



## The United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI)

### Fact Sheet

November 2008

Efforts by the United Nations to foster peace and reconstruction in Iraq have increased and gained visibility under the leadership of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and since the passage of Security Council resolution 1770 in August 2007, strengthening the UN mandate in the country. The resolution, while continuing previous tasks such as elections, constitutional support, human rights and humanitarian assistance, emphasized a stronger UN role in advancing political dialogue and reconciliation among the country's political groups and communities. The expanded UN role on the ground is reflected in the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), led by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, Staffan de Mistura.

Recent actions and accomplishments include:

- **Elections.** UNAMI's political and electoral teams facilitated intra-Iraqi negotiations that led to the passage in September 2008 of a new provincial elections law and a subsequent amendment ensuring greater minority representation, paving the way for critical provincial (governate) elections scheduled for early 2009. The law's adoption was a milestone for national reconciliation, and the upcoming elections are seen as a key opportunity to move the democratic process forward in Iraq. With elections now approaching, the United Nations has already assisted in a successful voter registration update in which nearly 3 million Iraqis took part, has launched a nationwide voter education project and will provide continued assistance to the Iraq High Electoral Commission throughout the electoral process. The United Nations previously assisted Iraq in carrying out two landmark elections and a constitutional referendum in 2005.
- **Disputed Internal Boundaries.** UNAMI is working to promote dialogue and effective mechanisms and procedures by which Iraqis can resolve a number contentious internal boundary questions, including the sensitive issue of the future status of the northern city of Kirkuk. The Mission has conducted numerous field visits to affected provinces and established a presence in Kirkuk to carry out research into conditions in that governate. The mission is working to assist the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government in addressing the development needs of all the disputed areas, after a political agreement on their final status is reached.
- **Regional Cooperation and Dialogue.** The United Nations has promoted cooperation and dialogue between Iraq and regional countries through the diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Representative and through expanding meetings between Iraq and its neighbors and related working groups on border security, energy and refugees. In recent months there has been a significant increase in the representation of Arab States and regional institutions through the restoration of their diplomatic missions

in Baghdad and high-level visits. The Secretary-General's Special Representative continues to visit all neighboring states to promote increased cooperation with Iraq.

- **Increased Iraqi Burden-sharing.** The Government of Iraq is increasingly able to fund its own reconstruction agenda thanks to greater stability and increased oil revenues. In August, UNAMI and the Government of Iraq signed "The United Nations Assistance Strategy for Iraq 2008-2010" emphasizing co-financing of projects between UN programmes, funds and agencies and the Government in order to leverage Iraqi resources with UN technical support and capacity building. As part of the Iraq 2008 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), the Government of Iraq has contributed US\$40 million to WFP to fund internally displaced Iraqis and US\$ 8 million to UNHCR in Jordan for Iraqi refugees. The Government has also pledged \$25 million in co-financing toward the construction of a larger and secure integrated compound to house UN staff in Iraq, permitting an increased presence and activities. The International Compact with Iraq, co-chaired by the United Nations and the Government of Iraq (<http://www.iraqcompact.org/>) held its first annual review conference in Stockholm in May 2008. The ICI provides a valuable framework for Iraq's engagement with the international community.
  
- **Increased UN presence on the ground.** While keeping the security of UN staff paramount, UNAMI continues to increase its operational capabilities in the country and currently has more than 400 international staff based in Iraq as well as a dedicated aircraft which has aided mobility. In addition to its headquarters in Baghdad, the mission has expanded its presence and activities in Kirkuk, Mosul, Najaf and Ramadi. The World Food Programme (WFP) recently joined the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in establishing a senior-level presence in Baghdad, while other agencies are present on a rotating basis. The five-year anniversary of the bombing of UN headquarters in Iraq, on 19 August 2008, was a reminder however that the United Nations continues to work in a complex security environment despite recent improvements in the security situation.

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More comprehensive information on the work of the United Nations in Iraq can be found on UNAMI's website (<http://www.uniraq.org>), as well as in the Secretary-General's most recent report on the activities of the United Nations in Iraq (S/2008/688, dated 6 November 2008).