

October 6, 2021

Joint Statement on Iraq's Early Elections

The text of the following statement was released by the Governments of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, and the U.S. Secretary of State welcome the Iraqi Independent High Electoral Commission's (IHEC) preparations for the October 10 election. This early election is an opportunity for Iraqi voters to democratically determine their future.

We recognize the importance of this moment in Iraqi history. In response to requests from the Iraqi people, substantial resources have been mobilized in support of free and fair elections.

In May 2020, the UN Security Council enhanced the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq's (UNAMI) electoral assistance mandate. The resulting UNAMI electoral assistance mission, tasked with supporting IHEC, is the largest of its kind in the world, with five times more UN officials than were present during the 2018 election.

In late 2020, Iraqis coalesced around the idea that international monitoring was a prerequisite for electoral legitimacy. Accordingly, the Government of Iraq submitted a request to the UN Security Council. On May 27, 2021, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2576, authorizing a UNAMI election monitoring team. On June 21, 2021, the EU announced a separate election observation mission, which now comprises a significant number of experts from EU member states. Both missions have already deployed monitors and observers, respectively. These missions represent a good-faith international effort to fulfill Iraqis' request and bolster the integrity of the election.

The Iraqi people now have an opportunity to exercise their fundamental right to vote. We support the Iraqi government's efforts to ensure a safe, free, fair, and inclusive electoral environment for all Iraqis, including women and youth, who have long faced violence and intimidation in the pursuit of reform. Likewise, we support the Iraqi government's efforts to ensure that internally displaced persons

can safely participate in the election. We call on all parties to respect the rule of law and the integrity of the electoral process.