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Holy See Press Office Communiqué: Audience with the President of the Republic of Iraq

Today, 24 November, the Holy Father Francis received in audience His Excellency Mr. Barham Salih, president of the Republic of Iraq, who subsequently met with His Eminence Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by H.E. Msgr. Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States.

During the cordial discussions, the good relations between the Holy See and Iraq and the positive developments of the political situation were evoked, highlighting the importance of joint efforts, with the support of the international community, to face the challenges of the reconciliation process to promote national unity. In this context, emphasis was placed on the historic presence of Christians in the country, of which they are an integral part, the significant contribution they make to the reconstruction of the social fabric, and the importance of ensuring that those who have been compelled to abandon their own lands of origin are able to return there, highlighting the need to guarantee their safety and a place in the future of Iraq.

Finally, attention turned to the various conflicts and grave humanitarian crises that afflict the Region, underlining the need for dialogue between the various ethnic and religious groups to re-establish trust and peaceful co-existence.