

## India offers support for reconstruction of Iraq

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, right, at a press conference at the Kuwait International Conference for Reconstruction of Iraq in Kuwait City on Wednesday.AFP

India has called for a comprehensive political settlement and reconciliation in Iraq at the International Conference for Reconstruction of Iraq in Kuwait, where major world powers are meeting to chalk out a plan of recovery for the country.

Union Minister of State for External Affairs M.J. Akbar, who is leading the Indian delegation, has announced that India will play its part in the reconstruction, and called for an end to global terrorism.

### Collaborative approach

“We will play our part with project-specific proposals. We support the important role assigned to private sector investors in the rebuilding of the terrorist-affected areas in Iraq. We are willing to play a substantive role in major projects in petrochemicals, health, education, infrastructure and other sectors. We will also look at any specific requests for rehabilitation projects and essential supplies like medicines, equipment, etc., as required for internally displaced persons as part of our assistance programme,” said Mr. Akbar indicating a collaborative approach to rebuilding the country, which has witnessed war since the early 1980s.

The conference being held in Iraq’s neighbour Kuwait has so far received promises of billions of dollars in the form of lines of credit from the international community and private investors, but reports say that Baghdad is yet to raise the resources for recovery from the destruction from years of foreign invasion and war with the Islamic State.

### Pact against terror

Mr. Akbar drew the attention of the conference towards India’s current campaign for a comprehensive global convention against terrorism.

“This is also the moment to remind the international community that an early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, a draft of which was proposed by India as early as 1996...,” he said.

During the visit of Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim Jaafari last year, India assured Baghdad of support in the reconstruction of the country. Since the outbreak of the war in 2003, India had frequently responded to the humanitarian needs in Iraq and contributed in several ways, including providing \$10 million in aid towards the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) for investments, reconstruction and development in Iraq.

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