



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Minister for Europe and the
Americas
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

02 November 2018

The Lord Boswell of Aynho
Chair
Select Committee on the European Union
Committee Office
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dear Tim,

Council Decision amending Decision (CFSP) 2017/1869 on the European Union Advisory Mission to Iraq (EUAM Iraq) in support of Security Sector Reform

Thank you for your letter of 18 October, confirming that the EU-Sub Committee on External Affairs had considered the above document. You raised a number of questions about the mission and its proposed mandate extension, which I will address in turn.

First, you asked for an assessment of the mission's results since its inception. So far the mission has provided strategic advice on the civilian aspects of: the Iraqi Countering Violent Extremism Strategy; the Ministry of Interior's five year Strategic Plan; the Federal Intelligence and Investigation Agency's Modernisation Plan; and the drafting of national laws. In advising the Ministry of Interior and the Office of the National Security Adviser, the mission has directly contributed to efforts to prevent renewed causes for further conflict. Furthermore, the mission has provided strategic coordination and coherence with other international actors in Iraq, established a mapping function to identify opportunities for future EU engagement on SSR, and has promoted human rights and gender equality across the above areas. On this basis, we assess that the mission made effective progress in its first year. You also requested an overview of the specific actions that will be undertaken during the next 18 months. Please see a list of the mission's planned activities in Annex A.

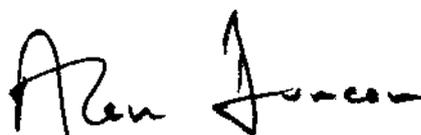
Second, you asked for more information on how the UK is bilaterally supporting SSR in Iraq. Through the Conflict, Security and Stability Fund, British Embassy (BE) Baghdad is advising Iraqi decision makers, including the National Security Adviser, on a governance framework that promotes formal Iraqi structures and appropriate command and control. We are also promoting, through a reform programme, the professionalism of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs as a formal institution which should support Iraq's security and territorial integrity. The UK Ministry of Defence is working directly with the Iraqi Ministry of Defence to increase its offer of professional training courses in the UK including on Officer development, intelligence, instructor training and on countering corruption. We are seeking to enhance and develop new opportunities on defence education, for both civilian and military personnel. We also support SSR in Iraq through multilateral institutions such as NATO and the Global Coalition.

Third, you asked for the Government's assessment on whether EUAM Iraq sufficiently addresses its objectives to take a focused approach to SSR, firmly based on Iraqi need, and complementing existing efforts on the ground. I can confirm that we assess the mission does address these objectives. Its advisory work with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior and the Office of the National Security Adviser is firmly centered around civilian SSR capacity building, although further work is needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the results. The mission's active mapping function is an essential tool for assessing ongoing Iraqi need. And the mission is effectively coordinating with the UN Development Programme, Global Coalition, NATO and the US to promote synergies and coherence on the ground.

Fourth, you asked about the gaps being addressed by the significant increase in staff, what expertise these additional staff will bring to the mission, and what work they will undertake. Each of these queries corresponds directly with the new areas of activity outlined above and in Annex A (actions to be undertaken over the next 18 months). In Iraq, increases in staffing levels lead to considerable uplifts in mission costs because of the resulting increased security costs and high levels of hardship allowance. Member States have expressed their desire for an ambitious reinforcement of the mission, and this increase in staffing will provide the capacity to deliver against the mandate whilst also ensuring sufficient resilience, including during regular staff breather breaks.

Last, you asked whether the UK would be interested in participating in the mission as a third country after Brexit. The UK is unequivocally committed to European security and supports a continued mandate for EUAM Iraq. Our potential future participation in the mission as a third country contributor is currently subject to Withdrawal Agreement negotiations. The first Strategic Review of EUAM Iraq authorised the participation of Third States, which was subsequently discussed at PSC on 16 October 2018 in relation to inviting Australia and Canada contribute to the mission given their ongoing involvement on the ground in Iraq. Noting that many civilian missions suffer from staffing gaps, it was agreed that the EU should take advantage of Third States who are willing to provide valuable expertise. Following Brexit, the UK Government intends to continue its current bilateral relations with Iraq, including on SSR, counter-Daesh and military support, humanitarian aid and stabilisation. We will continue to re-evaluate our bilateral relations as the new Government of Iraq beds in over the coming months.

I hope that I have answered your queries. I am copying this letter to the Clerks of both Committees, Les Saunders at the Department for Exiting the European Union, Adam Nutley, FCO Scrutiny Coordinator, Nicole Mason, FCO Parliamentary Adviser, and Lynne Smith, FCO Select Committee Liaison Officer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Duncan', written in a cursive style.

RT HON SIR ALAN DUNCAN MP

Annex A: Overview of the mission's activities for the next 18 months

- Strengthen its strategic advice on the development of National Strategies for Countering and Preventing Terrorism (including countering violent extremism), including the defining policies and action plans for their implementation;
- Support the Planning Directorate of the Ministry of Interior to plan and follow the implementation of departmental institutional reforms, as part of the implementation of the National Security Strategy;
- Support the implementation of National Strategies and contribute to the management and running of the SSR architecture;
- Define and support the implementation of a comprehensive strategy on border management, financial crime including corruption and money laundering, on the trafficking of cultural heritage goods, and to counter organised crime;
- Provide advice to facilitate the inclusion of human rights and gender equality within all National Strategies and policies, with a focus on implementation plans in the Ministry of Interior and through the Inspector General's Office, the Human Resources General Directorate and Training Directorate of the Ministry of Interior;
- Support the adoption of oversight concepts in the Ministry of Interior, including those that counter financial and administrative corruption;
- Contribute to the institutional reform process within the Ministry of Interior by promoting institutional coordination, providing conceptual tools to improve their planning, implementation and assessment capabilities at a strategic level and delivering advice on managing the Human Resource dimension of reform;
- Provide advice on outreach beyond Baghdad through the support to authorities in assessing the needs of institutions at the provincial and regional level and identifying the opportunities for, and the challenges to their integration in the reform process;
- Establish and maintain an effective link with international actors working on SSR in Iraq, including the UN, NATO, the Global Coalition and the USA;
- Maintain and update a mapping of ongoing and planned SSR activities and identify lessons, gaps and opportunities country-wide;
- Identify, in coordination with international donors, quick impact projects which could be delivered through either EU instruments or bilateral Member States' engagement (such as border management at Baghdad airport);
- Support the coordination of national and international stakeholders;
- Maintain the lead coordination role within the National Security Legislation System and in the Defence and Internal Security Strategy System;
- Maintain engagement with the Support Committee on SSR as part of Privileged Partner status;
- Continue close coordination with the EU Delegation on SSR, including counter-terrorism and intelligence, and with Member States in Baghdad through regular meetings at both Head of Mission and expert level.