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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.2.2021)

Credible, transparent, and inclusive parliamentary elections are crucial to building trust in Iraq's political system and establishing a government with a popular mandate. The EU is ready to support parliamentary elections in Iraq, currently scheduled for June 2021. The EU recently decided to support financially the efforts of the United Nations in Iraq, aiming to improve public confidence in the electoral process by building the technical and communication capacity of Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission, while also promoting greater inclusion and increased participation in the overall process. The EU's support of EUR 5.5 million, together with bilateral support from some Member States, is a substantial contribution in this regard.

EU election observation missions (EOM) contribute to strengthening democratic institutions, building public confidence in the electoral process, and helping to deter fraud, intimidation, and violence. It also reinforces other key EU foreign policy objectives, in particular peace-building. EOM's reports offer useful recommendations on how to improve the electoral process in line with international standards.

Iraq is tentatively listed as a priority country for electoral observation in 2021. The EU has never deployed an EOM in Iraq before. Whether or not the EU will be able to deploy an EOM will inevitably depend on the sanitary and security situation in the country. A decision on the possible deployment of an EOM will be made in the coming months, based on an assessment of its feasibility along the above-mentioned lines.