



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Iraq

(2712nd EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting - Brussels, 27-28 February 2006)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council condemns the criminal bombing of the Holy Shrine of Ali Al-Hadi and Hassan Al-Askari in Samarra aimed at provoking sectarian strife. It condemns the subsequent retaliatory acts, including attacks on religious sites. The Council deeply regrets the resulting loss of life. The Council condemns all acts undermining the political process.

The European Union strongly supports calls by Iraqi political and religious leaders for restraint and non-retaliation and urges Iraq to come together in a spirit of dialogue and mutual respect. The Council expresses its full support for the efforts of the UN in promoting inter-communal dialogue and national dialogue. It welcomes the initiative by the League of Arab States to hold a second conference on national reconciliation with participation of all Iraqi communities.

The Council underlines that recent developments in Iraq highlight the urgent need for the formation of a government of national unity and urges all political leaders in the country to match the courage of the Iraqi people, who voted for them in impressive numbers at the elections on 15 December 2005. This display of trust by the Iraqi people in a democratic system deserves to be met by the formation of a government of national unity which will work for the political and economic reconstruction of Iraq in a spirit of reconciliation".

P R E S S
