

*In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful*

## **The Governing Council Press Release**

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2004  
Baghdad- Iraq

The Governing Council and the Council of Ministers held a joint extraordinary meeting on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 in the afternoon where they discussed the complex and painful conditions the country is passing through and the measures that need to be taken to deal with this critical situation. This came about after a series of meetings, contacts and discussions between GC and various political forces and personalities. The participants saw that the effective handling of the security situation requires:

1. Immediate ceasefire and the adoption of political solutions for the emerging situations in some parts of the country particularly in Falluja, with the adherence to the rule of law and respect for public order and with emphasis that no one is above the law regardless of his position.
2. Rejection of violence and terrorist manifestations, and taking the necessary measures to stop them.
3. Involving the GC and its institutions in an actual and significant manner in running the affairs of the country and in taking decisions regarding pressing issues facing the country, and in the forefront the security file for which the requirement of its handover to the Iraqis must be prepared. Also in finding suitable means and mechanisms for solving basic and pending problems until sovereignty is transferred to the Iraqi people in a way that will put an end to the sole authority of the coalition in making decisions.
4. Ruling out the military solution for existing issues and what accompanies it of group punishment operations in which innocent civilians fall victim. It is necessary, in this context, to allow for the evacuation of the wounded and the delivery of medicine and food to the areas that need it most.
5. Drawing up a program for a quick overall handling of the grave situation, particularly in the security field which is to include political, economic-living (especially in the area of combating unemployment), social measures and others, and not to depend only on military and police measures.

6. The commitment of all sides to Iraqi national unity and to work to thwart all designs aiming at inciting sectarian and ethnic differences.

In the light of all this and in an effort to find tangible solutions for the burning problems impeding the march towards the transfer of authority to the Iraqi people and handing it to its representatives, steps must be taken swiftly to calm the situation immediately and halt all armed manifestations allowing for the Arba'een rituals to take their natural course in addition to facilitating the missions of the delegations mediating between various sides and support their efforts and those of the GC in this direction.

From another side, it is necessary for the police to go back to its positions and duties in maintaining security and for all government and public buildings to be returned to relevant institutions, also to take all necessary measures to protect public property and to prevent all actions of looting and kidnapping of foreigners.

All participants stressed the importance of respecting human rights in Iraq and the relevant international agreements and accords, also to prevent their violation in any form and under any pretence.

Finally, the participants expressed the hope that the international community does not abandon its duty in supporting the efforts of our people in thwarting the terrorists plans and secure the stability of our country, and to commence the march of establishing a federal constitutional democratic system.