

## The United Nations in Iraq and Iraqi Women Leaders Mark the Anniversary of UN SCR 1325 in Baghdad

**Baghdad, 26 July 2010** :On the occasion to mark the 10th anniversary of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 with a Global Open Day for Women and Peace, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Iraqi Gender Task Force today organized a round table discussion with Iraqi women advocates, leaders and parliamentarians .The session generated dialogue voicing the concerns, approaches and recommendations aiming to increase women's participation in conflict resolution, peace making and peace building

During the meeting, chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq (SRSG), Mr. Ad Melkert, several women leaders representing Iraq's government and civil society echoed similar messages towards advancing the role of women in the country .Each speaker made concrete recommendations towards the creation of equitable societies where the role of a woman is at par with that of her male counterparts .

In line with this, Acting State Minister of Women Affairs, Dr. Khuloud Al-Majoun, stressed the importance of transforming the State Ministry of Women Affairs into a full-fledged Ministry with an approved budget that would allow for the implementation of programmes leading to the empowerment of women .She stressed that “ this should be accomplished through relevant legislation and we hope to receive technical assistance and expertise in the areas of negotiations, national reconciliation and building capacities from the UN.”

Representing women parliamentarians in Baghdad, Member of Parliament (MP) Hanan Al Fatlawee, in her speech emphasized the important steps the Government has taken to address the plight of women in Iraq .In particular she made reference to the establishment of a 25 per cent quota representing women in provincial parliamentary councils“ .Emphasis should be exerted on supporting the elected provincial councils in adopting a greater role for women towards peacemaking and through necessary legislations aimed at the protection of women in all areas”, she stressed .

A voice from civil society, Amal Edwar, the Secretary of the Iraqi Amal Association, recommended the adoption of international conventions on human rights saying “international groups and stakeholders should prioritize their financial assistance to Iraqi civil society organizations and women groups - in accordance with UN SCR - 1325 to fund our campaigns and lobbying activities in upholding human rights and eradicating violence against women.”

The round table meeting also brought representation from the Kurdistan region of Iraq, where MP Samira Koran concurred with the viewpoints tabled by her counterparts .While stressing the need to take strategic steps that would be in line with UN SCR 1325 ‘she said that “women should also be represented in educational institutions such as universities, and hold other important positions that would give

them a lead in society.”

Listening to the views and recommendations expressed by Iraqi women leaders present at the round table discussion ‘SRSG Ad Melkert said “this morning’s inspiring discussion marks a crucial moment for the UN - to hear directly from Iraqi women who are taking the lead in addressing and advancing the role of women in society, whether through government or civil society .”SRSG Melkert stressed the willingness of the UN to consider and where possible to support the recommendations highlighted at the meeting, in line with both UNAMI’s mandate in Iraq and Security Council Resolution 1325 .