

Seeking justice and supporting victims of Daesh atrocities

Excellencies, I'd like to start by thanking Special Advisor Karim Khan for his report on the continued progress made by The UN Investigative Team for the Accountability of Daesh in the recent months. We commend UNITAD for its continued flexibility, including in the face of COVID-19 challenges, and applaud the progress to complete initial case-briefs on two core investigative priorities. And we welcome the launch of the Inter-Faith Dialogue series; close engagement with religious communities is critical to achieving justice.

But the Special Advisor's report and Nadia Murad's report left us in no doubt of the criminality of Daesh and the harrowing suffering of the victims – of children and women, for generations to come, across communities, whether they remain in ISIS captivity or if they have secured their freedom. So the international community must stand united in its resolve to hold Daesh to account and uphold justice. The United Kingdom has supported the Investigative Team to fulfil its mandate and we welcome the support of other countries to UNITAD. That is why the UK provided assistance to UNITAD's investigations into crimes committed against the Kaka'i, Shabak and Shia Turkmen. Indeed, we commend the Team's work in this regard, and note it has tripled the total number of incidents identified as relevant to these investigations, thanks to close collaboration with civil society, academics, and community leaders.

The UK also notes and welcomes the continued collaboration between the Team, the Iraqi judicial authorities, and the Governments of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. We welcome progress made in building evidence of Daesh atrocities. This is an important step forward in progressing UNITAD's mandate and securing justice for victims.

We welcome progress on draft legislation to provide the domestic legal basis for the prosecution of ISIL members for international crimes in Iraq. But given the importance of seeing justice done, we urge continued momentum and collaboration to secure an evidence sharing mechanism that provides assurances on the use of the death penalty.

Justice also means assisting the victims of Daesh to rebuild their lives. The work of the Team's Witness Protection and Support Unit to provide psychosocial support to witnesses, particularly women and child survivors, is crucial. And again, we are especially grateful to Nobel Laureate Nadia Murad for her work, for her briefing today, but above all, for her courage in turning her own harrowing experience and suffering to the benefit and service of others.

The United Kingdom has so far contributed nearly \$2.8 million to the work of the UN Investigative Team. We continue to engage in New York, London, Baghdad and Erbil. Regular updates to the UN Security Council are key to allowing us

to see the progress the Team is making. We welcome the Team's continued engagement with us at the United Nations and with individual member states who are providing staffing, funding and support.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity officially to note the UK's thanks and appreciation for the work of the Special Advisor and for all he has done over the last three years, in this, his last Council briefing.

Thank you, Mr President.