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USUN PRESS RELEASE # 192(07)  
August 10, 2007

Office of Press and Public Diplomacy  
United States Mission to the United Nations  
140 East 45th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10017



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Explanation of Vote by Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. Permanent Representative, on the adoption of a new mandate for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in the Security Council, August 10, 2007***

Thank you Mr. President,

And a warm welcome to the Secretary-general, and I thank the Secretary-general for his statement.

I would like to begin by expressing my deep gratitude and sincere thanks to Ambassador Jones-Parry for our work together in the Security Council. He will be missed. I would also like to warmly welcome Ambassador Ripert. I look forward to working with him and the rest of the French Mission on the many issues before the Security Council.

Mr. President, today's adoption of the resolution renewing the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq marks an important new phase in the UN's role in Iraq.

It expands the UN's involvement in three ways. First, it will provide increased assistance to the Iraqi people and their government on domestic reconciliation that leads to a national compact.

Clearly, domestic reconciliation is the responsibility of the Iraqi people and government, but the United Nations can lend specific expertise to help this process.

Second, the UN can also help promote regional understanding that supports Iraq's reconciliation.

This updated mandate marks another important step along the road to increased support for Iraq from the region and the international community. This process is already underway with meetings in Baghdad, Sharm al-Sheikh and elsewhere.

Third, the UN will help marshal resources to assist those Iraqis affected by the humanitarian crisis.

In fulfilling the tasks set out in this resolution, UN staff in Iraq are making, have made and will make a vital contribution to Iraq's future stability, and we deeply appreciate their sacrifices, their dedicated and selfless work.

The United States, as part of the Multinational Forces in Iraq, will do its part to ensure that the UN's security and resource needs are met, so that the UN's expertise can be fully deployed to help address the challenges in Iraq.

Mr. President, we are indeed grateful for expanding the UN's role to help the Iraqi people shape their future. However, let me be

clear. The United States will continue to shoulder all of its responsibilities to assist Iraq's government and people.

We are fully dedicated to success in Iraq, and our commitments to Iraq, to the region, to the UN and to the rest of the international community remain.

The United States looks forward to standing side-by-side with the Iraqi people for a stable, secure Iraq, at peace with itself and its neighbors and we intend to continue our considerable efforts to help build this new Iraq and help the Iraqis overcome the challenges of sectarianism and terrorism.

Without a doubt, we in the international community have had our differences with regard to Iraq. Despite these differences, I believe we all share the same vision for Iraq's future. This is clearly the case today.

This forward-looking resolution, adopted unanimously by the Security Council is an important signal that the page has turned.

This resolution underscores the widespread belief that what happens in Iraq has strategic implications not only for the region, but for the entire world. I thank my fellow members of the Security Council for their commitment to the people of Iraq, and to the UN's important role.

We hope that this resolution will be a springboard to greater international support for Iraq's government and people. The United States stands ready to work with other countries, in the region and elsewhere, to support the Iraqi government and people as they build a democratic, prosperous, and stable society.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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