

Press Release

Second Round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Iraq

The 2nd round of the India-Iraq Foreign Office Consultations was held on 20th February 2023 in Baghdad. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Secretary (CPV & OIA) while the Iraq's delegation was led by Dr. Hisham Al Alawi, Undersecretary for Political Planning Affairs from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq.

2. Secretary (CPV & OIA) called on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil H.E. Mr. Hayyan Abdul Ghani, Minister of Trade H.E. Mr. Atheer Dawood Salman, National Security Adviser H.E. Mr. Qasem Al Araji, and President of Sunni Awqaf Board H.E. Dr. Mesh'an Al Khazraji, and discussed a range of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

3. Both sides noted the warm and friendly traditional relations, and comprehensively reviewed the current status of bilateral relations in all fields including political, economic, defence, security, trade and investments, development partnership, scholarship programme and capacity building, cultural relations and people-to-people contacts. Detailed discussions were held on further strengthening of the bilateral relations and the future direction of the growth of bilateral cooperation.

4. Both sides expressed their satisfaction about the bilateral trade, which exceeded USD 34 billion for 2021-22 and discussed ways and means to further increase and diversify trade from oil to non-oil sectors. Both sides noted the importance of expanding economic partnership and technology engagement. They noted opportunities for investment, particularly in the fields of oil and gas, infrastructure, healthcare, power, transport, agriculture, water management, drugs and pharmaceuticals, ICT, and renewable energy. They urged business community to engage closely for mutual benefit.

5. A sizeable number of candidates from Iraq have been benefiting from our capacity-building programme, including ITEC and higher

education scholarships. Both sides are keen to enhance the level of economic engagement and people-to-people exchanges. Secretary (CPV & OIA) also announced that an artificial limb fitment camp (Jaipur Foot) will be organised in Iraq soon.

6. Secretary (CPV & OIA) interacted with the Indian Community, Indian and Iraqi business leaders and ITEC and ICCR alumni from Iraq.

7. Secretary (CPV & OIA) inaugurated the newly-constructed Indian Consular Application Centre (ICAC) in Baghdad which will facilitate Indian and Iraqi nationals, seeking visas and consular services.

8. Both sides agreed on the importance of continuing the upward momentum in the relationship through exchanges of regular visits and consultations, and agreed to hold the next India-Iraq Joint Commission Meeting at Oil Ministers' level in New Delhi at a mutually convenient date.

New Delhi

20 February 2023