

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against-abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
21 July 2020	S/2020/736	Letter dated 23 July 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
25 August 2020	S/2020/837	Letter dated 27 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
26 October 2020	S/2020/1055	Letter dated 28 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
18 November 2020	S/2020/1128	Letter dated 20 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
21 December 2020	S/2020/1275	Letter dated 23 December 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	

^a Owing to technical difficulties, the videoconference was closed instead of open. For more information on the procedures and working methods developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, see part II.

22. The situation concerning Iraq

During the period under review, the Council held one meeting in relation to the item entitled “The situation concerning Iraq”, which took the form of a briefing.⁶¹⁷ More information on that meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1 below. In addition, Council members held a total of four open videoconferences in connection with the item. The Council unanimously adopted resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), extending the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 May 2021.⁶¹⁸ More information on the videoconferences is provided in table 2 below. In addition to the meetings and videoconferences, in 2020 Council members held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the item.⁶¹⁹

In 2020, the Council heard regular briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI on the situation concerning

Iraq. In her four briefings in connection with the quarterly reports of the Secretary-General,⁶²⁰ she informed Council members about the progress with regard to the formation of a new Government and the preparations for elections in June 2021. She also spoke about the progress made regarding the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives. The Special Representative also informed Council members about the vulnerable economic and security situation in Iraq, exacerbated by corruption, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued threat of terrorism by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da’esh). The Special Representative reported on the ongoing mass protests, emphasizing the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. She also spoke about the serious human rights violations and abuses and the pressing need for accountability and justice. The Special Representative continued to inform the Council regarding the relations between Baghdad and Erbil and the status of

⁶¹⁷ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. II.

⁶¹⁸ For more information on the mandate of UNAMI, part X, sect. II.

⁶¹⁹ See [A/75/2](#), part II, chap. 29. See also [S/2020/344](#).

⁶²⁰ [S/2020/140](#), [S/2020/363](#), [S/2020/792](#) and [S/2020/1099](#).

negotiations between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the federal Government.

At the beginning of 2020, at the meeting of the Council on 3 March,⁶²¹ the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported on the Prime Minister's announced resignation in late November 2019 and the failure to designate a new Prime Minister, as well as the subsequent challenges in forming a new Government. She noted that the political uncertainty was eroding public trust. The Special Representative also highlighted that delivering on the demands of the people required a collective effort and that every single political actor and leader was fully responsible for restoring the critical confidence of the public in their Government and its institutions. On the need for free, fair and credible elections, the Special Representative emphasized the importance of broad, fundamental systemic reform and a strong Independent High Electoral Commission and that the newly appointed Electoral Commission needed to demonstrate greater resolve in adhering to the principles of transparency, accountability, independence and professionalism. She stated that the volatile domestic and regional climate had taken an extraordinary toll on Iraq and that the state-to-state violence that had played out across Iraq earlier in the year was perceived as a clear and substantial threat to the country. The Special Representative affirmed that regional security developments should not eclipse domestic priorities and rightful demands for reform. The question was whether Iraq would flourish as a venue for peace and understanding or suffer as the arena of external battles.

At the videoconference held on 12 May,⁶²² against the backdrop of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Special Representative said that as the Iraqi health system was already near breaking point before the COVID-19 outbreak, the first priority remained to prevent a rapid spread of the virus. She also echoed the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire. The Special Representative reported to Council members on the recent formation of a new Government, with the confirmation by the Council of Representatives of Mustafa Al-Kadhimi as the new Prime Minister and approval of his government programme and ministers. Welcoming the long overdue development, she called for the swift completion of filling the remaining vacant positions, including the appointment of more women and minority representatives. She also noted that the economic situation had laid bare Iraq's vulnerability owing to the grave lack of economic diversification and reiterated the need to broaden Iraq's revenue base by

reducing its oil dependence, among other things. She also addressed the impact of COVID-19 on humanitarian access, noting that many access requests remained unapproved and that a practical, long-term solution was urgently required. She also said that the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, and some of the activities had to be postponed.

On 26 August and 24 November,⁶²³ the Council heard briefings by the Special Representative in which she reported on the continued humanitarian challenges on the ground and noted the increasing gender-based violence amid dwindling options for victims to seek assistance and find shelter. She called for a simplified system that enabled immobilized humanitarian actors and supplies to rapidly reach people in need, while noting the hazardous conditions faced by humanitarian actors. The Special Representative also expressed concern with regard to the escalation in the Iraqi-Turkish border areas and urged both countries to resolve their differences through dialogue and cooperation with full respect for national sovereignty. She underlined the importance for Iraq to be given further room to focus on its domestic resilience instead of being used as a venue for different power struggles. The Special Representative reported that the Parliament had recently finalized the necessary electoral legislation and that UNAMI was ramping up its technical assistance in line with its mandate. In that connection, she further emphasized that Iraq's electoral institutional capacity needed to be strengthened and asked the relevant authorities to step up and think in terms of solutions instead of obstacles. She also reaffirmed that electoral preparations needed to remain free from political interference at all stages and made reference to the letter from the Government to the Security Council with a request for "more advice, support, technical assistance and electoral observation" within the framework of UNAMI support to Iraq.⁶²⁴

During the period under review, Council members reaffirmed their support for the work and mandate of UNAMI, in particular its technical electoral assistance and efforts to promote political dialogue and reconciliation, as well as its engagement with the Women's Advisory Group.⁶²⁵ Some Council members called on the Iraqi authorities to continue implementing the recommendations of UNAMI to

⁶²¹ See [S/PV.8739](#).

⁶²² See [S/2020/397](#).

⁶²³ See [S/2020/845](#) and [S/2020/1144](#).

⁶²⁴ See [S/2020/1130](#).

⁶²⁵ See [S/PV.8739](#) (United States, Dominican Republic, Russian Federation, France, South Africa and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines); and [S/2020/397](#) (Dominican Republic, Niger, South Africa and United Kingdom).

build on the progress made and encouraged the new Government to work closely with the Mission.⁶²⁶ Council members also emphasized the importance of making progress on the political process and holding free, fair and inclusive elections in June 2021, and welcomed support, advice and technical assistance provided to Iraq by UNAMI in electoral preparations.⁶²⁷ Some Council members also expressed concerns over the use of force against demonstrators and human rights violations in the context of public demonstrations and stressed the importance of ensuring the right to peaceful protest and freedom of expression and holding accountable those responsible.⁶²⁸ On the new Government of Iraq, several Council members called for swift and effective action to implement reforms, including the participation of women and youth in Iraq's decision-making processes.⁶²⁹ In that connection, some Council members spoke about the steady increase of cases of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, and called on UNAMI to actively engage with civil society organizations to better address the issue and encouraged the Government to take concrete steps to ensure the protection of victims.⁶³⁰ Rejecting the attacks on the United States Embassy in Iraq and the Consulate of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Najaf, the representative of Iraq called on the Council to emphasize the need to respect Iraq's sovereignty, not to undermine its security and to assist in its efforts to ensure stability.⁶³¹ In his interventions, the representative of Iraq also emphasized the importance of non-interference and respect for the sovereignty, independence and

territorial integrity of Iraq and establishing friendly relations and cooperation with its neighbours and the international community.⁶³²

On 29 May, the Council extended the mandate of UNAMI until 31 May 2021, through the unanimous adoption of resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#).⁶³³ In the resolution, the Council commended the Government of Iraq for its efforts to plan and execute free and fair Iraqi-led, Iraq-owned elections and welcomed the Government's request for further United Nations electoral advice, support and assistance in that regard.⁶³⁴ The Council decided that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNAMI would further advise, support and assist the Government of Iraq and the Independent High Electoral Commission with efforts to plan and execute free and fair Iraqi-led, Iraqi-owned elections and referendums, including through regular technical reviews and detailed reporting on electoral preparations and processes, as part of the Secretary-General's regular reporting cycle.⁶³⁵ The Council also decided that the Special Representative, at the request of the Government of Iraq and taking into account the letter from the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq to the Secretary-General,⁶³⁶ should prioritize the provision of advice, support and assistance to the Government and people of Iraq on advancing inclusive political dialogue and national and community-level reconciliation.⁶³⁷

In addition, developments in 2020 relating to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, established pursuant to resolution [2379 \(2017\)](#), were dealt with under the agenda item entitled "Threats to international peace and security".⁶³⁸

⁶²⁶ See [S/PV.8739](#) (United Kingdom, France and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines); and [S/2020/397](#) (United Kingdom).

⁶²⁷ See [S/2020/1144](#) (Belgium, China, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Tunisia and Viet Nam).

⁶²⁸ See [S/PV.8739](#) (Germany, United Kingdom, France, Estonia, Belgium, Niger and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).

⁶²⁹ See [S/2020/397](#) (Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Niger, South Africa and United Kingdom).

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.* (Dominican Republic, Estonia, Germany, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and South Africa).

⁶³¹ See [S/PV.8739](#).

⁶³² See [S/PV.8739](#), [S/2020/397](#), [S/2020/845](#) and [S/2020/1144](#).

⁶³³ Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), para. 1. See also [S/2020/448](#).

⁶³⁴ Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), fifth preambular paragraph.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 2 (b). See also [S/2020/1130](#).

⁶³⁶ See [S/2020/448](#).

⁶³⁷ Resolution [2522 \(2020\)](#), para. 2 (a).

⁶³⁸ For further details, see part I, sect. 34.

Table 1
Meeting: the situation concerning Iraq

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for- against- abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8739 3 March 2020	Twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2020/133) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2470 (2019) (S/2020/140)		Iraq	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq	All Council members, all invitees	

Table 2
Videoconferences: the situation concerning Iraq

<i>Videoconference date</i>	<i>Videoconference record</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Decision, vote (for-against- abstaining) and record of written procedure</i>
12 May 2020	S/2020/397	Letter dated 14 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
29 May 2020	S/2020/467	Letter dated 29 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	Resolution 2522 (2020) 15-0-0 S/2020/460
26 August 2020	S/2020/845	Letter dated 28 August 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	
24 November 2020	S/2020/1144	Letter dated 27 November 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council	