



# EUAM IRAQ STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY





## Foreword

A thorough reform of Iraq's civilian security sector will be critical for long term stability in Iraq. The European Union concentrates its support in this area on the civilian security sector. In order to regain Iraqi citizens' confidence, the government will need to prove its ability to deliver security and rule of law through trustworthy, regular civilian security forces that respect human rights, are in tune with citizen's needs and constitute the sole providers of security.

In this regard, and to respond to the request by Iraqi authorities for support with security sector reform, the European Union deployed in November of 2017 the European Union Advisory Mission in Support of Civilian Security Sector Reform in Iraq (EUAM Iraq) to help the Iraqi authorities strengthen state institutions and governance in line with Iraq's National Security Strategy.

The "EUAM IRAQ STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY" is part of the European Union's comprehensive approach to security sector reform. The purpose of this strategy is to outline in general terms the framework for the way forward.



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## Introduction

The European Union Advisory Mission in Iraq (EUAM Iraq) has engaged with civil society actors to support its activities since its inception in 2017. This is in line with the EU's policy commitment to support and engage with civil society to support security sector reform (SSR), as well as the Mission Operational Plan (OPLAN)<sup>12</sup>. Further, it is in line with the Iraqi National Security Strategy (NSS), Iraqi Security Sector Reform Program (SSRP), the Iraqi Strategic Plan for Ministry of Interior (2019-2023), and the Ministry of Interior Local and Civilian Policing Road Map, which refer to engagement with civil society as an important part of security sector reform.

Several Iraqi political, religious and tribal leaders perceive the affiliation with civil society organizations as a highly effective way to seek representation and popularity with the people. In addition, regular contacts with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) are of an absolute value in Iraq.

The purpose of the EUAM Iraq strategy for engaging with civil society is to outline in general terms the framework for the way forward.

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<sup>1</sup> "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe 's engagement with Civil Society in external relations," Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM (2012) 492).

<sup>2</sup> "Elements for an EU-wide strategic framework to support security sector reform," Joint Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council (SWD (2016) 221 final).



## Vision

Building up of strong partnerships within the engagement of security sector reform is a strategic priority for the EUAM Iraq. The Mission activities involve all relevant stakeholders, including non-state and civil society actors.

At the very heart of the security system governance agenda is the need to promote people-centered approaches to security. Placing people at the center of a Security Sector Reform (SSR) process enables donors to better assess the security situation in a given context, and to address the different security needs and perceptions of women and men, boys and girls.





## Objectives of the engagement

- Empower civil society in line with the general EU approach to strengthening the role of civil society;
- Improve the information exchange with civil society actors;
- Enhance information gathering and verification;
- Promote local ownership;
- Promote inclusiveness;
- Identify opportunities for confidence-building between Iraqi civil society and Iraqi security sector reform- related government authorities;
- Promote confidence-building carried out by civil society;
- Enhance EUAM Iraq's transparency;
- Enhance EUAM Iraq's outreach;
- Enhance EUAM Iraq's effectiveness;
- Coordinate with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as lead for international partner coordination and EUAM Iraq's other international partners on their engagement and support of civil society relating to the civilian aspects of security sector reform;
- Conduct all activities outlined in this strategy in line with the European Union's approach to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" and subsequent resolutions relating thereto.



# Definition of the civil society and limitations to the engagement

EUAM Iraq will engage with international and national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other organizations, involved in the civilian aspects of SSR. In addition, EUAM Iraq will engage with think tanks and academia working on SSR, and faith-based organizations.

The following limitations should be considered when engaging with civil society:

- “Do no harm” principle, attempting to maximize the positive and minimize the negative impact. In practice, this means doing the utmost to protect the sources of information and to anticipate and mitigate protection concerns if necessary.
- Evaluate the motivation of a given organization, group or organization, to engage with EUAM Iraq, and to be aware that the Mission’s engagement with the civil society actor in question may be perceived as an endorsement of the entity’s activity.
- Communicate clearly EUAM Iraq’s level of commitment.
- Evaluate if the “representative” of the entity that EUAM Iraq is engaging with, is a “true and accepted spokesperson” for the organization and for the constituency he or she purports to represent.
- Evaluate if reaching out to “hard-to-reach” individuals and groups, including those that are marginalized in Iraqi society, such as minority groups, refugees and internally displaced people, victims of domestic abuse and the LGBT community, is feasible and in support of mandate implementation.
- Adhere to EUAM Iraq’s guidelines on sharing of information, including compliance with all applicable laws, such as data protection.





# Key areas of engagement

As defined in EUAM Iraq OPLAN, the Mission will develop appropriate relationships in the context of the mandate with relevant national Iraqi, European and other international interlocutors from civil society. In line with its mandate, EUAM Iraq will engage more systematically with civil society in the following key areas:

## **A. Contributing to human security**

### **a. Engaging with the civil society actors which focus on security actors**

Engagement with civil society actors in this area will contribute to monitoring, analyzing and reporting on law enforcement and adequate public order as well as better understanding and monitoring of the perceptions and experiences of security for diverse men, women, boys and girls.

### **b. Engaging with civil society actors with a focus on local ownership and solutions**

The Mission is promoting non-politicized local ownership and practical solutions to local problems. Regular and frequent consultations with civil society organizations will increase the Mission's awareness of the local environment and of the specifics of an Iraqi understanding of a state-led, trustworthy and serving security sector.

## **B. Improving information gathering and verification**

EUAM Iraq will engage with civil society actors to improve gathering and verification of information. EUAM Iraq has no physical access to certain areas but engaging with civil society organizations with connections to such regions can provide valuable insights into security related developments, including political and economic aspects.

## **C. Contributing to conflict management**

### **a. Engaging with civil society actors which focus on confidence-building measures**

Engaging with civil society working on confidence-building can assist EUAM Iraq in identifying ideas that might have a potential to build at least limited trust with civilian security sector actors.

EUAM Iraq will act as a link between the local civil society and the donors, to direct help where it is most needed, as well as assist donors in identifying the most sustainable projects to build the public's confidence in SSR actors.

**b. Engaging with civil society actors which focus on the Iraqi government's initiatives regarding security sector reform**

EUAM Iraq's engagement with civil society will promote the cooperation between the government and civil society organizations, while supporting civil society initiatives such as civilian oversight. EUAM Iraq may assess the potential for several specific civil society actors to contribute to EUAM Iraq-specific tasks. Such engagement will be a good tool to inform regarding the development of national strategies in countering violent extremism (CVE), countering terrorism (CT), fighting organized crime, and Ministry of Interior strategies.







Published by the European Union Advisory Mission in Iraq (EUAM Iraq), March 2019  
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