all available resources for



this new phase of protracted emergency and development activities," Dr. Abdel Moneim added.

The Regional Director will be meeting with high-level Iraqi officials to discuss the health needs of all Iraqis; including displaced populations and Syrian refugees living in camps and host communities. Needs of populations returning to under-recovery areas is among the visit agenda topics.

"We stress the urgent need for evaluating the current health situation in Iraq in general and continued response to a protracted emergency in recovering areas in particular; our aim is to maintain essential to first-line health care service delivery and adequate stock of medicines and medical supplies there" Al Mandhari concluded.

WHO's emergency response in Iraq between 2016 - 2018

During the past five years, WHO has supported 23 Primary Health Care Centers (PHCC) in IDP camps and tens of primary health care centres in host communities. Four field hospitals

with 200 beds capacity were established, in addition to more than 12 referral hospitals supported with equipment, consumables, and medication.

More than 69 mobile medical clinics were deployed to serve IDPs at the front lines and in hard to reach areas. WHO also provided support to eight health facilities serving Syrian refugees inside refugee camps in Iraq.

This support is ongoing to cover the needs of an estimated 1.7 million internally displaced people- of which 500,000 people are living in 33 major IDP camps.

WHO has supported the Ministry of Health and partners with medicines, medical supplies, and emergency kits to respond to urgent health needs of IDPs and people returning to their areas of origin in Ninewa, Salah Addin, Kirkuk, and Anbar. More than 5.5 million beneficiaries were reached with a wide range of life-saving medicines for acute and chronic diseases, in addition to medical kits and surgical supplies of different types.

To efficiently detect and respond to any potential disease outbreak, WHO is supporting 170 reporting sites of Early Warning Alert Response Network (EWARN) in Anbar, Ninewa, Salah Aldin, and Kirkuk governorates. Health care providers have been trained on disease reporting and equipped with electronic tablets to document and report possible outbreaks.

WHO, in collaboration with other humanitarian organizations and health cluster partners, is coordinating and supporting the transition to recovery and development programs.



Statement on Iraq by Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean



Cairo, Egypt, 23 July 2019 – I recently concluded a four-day visit to Iraq where I saw firsthand a health system transitioning from emergency response to reconstruction, rehabilitation, and resilience, while at the same time addressing the health needs of millions of vulnerable Iraqis and refugees.

The country's new national health priorities -- including health financing, environmental health and sanitation, and Universal Health Coverage – indicate a new chapter in Iraq's health sector. This means accessible, affordable health services and improved health and wellbeing for all Iraqis, everywhere throughout the country. In my meetings with His Excellency the Minister of Health and his technical team, we agreed that this is aspiring goal can only be achieved through strengthened coordination and collaboration between national health authorities, WHO, and all health partners.

During my visit to Baghdad, I visited Al-Zwaya primary healthcare center, where I saw the need to strengthen family medicine at the PHC levels as a key component to achieving Universal



Health Coverage (UHC).

In Erbil, I met with His Excellency the Kurdistan Minister of Health, the Governor of Erbil, and the Head and members of Parliament. Our discussions enabled me to better understand the need for a new health legislation in the region to better access to quality health services, especially for those in need.

I saw the impact of the work that WHO, health staff, and partners are doing to save lives of the most vulnerable people in this country, including infants and children in Heevi Pediatric Hospital in Dohuk, where WHO supported the establishment of a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). I saw babies born as early as 28 weeks surviving in the NICU and children in life-threatening conditions recovering in the PICU thanks to the collective support of WHO and donors. In both units, the beds were full of neonates and children while others waited to be admitted, highlighting the need for expansion to accommodate more people in need of care.

I also visited WHO's warehouse in Erbil, which is crucial to supporting the health response in Iraq and fostering cross-border operations in northeast Syria. I applaud this efficient and effective way of resource utilization.

In the WHO-supported primary health care centre located in Sharya camp (which serves the health needs of the displaced persons in Dohuk), I met Iraqis with life-threatening trauma injuries, and saw how moving services closer to people living in remote and low-access areas could save lives at critical moments.

In Ninewa, I visited two field hospitals established by WHO in west Mosul to serve returnees following the destruction of two main hospitals as a result of conflict. I toured the damaged Ibn Sina Hospital and other medical centres to witness firsthand the devastating effects of attacks on health care. Although the field hospitals in west Mosul are overwhelmingly full, they partially cover the current gaps in secondary and tertiary healthcare services for returnees.

I spoke to health workers in primary health care facilities and field hospitals. Every one of them working in the frontlines is an unsung hero. I applaud their courage, resilience, and desire to serve the vulnerable communities during and after the crisis, and now in the phase of transition and reconstruction.



Without them, we would not have successfully saved lives in the most critical of times.

As part of WHO's efforts to strengthen referral services for IDPs and refugees, I was happy to hand over two new ambulances to the Ministry of Health, reinforcing our commitment to strengthen the country's health system. These ambulances will go a long way in enhancing referral services for IDPs and refugees living in Dahuk governorate.

The work that WHO and partners are doing in Iraq reflects the true spirit and values of WHO. My discussions with health cluster partners enabled me to understand different types and interests of stakeholders that WHO work with to achieve its integrated agenda for a better response to emergency operations in the country.

In my meeting with the UN country team, we agreed on unifying and coordinating our efforts towards achieving the national health targets in alignment with the sustainable development goals. We also agreed on working together with the government to develop additional strategies to promote behavior change and strengthen primary healthcare facilities and their delivery of services as a pathway to achieving UHC.

I left the country with a clear picture of the meaning of a protracted emergency and the role that WHO and other partners play.

In 2019 and beyond, I pledge WHO's ongoing commitment to strengthening collaboration with national authorities, partners and donors, to build a health system that can deliver health services to all people across Iraq, without facing access restrictions or financial difficulties.

UNHCR has provided a gastroscopy OGD to Rizgary Public Hospital

Erbil, 14 July 2019 - UNHCR has provided a gastroscopie OGD to Rizgary Public Hospital to increase the capacity of the health system in Erbil. The hospital serves refugees, IDPs, and the host community who had to wait a long time to receive OGD services.



UNHCR donated six dental chairs and three Autoclaves to the newly established first public dental centre in Soran, Iraq

Baghdad, 24 July 2019 - UNHCR donated six dental chairs and three Autoclaves to the newly established first public dental centre in Soran, Iraq. "Thanks to this donation, we are looking to offer dental services to the 500,000 people living in the region", said the Director of Health Center in Soran.



Anti-smoking campaigns targeting children launched to raise awareness of the problem among IDPs

Erbil, 22 August 2019 - 35% of Haj Ali & Jemma camps population are between 5-17 years. During focus group discus-

sions, communities raised concerns that several children were seen smoking cigarettes. IOM launched a series of

anti-smoking campaigns targeting children, to raise awareness.



UNESCO Director in Iraq and the Head of the Sunni Endowment Diwan visited the minaret of the Suhrawardi Mosque

Baghdad, 4 July 2019 - UNESCO Director in Iraq and the Head of the Sunni Endowment Diwan visited the minaret of the Suhrawardi Mosque. UNESCO will lend its assistance to the Sunni Waqf and the Iraqi authorities to assess the damage to the Minaret and throughout the main phases of its rehabilitation.



UNESCO visited the Institute of Music Studies in Baghdad

Baghdad, 4 July 2019 - UNESCO visited the Institute of Music Studies in Baghdad and met with the Head of Institute Mr. Mohammed Redha, and Mr. Mahmood Abdul-Jabar, DG of the Department of Musical Arts and the staff of the Institute. UNESCO will assess the structural conditions of the buildings.



Director of Cabinet of UNESCO Director-General visited Iraq

Baghdad, 12 July 2019 – Mr. Nicolas Kassianides, Director of Cabinet of UNESCO Director-General met with Maysoon Al Damluji, cultural advisor to President Salih, and discussed ways of cooperation in the area of culture.

Mr. Kassianides met with the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Dr. Al-Hamdani, and the Minister of Higher Education, Prof. Al-Suhail, to discuss ways of reinforcing cooperation with these ministries.

With Dr. Abdul Latif Al Heymem, Head of the Sunni Endowment Diwan, close cooperation in the #RevivetheSpiritOfMosul initiative was



discussed. The same initiative was discussed with Mr. Rahman Al Ameri, Director of the Department of International Organizations in MOFA.

Director Kassianides, accompanied by the UNESCO team in Iraq, visited the historical citadel of Erbil with Dara Al Yaqoubi, head of the High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization. The Erbil Citadel dates back thousands of years, to the first settlers of Erbil and is inscribed on the UNESCO List of World Heritage.

They visited Al-Nouri Mosque, the al-Sa'a church and the old city of Mosul to witness actions taken and planned to



address the damage inflicted to the old city taken due to violent conflict and progress in rehabilitation efforts.

#RevivetheSpiritofMosul initiative was launched in 2018 by UNESCO to reconstruct and rehabilitate historical sites in Mosul.

On 12 July 2019, Mr. Kassianides was at the Mosul Book Forum with artists, architects and intellectuals from Mosul discussing UNESCO's Initiative #RevivetheSpiritofMosul. Participants exchanged on needs and expectations of the Moslawi's regarding the recovery of their city.

EU, UNESCO and partners announce “Support to livelihoods through cultural heritage development” project



Amman, Jordan, 21 July 2019 – The European Union (EU), UNESCO and key partners gathered to honor the partnership and collaborations forged around the “Support to livelihoods through cultural heritage development” project. The project focuses on creating short-term decent job opportunities through employment intensive methods applied to safeguard cultural heritage in the northern districts of Jordan and Iraq.

The project will be coordinated by the UNESCO Amman office and implemented in partnership with the ILO, the UNESCO Iraq office and key partners over the next two years. The project will be supported by the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the EU ‘Madad’ Fund, an innovative tool initiated in 2014 in response to the Syria crisis. The EU ‘Madad’ Fund acts as a key instrument to deliver the EU’s pledges, address resilience and stabilization needs and support refugees and host communities in Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, Lebanon and Egypt.

Graciously hosted by H.E Mrs. Majd Shweikeh, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, the ceremony was attended by H.E Andrea Matteo Fontana, EU Ambassador to Jordan, H.E. Dara Al-Yaqoobi, Deputy Minister and Head of the High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR) - Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Mr Abdel Razzaq Arabiyat, Managing Director of the Jordan Tourism Board, Mr Yazin Al Ayan, Acting Director General of the Department of Antiquities, Mr. Augusto Piccagli, Head of EU Cooperation for Yemen and Iraq, Ms. Costanza Farina, UNESCO Representative to Jordan, Mr. Brendan Cassar, representing UNESCO Iraq Office, and supportive partners.

H.E. Shweikeh emphasized the importance of turning challenges to tourism into concrete opportunities. “Sustainable tourism is a key objective of this upcoming initiative. Our collective presence here today, as we gather to honor this partnership, signifies our ongoing collaboration, with a strong focus on continuity, sustainability and action”.

H.E Ambassador Fontana stated, “This project aims to improve self-reliance through access to decent employment opportunities for Syrians, Jordanians and Iraqis in the cultural heritage sector, through Employment Intensive schemes in two northern governorates of Jordan and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). It also aims to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship development in the cultural heritage sector, unleashing its potential to boost the economy and create jobs.”

On behalf of UNESCO, Ms. Farina shared, “This major EU investment celebrates UNESCO’s innovative approach to optimize cultural heritage rehabilitation as a vehicle to create job opportunities for unemployed youth. This substantiates the notion that culture can serve as a source of resilience and a vector for socio-economic development. We are extremely grateful and honored by this partnership and the trust bestowed upon UNESCO and its partners. We are also very grateful to the Department of Antiquities for the strong and longstanding collaboration on this and other cultural heritage initiatives”.

Mr. Dara al Yaqoobi, Deputy Minister and Head of the High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization was also in attendance, sharing enthusiasm surrounding the robust partnerships that will serve to ensure strong outcomes.

In line with governmental priorities, the EU-Funded project will seek to engage both Jordanian and Iraqi experts as well as Syrians, and young people, in their respective communities in the preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage sites for tourism purposes in the northern districts of Jordan (Irbid and Mafraq) and Iraq (Erbil, Duhok). A Steering committee co-ordinated by UNESCO will provide strategic guidance and will further support this work, in partnership with relevant institutions including the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Institut Francais du Proche-Orient (IFPO) and the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (GPIA), who were also in attendance.

At the close of the ceremony, H.E. the Minister presented H.E. the EU Ambassador with a plaque, plaque as a gesture of appreciation. The Minister recognized the EU Ambassador’s longstanding efforts and impactful engagement in the field of sustainable tourism and cultural heritage in Jordan. The EU has been an enduring strategic partner of UNESCO, providing generous funding and expertise to a host of projects focused on education, freedom of expression and enhancing resilience.

About the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the EU ‘Madad’ Fund:

Since its establishment in December 2014, a significant share of the EU’s non-humanitarian aid for Syria’s neighbouring countries is provided through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the EU ‘Madad’ Fund. The Trust Fund brings a more coherent and integrated EU aid response to the crisis and primarily addresses longer term economic, educational, protection and social needs of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq, and supports overstretched local communities and their administrations. To date, the Trust Fund has committed 334 million euros to Jordan.



A ceremony for the restitution of cultural property retrieved by various countries held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Baghdad, 29 July 2019 - Under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, in the presence of the international diplomatic community, UNESCO office in Iraq

participated in a ceremony for the restitution of cultural property retrieved by various countries.

Representing UNESCO, Mr. Rory Robertshaw emphasized the need for inter-

national cooperation in order to protect Iraqi heritage and to restore what has been lost.



Education

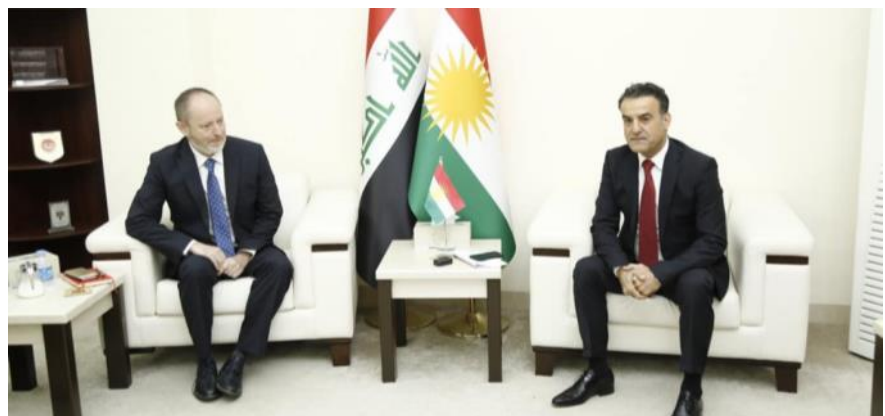
Members of Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IMWG) on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) visited France

Baghdad, 4 July 2019 - UNESCO, in partnership with Prime Minister's Advisory Council (PMAC), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (GoI and KRG) organized a study visit to France for members of Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IMWG) on Technical and Vocational Education and Training TVET.



UNESCO team in Iraq met with the new KRG Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Erbil, 24 July 2019 - UNESCO team in Iraq met with Dr Aram Kader, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in the Kurdistan Regional Government. UNESCO congratulated the Minister on his recent appointment. The lasting partnership between the Ministry and UNESCO on higher education provided a backdrop to discussions on national qualifications frameworks; quality assurance and accreditation; and compliance with aspects of the “Bologna Process” to ensure comparability in standards and quality of Higher Education qualifications.



TVET Reform Project discussed in Baghdad

Baghdad, 25 July 2019 - UNESCO Education team in Iraq met today with Dr. Fouad Mohammed, Deputy Minister for Scientific Research Affairs, Dr. Hamid Ahmed, Deputy Minister, Administrative Affairs, Dr. Salah Al-Nuaimy, Minister's Advisor, and Dr. Ehab Abbas, Director of Research and Development Department at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR), Dr. Abdulmohsein Mohaisen, President of Middle Technical University, and Dr. Fareed Majeed, Deputy President of MTU. Dr. Fouad welcomed the UNESCO team and confirmed the important role of UNESCO to support higher education in Iraq. The UNESCO team expressed the success of the activities conducted under TVET Reform Project

in cooperation with MoHESR for the last three years, in particularly the three training workshops on Bologna Process which were conducted recently by UNESCO experts in Iraq. The discussions also focused on nation-

al qualifications frameworks; quality assurance and accreditation; and compliance with aspects of the "Bologna Process" to ensure comparability in standards and quality of Higher Education qualifications.



Shadow theatre as a recreational teaching method

Baghdad, 30 July 2019 - We all read stories at school, but what if we could see these stories come alive, in the classroom?

Sara, Haneen and Marwa are enjoying watching their teachers perform a story of the interplay between a mouse and a lion in their school's first-ever shadow theatre.

"We used to read these stories in books or watch them on television, but seeing them performed in a theatre in our school is so much fun for us," said Sara, 11,

IOM organized a training course on shadow theatre for a group of teachers as a recreational teaching method.



UNESCO team in EU funded project - System Building and Capacity Strengthening, for effective delivery of quality education outcomes – will be launched in September

Baghdad, 1 August 2019 - UNESCO and UNICEF met with the Ministry of Education to plan for the implementation of a new EU funded project - System Building and Capacity Strengthening, for effective delivery of quality education outcomes.

Among the components of the project, the roll-out of the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in 10 governorates. The official launching of the project will take place beginning of September 2019 with the presence of the EU and the Government.



New horizons of peace and conflict research in Iraq



Baghdad, 15 August 2019 - UNDP, the Iraqi Al Amal Association and the University of Innsbruck deepen their collaboration in partnership with the Universities of Anbar, Baghdad, Mosul and Tikrit.

After experiences of large-scale violence, conflict transformation work is a particularly complex endeavor. In order to be successful, it appears not enough to negotiate ceasefire agreements but continues channels of dialogue need to be established that allow communities to step by step face their daily challenges in their struggles for peace. In the Iraqi case, universities – both faculty and students – have been identified as key actors for actively contribute to national conflict transformation and reconciliation. To this end, the University of Innsbruck's Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies has been invited to partner with colleagues from different Iraqi universities to build capacities for teaching and research in this discipline.

During the academic year 2018/19, the University of Innsbruck's Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy and History has facilitated the development of a national framework for curricula in Peace and Conflict Studies in Iraq, in partnership with nine Iraqi universities. After the extraordinary success of this first joint project, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has awarded the Iraqi Al Amal Association and the University of Innsbruck with a new grant to lift the cooperation with Iraqi academics in the framework of post-war reconciliation to a new level. While the 2018-2019 project phase has focused primarily on curriculum development and basic capacity building for

Peace and Conflict Studies for Iraqi academics and youth trainings in the field of conflict transformation, leading to the establishment of the first academic degree programs, this new project includes an advanced teaching and faculty capacity building component on the one hand and a research pillar for peace and conflict monitoring on the other hand.

First Programs for Peace and Conflict Studies in Anbar, Baghdad and Mosul During the past year particular emphasis was given to training a group of experienced Iraqi scholars from different disciplines within the field of Peace and Conflict Studies. Academics from all over Iraq have been introduced to basic concepts of transnational peace philosophy and elicitive conflict transformation, as they have been developed within the framework of the Innsbruck School of Peace Studies. A central consideration of the elicitive curriculum development efforts was the establishment of a joint national framework, that on the one hand is compatible with the international field of Peace and Conflict Studies, and on the other hand also leaves space for a variety of local particularities in the Iraqi context.

Elicitive Peace and Conflict Monitoring in four Iraqi Cities

The efforts for academic capacity building for Peace and Conflict Studies in Iraq crucially includes a research component that aims at developing an elicitive peace and conflict monitoring tool for Iraq. This component will include monitoring activities in Baghdad and Mosul, Ramadi, as well as Tikrit. To this end the University of Innsbruck's project team, that so far has consisted of Wolfgang Dietrich and Adham

Hamed, has been joined by Armin Rabitsch, who joins the Peace Studies Innsbruck Faculty as International Monitoring and Missions Advisor. As a further new team member, the Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies team has been joined by Gawaher Asaad, who takes up the role of an Arabic Project Assistant. Through her substantial experience in humanitarian work with international organizations in conflict areas, as well as her academic roots within the Innsbruck School of Peace Studies, she will substantially support the team of researchers.

Assessment Mission

Project team members Adham Hamed and Armin Rabitsch spent the past week on an assessment mission in Iraq. Central aims of this mission included the development of a solid understanding of potential districts to be monitored by four local Iraqi research teams later this year. This shall serve as a basis for the development of a detailed project methodology in line with principles of elicitive peace and conflict research.

Until January 2020 six further visits will follow, which will include a variety of conflict monitoring and faculty training activities, as well as the teaching of three courses at the new Diploma Program in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Baghdad. With this project the Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies continues with its line of building academic capacities and conducting state of the art peace and conflict research in larger frameworks of conflict transformation.



UNICEF promoted the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Baghdad, 14 July 2019 - It was all fun and games as UNICEF promoted the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Iraqi Children's Day celebrations at the Babylon Mall, Baghdad.

Thirty years ago, world leaders made a historic commitment to the world's children by adopting the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child – an international agreement on childhood.

It's become the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history and has helped transform children's lives around the world.

But still not every child gets to enjoy a full childhood. Still, too many child-

hoods are cut short.

It is up to our generation to demand that leaders from government, business and communities fulfil their commitments and take action for child rights now, once and for all. They must commit to making sure every child, has every right.



International Youth Day celebrated in Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 25 August 2019 – Today, Kirkuk celebrated International Youth Day, organized in partnership with IOM, Australian Aid and the Directorate-General of Youth and Sports. The event took place at the Tissen Forum for Arts and Culture, with the broad participation of Government Officials, UN staff, NGO representatives and, most importantly the guests of honour for the day, the Iraqi youth.

The theme this year was “Transforming Education”, and several young children explained how education transformed their lives. With the high-levels of youth unemployment, Nigar struggled to find a job, and sat at home for years. After a job-skills training from IOM, she realized that she

already has all the skills to succeed and became a community organizer. Nigar had a message to all unemployed youth: “Do not wait until a job finds you, go out and create your own job!” Likewise, Mustapha could not go to school, and was sometimes discriminated because of his short stature. A vocational training by IOM helped him develop specialized skills. Mustapha learned how to repair mobile phones, and currently owns a successful shop.

In a video-message for the event, the Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (DSRSG) and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, assured that “the United Nations would build a better environment



so that young people have a future in which to grow their families and their lives.” In addition, Martijn Dalhuijsen, UNAMI's Development Coordination Officer in Kirkuk stated “the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda2030 are especially relevant for young people. By 2030, the young people of today will all be grown up, they are the adults of the future. We have to include youth now to save the environment that they will inherit”. He also recommended to all youth groups to officially register as a Non-Government Organization and realize their own Agenda2030.

International Youth Day 2019 ended with performance from Arab, Turkman, Kurdish, Yezidi and Chaldean children - all dancing together in peace and harmony. This bodes well for the future of Iraq.

(International Youth Day was designated by the United Nations in 1999 with the adoption of Resolution 54/120.)



UNAMI remembered tragic bombing of the Canal Hotel

Baghdad, 19 August 2019 – The United Nations family in Iraq marked the 16th anniversary of the bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad with a solemn ceremony and a one-minute silence to remember their fallen colleagues and honour the sacrifices of United Nations staff worldwide in the service of peace and humanity.

Twenty-two UN colleagues, including the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello, were killed on 19 August 2003 in a massive truck bombing which tore apart the UN

headquarters in Baghdad. More than 150 people were wounded. Also remembered at the ceremony were a staff member of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) who was abducted and killed in 2016, three colleagues from the UN Support Mission in Libya who were killed in a car bombing in Benghazi earlier this month, and victims of other bombings that targeted UN offices.

The anniversary of the bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad is now marked annually worldwide as World

Humanitarian Day.

The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General Alice Walpole and Husam Akobi, a survivor of the 2003 bombing and national staff representative, spoke at the event, which included laying a wreath at the memorial plaque, a minute of silence, a flag and bugler ceremony, and a hymn sung by the Fijian guard unit.

UNAMI offices in Basra, Erbil and Kirkuk also observed the day with a minute of silence and gatherings.



Iraq's Humanitarian Coordinator commemorates World Humanitarian Day

Baghdad, 19 August 2019 - Today, on the tenth anniversary of World Humanitarian Day, the United Nations honours the contribution of the nearly quarter-million female aid workers who provide humanitarian assistance to people in need. This year, the UN and partners are launching the #WomenHumanitarians global campaign to pay special tribute to women who work to save lives and alleviate human suffering.

In Iraq, World Humanitarian Day has special significance, as it was designated in memory of the 19 August 2003 attack on the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, Iraq, which killed 22 people, including the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq. Over the past 16 years, more than 4,500 humanitarians have been killed, injured, detained, kidnapped or otherwise prevented from carrying out their work. More than 90 per cent of all attacks worldwide were on national staff. In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly formalized 19 August as World Humanitarian Day.

“As a member of the UN’s senior female leadership who has worked in a number of emergency contexts, today’s com-

memoration is personally important to me,” said Marta Ruedas, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq. “I have seen first hand the sacrifices humanitarians and communities have to make in order to help people affected by crises in some of the world’s most hazardous places.”

Female humanitarians comprise over 40 per cent of aid workers worldwide. Unofficially, the figures are much higher, as women are often the unsung heroes on the front lines of the world’s most difficult and dangerous settings. As affected community members, they are active in every aspect of the humanitarian response, from disaster management to the delivery of emergency supplies; from the distribution of food to the provision of medical care.

Engagement of women in humanitarian response makes aid operations more effective by increasing their reach. In many settings, women humanitarians have unique access to women and girls and can provide vital support and services to people who might otherwise be inaccessible. The involvement of women improves the humanitarian response to gender-based violence, which increases during emergencies. This can be crucial



for those living in prolonged humanitarian crises, such as Iraq’s internally displaced persons (IDPs). In Iraq, IDP female-headed households are among the most vulnerable, especially those with perceived affiliations to ISIL. They defy considerable odds and immense societal pressure to keep their families safely sheltered, fed, clothed and educated.

“This World Humanitarian Day, we take the opportunity to feature the tireless work of some exemplary women in Iraq’s humanitarian community. The dedication of these women—whether UN employees, NGO workers, national staff or ordinary Iraqi women trying to help their country rebuild—is commendable,” said Ms. Ruedas.

United Nations commemorate World Humanitarian Day



New York, 19 August 2019 - "We commemorate those who work with dedication to serve humanity," United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Ms. Amina J Mohammed, said at the wreath laying ceremony on the 16th anniversary of the Canal Hotel bombing. She was accompanied by the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations, Ambassador Bahr Al-Uloom.

Here are Deputy Secretary-General's remarks at wreath-laying ceremony on World Humanitarian Day [as prepared for delivery]:

Dear colleagues and friends,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we have gathered here not only to honour the victims of the Canal Hotel bombing in Baghdad, but also to remember and recognize all those who have sacrificed their lives in the service of the United Nations, working for the purposes and principles of the UN

Charter.

Sixteen years ago, on this day, the worst terrorist attack the United Nations has ever experienced took the lives of twenty-two of our dear colleagues.

Across the years since, so many others have perished in the line of duty, on the frontlines of crisis and in epicentres of dire need.

Civilians, troops, police; women and men of all backgrounds and countries.

I would like us now to observe a minute of silence in their honour.

Thank you.

These losses have seared our awareness as members of a close-knit United Nations family.

They have also brought important lessons.

We are changing the way we operate around the world, with strengthened safety and security measures, preparedness training programmes, integrated rapid response, increased counsel-

ling and mental health support.

We are doing more to address the needs of surviving staff, as well as families of the victims in their long journey of healing.

This year's observance highlights women humanitarians. Their presence makes our efforts more effective, from addressing health epidemics to providing support to victims of gender-based violence. Thanks to their efforts millions of people have found protection from conflict and had hope itself rekindled.

Colleagues,

Losing so many of our fellow staff members and personnel all over the world is a terrible blow to our mission.

At the same time, I know that you never lose faith in the role of the United Nations, and that we all, each in our own way, remain determined to fulfil our responsibility to work for peace, development and human rights.

Those who attack the United Nations want to make us afraid, feel weak, and to retreat.

Those we honour today inspire us to be bold and determined to go forward.

We cherish the memory of these courageous and dedicated humanitarians.

Their legacy is lasting and ever present in the families and colleagues they leave behind. It lives on in our commitment to save people from misery and death and in our determination to create a better future for all.

Today, we also extend our condolences and sympathies to the family members who have lost loved ones this year.

Thank you.

Timeline

UNAMI Erbil office organized first internship programme

Erbil, 8 July 2019 - A group of 14 students, comprising 9 females and 5



males, from Tishk University and University of Kurdistan – Hawler, today commenced a month-long internship programme at the Regional Office of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) in Erbil, Kurdistan Region, Iraq.

Welcoming the students, the Head of UNAMI Erbil Office, Mr. Ricardo Rodriguez, explained the role of UNAMI in Iraq and outlined the details of the inaugural internship programme. During the next four weeks, the interns will learn about the United Nations activities in the country and will prepare research papers in the field of Political Affairs. They will also explore how to search, collect and compile news content, as well as engage in practical outdoor activities to create multi-media

content for public information.

The interns expressed their enthusiasm to be part of this new UNAMI initiative and to put into practice what they have been taught in their university lecture rooms. The internship programme, which is a result of a Memorandum of Understanding between the UNAMI-Erbil office and a number of universities in the Kurdistan Region, will run for two months and a new set of students from other universities in the Kurdistan Region will be enrolled in the following month.

On 5 August 2019, the Head of UNAMI Regional Office - Erbil, Mr Ricardo Rodriguez, distributed the internship certificates to the students from Tishk and UKH Universities who completed their internship.

SRSG Hennis-Plasschaert congratulated to Kurdistan Region and whole Iraq on new KR Government

Baghdad, 10 July 2019 – The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: "Congratulations to Kurdistan Region and all of Iraq on new Kurdistan Regional Government Cabinet. Lots of work ahead: closer cooperation and

coordination with federal government to address all outstanding issues, stability and economic development. The United Nations will continue to work closely with Erbil and Baghdad in helping build a prosperous Iraq, its unity and democracy strengthened".



Rwanga Foras International Job Fair was held in Erbil

Erbil, 16 July 2019 - Rwanga Foras International Job Fair was held at the Sami Abdul Rahman Park in Erbil, on

15-16 July 2019. Numerous visitors asked UNDP about current job opportunities, while the United Nations Vol-

unteers (UNV) were providing information on volunteerism and how to become a Volunteer.



SRSG Hennis-Plasschaert sent best wishes to the new European Union Commission President

Baghdad, 17 July 2019 - Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: "Best wishes to new European Union Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. European Union will be well served with a strong advocate for unity. European Union is a key political partner of the United Nations in Iraq and Iraq, and I look forward to strengthening future cooperation in support of Iraq's recovery".



World Food Programme has new Representative to Iraq

Baghdad, 24 July 2019 - The World Food Programme warmly welcomes its new Representative to Iraq, Mr. Abdirahman Meygag, who joins the Agency from his last posting at WFP in Syria. The Agency also takes this opportunity to convey its heartfelt thanks and appreciation to its outgoing Representative to Iraq, Ms. Sally Haydock. Mr. Meygag presented his credentials at the Iraq Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and is officially on board as Representative for the World Food Programme in Iraq.



UN Representative wishes Iraqis peace and prosperity on Eid-ul-Adha

Baghdad, 10 August 2019 - On the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, extends her best wishes of peace and prosperity to all Iraqis. "Eid-ul-Adha, the holy Feast of Sacri-

ifice, is all about compassion, sharing, giving and helping.

As we remember the victims of conflict, the displaced and the less fortunate, we wish to all Iraqis that the spirit of peace, unity, cooperation and optimism shines ever brighter over this beautiful country."



United Nations flag flies at half-mast at UNAMI in Iraq Baghdad in honor of three fallen colleagues from the UN Support Mission in Libya

Baghdad, 11 August 2019 - United Nations flag flies at half-mast at UNAMI in Iraq Baghdad in honor of three fallen colleagues from the UN Support Mission in Libya, who were killed in the bombing in Benghazi, Libya, on 10 August. One of the victims served in UNAMI until 2018. Those brave colleagues made the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of peace, a noble cause that we in the UN family proudly serve under and work for. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and we wish the injured a speedy recovery.



DSRSG Walpole: Families of the disappeared deserve the truth

Baghdad, 29 August 2019 – United Nations Deputy Special Representative for Iraq (DSRSG) Alice Walpole today addressed a gathering to mark the International Day for the Victims of Enforced Disappearances. The event, held under the auspices of the Prime Minister and organised by the International Committee of the Red Cross, commemorated the very many people who have disappeared in Iraq during decades of armed conflict, whose fates and whereabouts remain unknown.

"The search for those who have disappeared is a search for truth", DSRSG Walpole said. "For many families whose loved ones are missing, presumed killed, the truth is the only recompense we can offer them".

She recalled that the United Nations Security Council recently adopted its first ever resolution on persons reported missing during armed conflict. Resolution 2474 calls on parties to armed conflict actively to search for missing persons; maintain communication with the families of the missing; recover the dead; record and map burial sites; register and notify families of detainees. DSRSG Walpole praised the Iraqi government's engagement with the United

Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances and welcomed the draft legislation on enforced disappearances currently before the Iraqi parliament. In this context, she called on the government to investigate all disappearances, determine the fate and wherea-

bouts of the missing, return detainees to their families, and identify and prosecute those responsible for abductions and deaths.

"It is, at the very least, what the families and communities of the disappeared deserve", DSRSG Walpole said.

