

*Statement from Mark Kornblau, Spokesman, United States Mission to the United Nations*

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Susan Rice, US Ambassador to the United Nations, completed a two day visit to Iraq today, holding meetings with Iraqi leaders and US military and diplomatic officials.

Ambassador Rice met for one and a half hours Friday afternoon with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, and later over dinner with President Jalal Talabani. Ambassador Rice discussed the ongoing efforts to transition security responsibilities to the Iraqi Security Forces, the upcoming Iraqi elections, other political and economic issues, as well as the broadening and deepening cooperation between the United States and Iraq. She was also briefed by senior leadership at the US Embassy in Baghdad.

Saturday, Ambassador Rice met with the leadership of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq. She also met Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari, toured the site of the August 19 terrorist bombing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and expressed America's condolences for those killed in the attack.

Ambassador Rice received a strategic briefing from MNF-I Commanding General Ray Odierno. She then had lunch with a group of U.S. troops comprised mostly of parents away from their children, to thank them for their service and their enormous sacrifices in undertaking such challenging work far away from their families and loved ones.

Later in the day, Ambassador Rice traveled to Erbil where she met with Massoud Barzani, President of the Kurdistan Regional Government, and senior KRG officials. She visited an innovative USAID microfinance project, and the historic Erbil Citadel and Textile Museum.