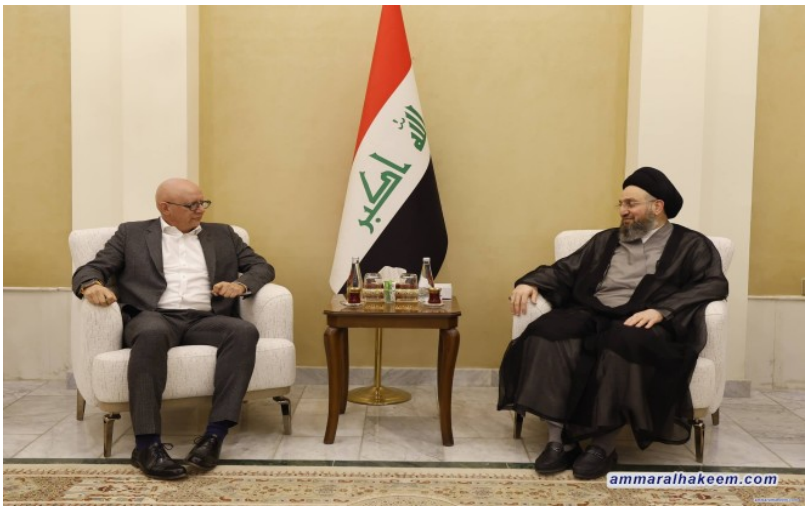
Sayyid Al-Hakeem: Iraq Seeks International Partnerships to Strengthen Economy, Safeguard Sovereignty



His Eminence Sayyid Al-Hakeem, Head of the National State Powers' Alliance, received at his office in Baghdad a delegation of researchers and academics specializing in Iraqi and regional affairs, comprising Professor Toby Dodge, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics, and the Iraqi academic Dr. Raad Al-Qadri.

The meeting saw discussion of the political, social, and economic situation in Iraq and the challenges facing it, particularly after the end of the mission of the International Coalition in Iraq to combat ISIS, with H.E. regarding the end of the Coalition's mission as a message of recovery for Iraq and an international acknowledgment of it, and affirming that Iraq seeks to establish bilateral relations with the Coalition countries in a way that serves its interests and safeguards its sovereignty.

H.E. explained that Iraq is living a phase of consolidating democracy, and offers a unique model in the region in democratic practice, freedom of expression, and the peaceful rotation of power, which has reinforced the standing of the political system despite all the challenges it faced over the past two decades at the political, social, and security levels, noting that the current phase is witnessing an economic challenge resulting from regional events and the fluctuation of oil production and exports.

H.E. affirmed that Iraq is moving ahead with addressing the problem of weapons outside the framework of the state, diversifying sources of income, and freeing the economy from the rentier condition, in addition to diversifying export outlets via the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, and targeting new markets that deepen Iraq's standing in international markets and open the door to partnerships with important countries around the world.