



European Parliament

Permanent Ad Hoc Delegation for Relations
with Iraq



Council of Representatives of Iraq

European Union Friendship Committee

JOINT DECLARATION **Strasbourg, 23 April 2009**

We, Members of the European Parliament Permanent Ad Hoc Delegation for Relations with Iraq and the Iraqi Council of Representatives European Union Friendship Committee, held our second Interparliamentary meeting in Strasbourg on 22-23 April 2009.

We welcome the outcome of the provincial elections in Iraq and invite the European Commission to extend its informal support for the organising of elections to formal support in future elections; we invite it to consider organising full Election Observation Missions for future elections.

We take notice of the remarkable progress made in preparing the first ever Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Iraq and recognise its fundamental importance as the corner stone for its bilateral relations.

We warmly welcome the fact that the European Parliament and the Iraqi Council of Representatives delivered on their commitment to enhance parliamentary cooperation and managed to set up a regular dialogue since the establishment of the European Parliament Permanent Ad Hoc Delegation 15 months ago. These meetings have given us the opportunity to achieve a better mutual understanding based on shared values and common experience.

We appreciate that, beyond these meetings, a series of high-level visits of Iraqi and European representatives and contacts between individual Members of both Parliaments have helped creating a network which has maintained EU-Iraq relations centre stage of the agendas on both sides.

We welcomed recent progress made in direct contacts and work between parliamentary committees; in particular in the area of Security, Women's rights, civil society.

We considered that we should establish a work plan for future activities in particular in the areas of:


- Education & Higher Education Committee;
- Health and Environment Committee;
- Economy, Investment & Construction Committee;
- Oil, Gas and Energy Committee;
- Parliamentary Development Committee.

We point also to the visit to Brussels by Prime Minister Maliki on 16 April 2008, and to his participation in a joint meeting with the Permanent Ad Hoc Delegation for Relations with Iraq and the Foreign Affairs Committee as an important progress towards the establishment of closer contacts between the two sides.

We also underline the importance of the meeting of the Iraqi Delegation with President Pöttering on 22 April 2009.

We wish to see our parliamentary relations further develop along these lines, and recall our commitment to provide, by our joint work and by maintaining a regular pattern of Interparliamentary exchanges and meetings, the necessary democratic scrutiny of the cooperation which is undertaken by our respective governments.

We commit to the setting up of a Friendship Institute, which would enhance and develop the work of the Parliamentary Delegations by adding cultural, business, industry and civil society dimensions.



BARONESS NICHOLSON of
WINTERBOURNE
Chair of the Permanent Ad Hoc
Delegation for Relations with Iraq



SHEIKH KHALID
AL ATTIYAH
First Deputy Speaker, Chair of the
European Union Friendship Committee