

UN Security Council condemns Iraq violence

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It was a hastily-arranged meeting of the United Nations Security Council to discuss the unravelling situation in Iraq. As rebels from the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, moves further south, the Security Council came together to unanimously denounce the violence. It was briefed by the head of the U-N political mission in Iraq who told the council he felt quote "quite assured" there was no immediate danger of the violence spreading to the capital of Baghdad.

After the meeting, the current president of the Security Council, Russia's representative Vitaly Churkin spoke to reporters, and said that the council was of one voice in its support of Iraq.

"The members of the Security Council are united in their attitude to the situation in Iraq and members of the Security Council expressed their unanimous support to the government and people of Iraq in their fight against terrorism." Current Security Council President Vitaly Churkin said.

Meanwhile the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has urged the international community to be, quote "united" in showing a "strong commitment to solidarity". He also said that terrorism could not be tolerated.

"It is clear that more effort needs to be directed in combating the conditions that give rise to terrorism. Nothing can justify terrorism. No grievances and no cause can justify terrorist acts. The terrorism thrives when conflicts continue to simmer." Ban said.

Churkin said the council urged Iraq and the international community to give its full support to the U-N mission there. However, the mission, known as UNAMI, is not equipped to deal with this level of violence. And there's a question now over whether its mandate needs to be changed - to offer more support either on a political or humanitarian level.

But already the U-N refugee agency, UNHCR, has increased its aid efforts in response to the mass exodus. Fighting has prompted more than a half-a-million people to have reportedly fled their homes. UNHCR has protection teams on the ground to help those in need, and is providing tents and shelters for families.

And it appears the UN -- and its agencies -- is likely to be called on more in the coming days.

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