



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on Iraq

*2925th GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 23 February 2009*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council welcomes the holding of provincial elections in Iraq on 31 January 2009 and congratulates the people of Iraq for having successfully expressed their democratic will. The elections were well organized and conducted in a competitive and generally peaceful environment with freedom of expression widely respected across the country. The elections are an important step towards a consolidation of the democratisation process and reconciliation.
2. In this context, the Council commends the work by the Independent High Electoral Commission supported by UNAMI, with technical and financial support from the European Community, in organising these elections with a challenging timetable. The EU will examine the possibility of providing similar support for future elections.
3. The Council underlines the importance of using the outcome of these elections to make further progress on improving the lives of the Iraqi people as well as on national reconciliation in Iraq. In this context, it encourages the new Provincial Councils to respond to the expectations of the Iraqi people by delivering inter alia much needed basic services and related investment.

P R E S S

4. The experience gained from these elections will hopefully contribute to further consolidation of the democratisation process, including the country's legislative and constitutional framework, and to laying a solid foundation for Iraq's next set of elections. The EU, in cooperation with its international partners, will continue to support Iraq in its efforts to build a secure, stable, democratic, unified and prosperous country where human rights are respected and reiterates its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq."
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