



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on Iraq

(2728th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting - Brussels, 15 May 2006)

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council warmly welcomes progress made in Iraq towards forming a government of national unity. It congratulates President Jalal Talabani, the Vice-presidents Adel Abdel Mahdi and Tariq Al-Hashemi, the President of the Council of Representatives, Mr Mahmoud Al-Mashhadani, and his deputies Khalid Al-Attiyah and Aref Tayfour upon their election. Likewise, it congratulates Mr Nouri Al-Maliki upon his nomination as Prime Minister.

The EU reiterates its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. It firmly believes that a government of national unity is essential to enhance the stability of the country and encourages all political groupings to continue working together towards the formation of such an inclusive government as soon as possible. In this context the Council reiterates its support for a process of national reconciliation including efforts by the UN in this area and the initiative by the League of Arab States to organise a conference on national accord.

The EU is ready to engage actively with the new government in order to achieve a secure, stable, unified, prosperous and democratic Iraq. In this regard the EU looks forward to discuss concrete measures to enhance EU-Iraq relations based on Iraqi priorities in the new government's programme and on shared values. The EU equally stands ready to strengthen EU-Iraq relations through continuing the political dialogue at all levels in accordance with the EU-Iraq Joint Declaration on Political Dialogue of 21 September 2005 and to negotiate an EU-Iraq Trade and Co-operation Agreement. Community assistance will be provided through the newly adopted assistance programme for 2006 to the following areas: improvement of basic services, good governance and furthering democracy. In response to Iraqi needs and requests, the Council is prepared to extend the activities of the Integrated Rule of Law Mission, EUJUST LEX, beyond its current mandate."

P R E S S
