

Iraq

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Athens, Greece, on 24-26 October 2019:

Take note of:

- the thousands of people in Baghdad who have taken to the streets in recent weeks to protest against dismal employment opportunities and poor government services;
- that Iraqi security forces have responded with unnecessarily brutal force, using snipers and live fire, killing at least 100 people and injuring over 6,000.

Acknowledges:

- the low voter turnout in Iraq's 2018 election and the crisis that followed;
- the important role Iraq plays in the region geopolitically;
- the important steps taken to stabilise the country, among them the peaceful transition of power following the past election, and the participatory writing of the Iraqi constitution;
- the suffering of the Iraqis, having lived through decades of oppression and violence, from the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein's regime, and more recently at the hands of Al-Qaeda and Daesh.

Regrets:

- the government's handling of the protesters. It is unacceptable that people are killed for showing dissatisfaction with their government.

Underlines:

- the need for Iraq to go to the bottom of the real issues the country is facing; administrative, political and economic corruption. Problems with low voter turnout and representation, partially accelerated by the Iraqi electoral law are further symptoms of this

Calls on the Government of Iraq to:

- respect people's right to demonstrate, to listen to their concerns and not to add to the years of violence their people have suffered;
- immediately and unconditionally, release all those detained solely for peacefully exercising their rights to protest and freedom of expression, and commit to holding to account security forces responsible for intimidation and excessive use of force, including by bringing to justice those responsible for unlawful killings and injuries;

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- institute an independent investigation of the killings done in relation to the recent demonstrations and demand that people responsible are held accountable before the law;
- seek reforms to governance structures in order to ensure that no significant sections of society are excluded.

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