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[Publication](#) | 15.07.2014

Situation in Iraq

Greens/EFA motion for resolution

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on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group*

The European Parliament,

- having regard to UN information according to which Iraq is currently home to over 220 000 refugees from Syria, while some 500 000 Iraqis have fled from Mosul and 480 000 from Anbar since early June 2014, including an estimated 250 000 children, mostly to the Kurdish Autonomous Region,
- having regard to EUR 36 million of humanitarian funding for Iraq by ECHO since 2013,
- having regard to the recent declarations of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), stating that at least 2 417 Iraqis have been killed and another 2 287 injured in acts of terrorism and violence during June 2014 - the highest toll in one month since 2007,
- having regard to the statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on 16 June 2014, condemning summary executions by ISIL and expressing the view that these almost certainly amounted to war crimes,
- having regard to the statement by UN Undersecretary General and executive director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, expressing concerns for the safety of women and girls in Iraq, especially in areas held by ISIL,
- having regard to the report of 12 July 2014 by Human Rights Watch stating that Iraqi security forces and government-affiliated militias appear to have unlawfully executed at least 255 prisoners over the past month in apparent revenge for killings by Islamic State fighters,
- having regard to the statement by Vice-President/High Representative Catherine Ashton of 11 June 2014, calling upon all democratic forces in Iraq to work together on the basis of the Iraqi constitution,
- having regard to Iraq's parliamentary elections of 30 April 2014,

- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Iraq, of the other part,
- having regard to its resolutions on Iraq, notably those of 27 February 2014 on the situation in Iraq(1), of 10 October 2013 on recent violence in Iraq(2), of 14 March 2013 on Iraq: the plight of minority groups, including the Iraqi Turkmen(3) and of 17 January 2013 on the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement(4),
- having regard to its resolution of 11 March 2014 on Saudi Arabia, its relations with the EU and its role in the Middle East and North Africa(5), its resolution of 24 March 2011 on European Union relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council(6) and its resolution of 3 April 2014 on the EU strategy towards Iran(7),
- having regard to the interim accord of 23 November 2013 between the EU + 3 and Iran aimed at achieving a final deal that would end the decade-old dispute over Tehran’s nuclear energy programme; whereas the deal in force since January 2014 expires on 20 July 2014 but can be extended depending on the agreement of all parties involved,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas Iraq has been in turmoil ever since a coalition of the ‘willing’ invaded Iraq in 2003 in violation of international law, which deeply upset or even destroyed much of the formerly existing social fabric and administrative structures;

B. whereas the second government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has been pursuing increasingly authoritarian and Shia-sectarian policies which, in recent months, have accelerated the sense of alienation and marginalisation of the Sunnite minority;

C. whereas in correlation with the Syrian war and the disintegration of the Iraqi-Syrian border, Sunni extremist fighters of the Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIL or ISIS) have recently been invading and occupying considerable parts of north-western Iraq, notably, on 10 June 2014, Iraq’s second largest city, Mosul, a move which has been tolerated or even supported by parts of the disenchanted Sunni population and former Baathists;

D. whereas incidents of mass extrajudicial executions, destruction of cultural and religious sites and cruel repression perpetrated, and reports thereof deliberately propagated, by the IS are spreading wide-ranging fear among the Iraqi population;

E. whereas in reaction to the advancing IS fighters, on 13 June 2014, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani, the most senior Shia cleric, called on all Iraqis who are capable of carrying arms to volunteer to join the security forces in defence of the country;

F. whereas at the beginning of July 2014 the IS leadership declared the restoration of the Islamic caliphate in Syria and Iraq, and its reclusive leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi delivered a Friday sermon in Mosul’s largest mosque, challenging the borders of the modern-day states in the region;

G. whereas military units of the Semi-Autonomous Region of Kurdistan took over the control of the multi-ethnic city of Kirkuk in the middle of June 2014, thus integrating decade-long disputed oil-rich territory into the Kurdish province, and whereas the Kurdish Government announced plans for a referendum among the Kurdish population to obtain independence from Iraq;

H. whereas government troops supported by Shiite militias are fighting to regain control of the city of Tikrit and other areas conquered by the IS, while terrorist attacks and suicide bombers, in their majority

directed against Shiites, continue to destabilise the country;

I. whereas the Iraqi Government has received fighter jets from Russia and Iran and intelligence support from the US, while extremist Sunni armed groups in the region, including the IS, have been receiving ideological and physical support over the past years from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries;

J. whereas the parliamentary elections of 30 April 2014 were overshadowed by violent threats from ISIS against any Sunni Muslim who dared to go and vote, and whereas the new, fragile parliament failed for the second time on 7 July 2014 to elect a new, more inclusive leadership that could lead the country away from the brink of disintegration;

1. Expresses deep concern over the extremely serious political crisis in Iraq, which is on the brink of disintegration, drawing the whole region into the turmoil, and urges all political leaders in the country to de-escalate the political tensions and to contribute to a solution to the crisis in a spirit of political responsibility and compromise;

2. Condemns the violence and the reports of mass executions by the forces of the IS, which increase the suffering of the population by adding to the already existing abuses by government security forces; believes that the number of radicalised, often young, people who are being drawn into the wave of armed movements with extremist ideologies such as IS, including from Europe, is taking on such proportions in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere that a concerted regional approach is urgently needed, which not only focuses on security, but also addresses systemic political, economic and social issues;

3. Considers that there is an urgent need to bring notably Iran, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, Syria and Iraq to the negotiating table in order to stop support and funding for the IS or other armed Islamist extremists, and to prevent the further escalation of the Sunni-Shiite conflict which is threatening to enflame the whole region;

4. Calls on all countries to halt additional military support for the al-Maliki government, as it will aggravate tension and bloodshed in the country without resolving the conflict, and calls on the EU Member States, in line with the EU Code of Conduct on Weapons Exports, to abstain from any arms deliveries to Iraq;

5. Recalls that the Iraqi constitution guarantees equality for all citizens by law, along with the 'administrative, political, cultural and educational rights of the various nationalities', and that the Iraqi Government bears responsibility for ensuring the rights, well-being and security of the whole population;

6. Calls on the Iraqi Council of Representatives to come forward with concrete decisions, such as a national unity government which properly represents the political, religious and ethnic diversity of Iraqi society, in order to stop the bloodshed and the fragmentation of the country;

7. Strongly criticises the lack of good governance in Iraq which has led to widespread poverty, high unemployment, economic stagnation, environmental degradation and a lack of basic public services, despite high oil revenues; points out that in the past, numerous peaceful demonstrations demanding more social, economic and political rights have been met with systematic repression by the security forces, carried out with impunity;

8. Condemns the Iraq invasion of 2003 which was supported by numerous EU Member States, offers its condolences to all those who have suffered from the consequences and calls on all those leaders who involved their country actively in the war to accept part of the responsibility for the situation in Iraq today;

9. Reiterates in this context that the nomination of Tony Blair as special envoy for the Middle East Quartet (United States, United Nations, European Union and Russia) has been an ill-fated symbol and that,

particularly after Mr Blair's recent comments on Iraq, his mandate should be terminated;

10. Takes act of the announcement by the Kurdistan Regional Government of a referendum for independence; appeals, however, to the parliament and the President of Iraqi Kurdistan, Massoud Barzani, to uphold an inclusive process in respect of the rights of the non-Kurdish minorities living in the province;

11. Appreciates the fact that the Kurdish region has served as a safe haven for hundreds of thousands of non-Kurdish Iraqi citizens who have been fleeing from the conflict zone, welcomes the past EU support for the displaced and calls on the EU and the Member States to increase financial support to help the administration support the burden;

12. Underlines that the EU should develop a comprehensive policy approach to the region and, notably, that Iran, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states need to be included as essential players in any de-escalation effort in Syria and Iraq;

13. Concerning Iran, believes that for any de-escalation effort to succeed it is essential to terminate the nuclear dispute with a compromise as quickly as possible, and appeals to all sides to live up to the urgency of the matter; calls for the establishment of an EU delegation in Tehran and prospects for exchanges beyond the nuclear dossier and human rights at different levels of society, notably in the fields of energy, environment, transport, research, and education;

14. Concerning Saudi Arabia and Qatar, calls for an open and critical dialogue by the EU over alleged support for anti-democratic and extreme Islamist groups, and insists that the EU should demand that the governments do everything in their power to stop all activities by official or private bodies to propagate and spread extreme Islamist ideologies in words and acts;

15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Council of Representatives of Iraq, the Regional Government of Kurdistan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the United Nations Human Rights Council.

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