



Statement of the Delegation of the Republic of Iraq

Presented by
Prime Minister
Mr. Mustafa Al-Kadhimi

During the High-Level Week of the 77th session of
the United Nations General Assembly

New York 23/9/2022

In the name of Allah, most gracious and merciful

Mr. President of the United Nations General Assembly,
Your Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Your Majesties, Excellencies, and Highnesses,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Peace be upon you,

I am pleased to greet you on behalf of Iraq, a founding member state of the organization that hosts us today.

I congratulate Mr. Csaba Kőrösi on his election as President of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly, confident of his expertise and competence in achieving the desired objectives of this session. I extend my sincere thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, for his vital role in leading this body over the past years and in supporting and assisting the Government of Iraq. We are grateful and appreciative of his efforts.

Mr. President,

Iraq is a country deeply rooted in history and human memory, representing a living example of how hope prevails over the significant challenges that seem impossible, especially at the level of domestic political conflict. The spirit of hope embodied by the people of Iraq is able to extract opportunities for life, progress, and peace from the clutches of conflicts and crises.

Despite the difficult circumstances, Iraqis employed that spirit of hope to fight terrorism and defeat it on behalf of the whole world. The task was arduous, and our people made enormous sacrifices not only to liberate their land from the terrorist gangs of ISIS but also prevent them from threatening people everywhere and uprooting its destructive ideology. Here I would like to commemorate the martyrs of Iraq who sacrificed their lives in defense of the values of freedom, justice, democracy, and human rights.

During that just war, Iraqi military forces, acquired unique skills in fighting ISIS, enforcing the rule of law, and peacekeeping. Iraq benefited from the expertise of its allies in the fight against terrorism, and we are thankful and appreciative to them. We renew Iraq's call for sustaining the effort to confront the problem of international terrorism and the groups backing it.

Iraq looks forward to receiving further UN support in reconstructing the liberated areas affected by the occupation of ISIS terrorists. Also, the potential UN aid to respond to the urgent and necessary humanitarian needs to enhance Iraq's capabilities and efforts to rebuild the destroyed infrastructure in a way that would help these cities and their people, including IDPs to return to normal life again.

It is worth noting that Iraq's ministries and governmental institutions have continued their efforts to help repatriate the Iraqi families in the Al-Hol camp in Syria and reintegrate them into their home towns. I want to point out here that we have developed a comprehensive governmental program for the reconstruction of the liberated areas, the rehabilitation of infrastructure, and the safe and voluntary return of the displaced. We would like to express our profound thanks and appreciation to the donor countries and international organizations for their humanitarian support and assistance.

Mr. President,

As I address you from this platform, I reiterate Iraq's calls for its territories not to be used under the pretext of combating terrorism or protecting the national security of other countries in a manner that endangers our security and stability. Iraq stresses the need to respect the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law and international relations, the respect for the sovereignty of states, the principles of good neighborliness, and the strengthening of cooperative ties. The Government of Iraq affirms its adherence to an approach that calls for resolving differences through diplomatic channels.

Mr. President,

There is no doubt that Iraq, like the rest of the world, has been affected by the pandemic wave of Covid 19, which has impacted all aspects of life and has proven that international cooperation and solidarity were the most successful way to confront such pandemic. The Iraqi government and its national institutions have taken many preventive and curative measures necessary to curtail and limit this pandemic and to provide treatment for the infected. Here I take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the countries, international organizations, the World Health Organization, and humanitarian organizations for their sincere efforts in addressing the pandemic and assisting developing countries in confronting and combating it.

Mr. President,

Realizing the importance of national commitments, the protection of the democratic process, and the people's demands to democratically exercise their rights and freedom of expression, the Iraqi government endeavored to establish free and fair elections with the support of the Security Council, the United Nations, and other international organizations which praised its integrity and professionalism. I want to extend my thanks and appreciation to all organizations and countries and to everyone who helped support these elections, and I would like to make special mention of the great Marja' Sayyed Ali al-Sistani for defending the democratic path of Iraq. Despite the success of the elections, the political forces could not agree on the government's formation leading to a political impasse. My government has called for a serious and transparent dialogue for all the different political forces and parties to discuss ways out of the current political crisis in an effort by the government to meet the people's aspirations and hopes, and achieve their goals to secure their future.

The Government of Iraq is working to build the state and maintain its stature on the basis of coexistence among all the Iraqi people, while respecting diversity and ideological, religious and sectarian pluralism under the rule of the values and principles of justice and equality. This is done through ensuring freedom of expression, the right to peaceful demonstration, and human rights, strengthening law enforcement agencies and accountability, stopping violations against individuals, working to achieve a state monopoly on arms, preventing the possession and use of arms outside the framework of the law and state institutions, investigating their use against citizens and members of the security forces, holding the perpetrators accountable according to the law, and applying justice for all.

Mr. President,

Iraq is keen to be a source of stability, regionally and internationally. It seeks to bring together viewpoints and endeavors to find sustainable peaceful solutions to regional crises, and mend ties between the region's countries by introducing a number of initiatives to ensure peace and security in our region, which has suffered for too long from wars and crises. Pursuant to this balanced policy, Baghdad has hosted many meetings for these countries; a consequence of the balanced policy pursued by this government and an approach for Iraqi diplomacy with neighboring countries that serves the interest of all parties and serve interests of the people of the region, building on historical relations, as well as encouraging regional cooperation and defusing crises.

The Baghdad Conference on Partnership and Cooperation in August of last year witnessed remarkable participation by the neighboring brotherly and friendly countries. The conference resulted in important recommendations presented in the Communiqué of the Baghdad Summit.

Mr. President,

It is no secret that Iraq is going through difficult climate conditions due to the scarcity of water resources, the change of river courses that Iraq shares with neighboring countries, and the building of projects without taking into account their effects on water quotas, and the fair use of riparian countries. All of these conditions combined led Iraq to become the fifth most vulnerable country to climate change. This has recently led to the drying up of most of the areas of the Iraqi Marshes and caused damage to the livelihoods of hundreds of families living there. The Marshes are natural reserves, and part of the World Heritage List. These conditions led to an increase in the rate of desertification and internal displacement. The loss of livelihoods of many families also led to a drop in the proportion of agricultural land. Iraq calls upon all the region's countries to enter dialogue to solve water issues in accordance with international laws and treaties.

Iraq is an oil-producing country that has participated in the progress and development of the global economy since the beginning of the twentieth century. As it suffers from climate change, it will also suffer from all the measures taken to address this phenomenon, and the reduction in dependence on fossil fuels. Despite that, this government has worked on important strategic projects in clean energy, associated gas extraction, and other areas related to the green economy. This requires international support in its various fields to back Iraq's efforts and enable it to move forward in implementing national policies and strategies to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

Similarly, we have not neglected the necessity of developing the education and culture sector. At the top of our priorities, we put the implementation of the National Strategy for Public and Higher Education for 2030, which includes 100% school enrollment rate, upgrading the standards of public and higher education, progressing educational techniques and technologies, and enhancing skills in accordance to the job market and economic development. We also launched the National Initiative for Early Childhood Development, which covers a period of 10 years; to reduce the illiteracy rate in

our society and provide an appropriate educational environment for our children, especially since many segments of our society suffer from the repercussions of wars, conflicts, and corruption, which have hit the foundations of the educational sector. We have embarked on a campaign to build hundreds of schools in various governorates after they suffered from a significant shortage during the past decades, in addition to facilitating the tasks of building universities and colleges.

Mr. President,

We assert Iraq's firm stance on the Palestinian cause and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and we stressed the need to preserve the historical status in Jerusalem and its holy sites. While we affirm our commitment to Syria's territorial integrity and security, we support the conduct of political talks between all Syrian parties and support the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

As with other countries of the world, Iraq believes that regional crises and wars have consequences for all countries of the world and that ordinary peoples always pay the price for these wars. They impact all aspects of life, especially energy supplies, food, and security. Accordingly, we stress the need to find peaceful and sustainable solutions to regional and international crises through dialogue, and avoid the use of force, to maintain international peace and security, and to save the global economy and humanity from the repercussions of these wars.

In conclusion, the challenges facing my country, Iraq, today are the results of decades-long accumulations of political crisis and conflicts, which we are working to dismantle, placing our hope mostly on our young society's aspiration to defend democracy, being a way of life and means for good governance. Our nascent democracy still has a spirit of courage and hope, and it needs the understanding and support of the international community to continue the modern state-building and reconstruction, provision of services, and building of infrastructure that was destroyed by wars. We believe in the necessity of investing in our people and working on sustainable development in cooperation and comprehensive partnership with our regional neighbors and the international community.

Thank you very much
Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you