



## Civil Society Dialogue Network Geographic Meeting

### An EU Strategy for engagement with Iraq: Gathering input from INGOs

Tuesday 3 October 2017

Hotel Berlaymont Brussels, Boulevard Charlemagne 11-19, 1000 Brussels

## CONCEPT NOTE

### Background

On 19 June 2017, the EU's Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) adopted conclusions on Iraq in which it stated:<sup>1</sup>

Following on from its Regional Strategy for Syria and Iraq, as well as the Da'esh threat, the EU remains firmly committed to supporting Iraq in its recovery from the current crisis, notably through the implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Iraq once fully ratified, including cooperation on democracy and human rights, trade and investment and migration in all its aspects.

On the basis of these Conclusions, the Council invites the High Representative and the European Commission to present in due course elements for an EU strategy for engagement with Iraq.

In this context, the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS) have asked the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) to organise a dialogue meeting between international non-governmental organisations (INGO) representatives and EU officials working on the preparation of the new strategy.

This meeting will be a follow-up to the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) Geographic Meeting entitled 'An EU Strategy for engagement with Iraq: gathering civil society input' which involved Iraqi civil society representatives and which took place on 13-14 September 2017 in Brussels.

### Objective

The overall objective of this meeting is to gather INGOs' analysis and recommendations on the development of an EU Strategy for Iraq. It is envisaged that the outputs of the meeting will be:

- Assessment of the EU's past engagement and potential future role in promoting peace and development in Iraq
- Recommendations for priorities and approaches for future EU engagement to promote stabilisation and sustainable national peacebuilding and development in Iraq
- Recommendations for including enhanced EU engagement with Iraqi civil society and INGOs in the new EU Strategy for Iraq

### Participants and format

The meeting will bring together 20-30 participants, including INGO representatives and officials from the EC and the EEAS. Discussions will be held in a roundtable format. Initial presentations from one or two speakers will be followed by a facilitated discussion in which all participants will be encouraged to provide analysis and recommendations.

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/06/19-conclusions-iraq/>

## AGENDA

08.30 . 09.00	<p><b>Registration of participants</b></p>
09.00 . 09.15	<p><b>Welcome and introductory remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, EPLO</li> <li>• Rosamaria Gili, Head of Division, Division for the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq and Regional Policies, EEAS</li> </ul>
09.15 . 10.30	<p><b>Session 1: Governance, human rights and reconciliation</b></p> <p>The aim of this session will be for participants to provide their analysis of and recommendations on issues relating to governance, human rights and reconciliation in Iraq.</p> <p>The discussions in this session could be guided by the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reconciliation:</b> What is the best method of fostering reconciliation in Iraq today, especially at the grassroots level? How can national identity be strengthened?</li> <li>• <b>Electoral system:</b> What needs to happen for the electoral system to generate more cross-sectarian alliances and policy-based politics cutting across different groups and regions in Iraq?</li> <li>• <b>Governance:</b> How does national- and subnational-level governance need to be reformed in order to support more stable politics and equitable and predictable services for the population?</li> <li>• <b>Role of civil society:</b> How can civil society act as a %watchdog+regarding budgetary procedures (e.g. budget allocation, revenue sharing), and implementation (e.g. exposing corruption cases and corrupt officials and institutions, including the judiciary)?</li> <li>• Facilitator: Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, EPLO</li> </ul> <p>Introductory comments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC and/or EEAS</li> <li>• INGO Representative</li> </ul>
10.30 . 11.00	<p><b>Coffee Break</b></p>
11.00 . 12.15	<p><b>Session 2: Stabilisation and reconstruction</b></p> <p>The aim of this session will be for participants to provide their analysis of and recommendations on the stabilisation and reconstruction of Iraq and share</p> <p>The discussions in this session could be guided by the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which stabilisation needs and geographical areas should be prioritised?</li> <li>• Is there a role for regional actors in the reconstruction of Iraq? If so, what should it be?</li> <li>• Facilitator: Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, EPLO</li> </ul> <p>Introductory comments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC and/or EEAS</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INGO Representative</li> </ul>
12.15 . 13.00	<p><b>Session 3: Education</b></p> <p>The aim of this session will be for participants to provide their analysis of and recommendations on the possible contribution of education to reconciliation in Iraq.</p> <p>The discussions in this session could be guided by the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key challenges in the education sector in Iraq?</li> <li>• Which initiatives should the EU promote to strengthen access to high-quality education?</li> <li>• To what extent can education contribute to deradicalisation?</li> </ul> <p>Facilitator: Natalia Alonso, Head of the Brussels office, Oxfam International</p> <p>Introductory comments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC and/or EEAS</li> <li>• INGO Representative</li> </ul>
13.00 . 14.00	<b>Lunch</b>
14.00 . 15.30	<p><b>Session 4: Security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR)</b></p> <p>The aim of this session will be for participants to provide their analysis of and recommendations on SJSR and DDR in Iraq.</p> <p>The discussions in this session could be guided by the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SJSR:</b> What are people's main expectations vis-à-vis the security sector and the justice system in Iraq, and how could improvements be made in practice?</li> <li>• <b>DDR:</b> Which measures should be in place to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the removal of weapons from the hands of combatants?</li> <li>○ the extrication of combatants from military structures?</li> <li>○ the reintegration of former combatants into society?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Facilitator: Natalia Alonso, Head of the Brussels office, Oxfam International</p> <p>Introductory comments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EEAS</li> <li>• INGO Representative</li> </ul>
15.30 . 15.45	<b>Closing remarks</b>

#### Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a mechanism for dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on issues related to peace and conflict. It is co-financed by the European Union (Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace). It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLLO), a civil society network, in co-operation with the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The third phase of the CSDN will last from 2017 to 2020. For more information, please visit the [EPLLO website](#).