



Security Council

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Letter dated 12 May 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefings provided by Mr. Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, and Ms. Nadia Murad, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, the Niger, Norway, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam in connection with the video-teleconference on "Threats to international peace and security" convened on Monday, 10 May 2021. A statement was also delivered by the representative of Iraq.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, these briefings and statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Zhang Jun**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Briefing by the Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Karim Asad Ahmad Khan**

I am honoured to address you this morning to present my sixth and final report (see S/2021/419) as Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD).

In December 2018, I provided my first briefing to you (see S/PV.8412), outlining how our Team of five staff members in Iraq had begun work on the implementation of the innovative mandate established pursuant to resolution 2379 (2017), at the request of the Government of Iraq. Today, two and half years on, I am pleased to be able to report on the activities of more than 200 staff, including national experts appointed in consultation with the Government of Iraq, working from offices in Baghdad, Dahuk, Erbil and New York and harnessing the investigative activities of six field investigation units addressing crimes committed against all communities in Iraq. Specialized thematic units on gender-based crimes and crimes against children, financial tracking and witness protection are providing targeted support across all aspects of our work, while a dedicated mass-graves unit has now successfully supported excavations at 22 sites.

UNITAD is now a fully functioning investigation team capable of addressing some of the key challenges faced by national authorities in prosecuting members of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) for their crimes in Iraq. Drawing on this infrastructure, the Team rapidly expanded its evidentiary holdings in the past six months, including significant developments in the collection of forensic evidence from mass grave sites, digital data extracted from ISIL hard drives and the digitization of documentary case files, in cooperation with Iraqi authorities.

In parallel, the introduction of advanced technological tools has further enhanced our evidence-processing capabilities, allowing investigators to search rapidly across data sets in order to reconstruct events, respond to targeted requests for information and ensure that evidence is properly corroborated.

In a significant development, the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning tools in the analysis of internal ISIL databases now allows the Team to establish clear timelines of the activities of key ISIL members. Drawing together information from ISIL immigration records, medical records, payment logs and fighter rosters, we have directly tied persons of interest to ISIL battalions and crime scenes.

Building on this progress, a landmark moment has been reached in our work, with initial case briefs completed in relation to two key investigative priorities: the mass killing of unarmed cadets and military personnel at Tikrit Air Academy in June 2014 and the attacks against the Yazidi community in the Sinjar region. The crimes committed against the Yezidi community represent some of the most brutal and widespread acts of violence inflicted by ISIL on the people of Iraq.

The Team has established a detailed account of these atrocities through the excavation of mass grave sites, by ensuring the most vulnerable of witnesses have been able to come forward with their accounts and by collecting extensive documentary evidence, in cooperation with Iraqi authorities, non-governmental organizations and other partners.

I can confirm to the Security Council that, based on our independent criminal investigations, UNITAD has established clear and convincing evidence that genocide was committed by ISIL against the Yazidi as a religious group. The intent of ISIL to destroy the Yazidi, physically and biologically, is manifest in its ultimatum — applied remorselessly to all members of their community — to convert or die. Thousands were killed pursuant to this ultimatum, either executed en masse, shot as they fled or dying from exposure on Mount Sinjar as they tried to escape. Thousands more were enslaved, with women and children abducted from their families and subjected to the most brutal abuses, including serial rape and other forms of unendurable sexual violence. For many this abuse lasted years, often leading to death. The intent of these acts was to permanently destroy the capacity of these women and children to have children and build families within the Yazidi community.

The Team has also established that numerous other international crimes were also committed against the Yazidi community, including extermination, enslavement, sexual violence, forcible transfer, persecution on religious and gender grounds and conscription of children into an armed group. Yazidi children were in many cases directly targeted and disproportionately impacted by Da'esh crimes. Anyone who escaped alive, but particularly children, carry daily the burden of the lasting effects of these crimes.

But let us not forget: these crimes are ongoing. Thousands of Yazidi women, boys and girls remain detached from their families or disappeared — and some even continue to be held by their original ISIL captors or those to whom they were sold. We will not forget them, and our work to ensure justice for all those impacted by these crimes will continue.

Through investigations into the attacks by ISIL on predominantly Shia unarmed air cadets and personnel from Tikrit Air Academy, the Team has compiled and analysed extensive evidence detailing their capture, torture and mass execution. These acts were carried out in the most brutal circumstances imaginable, with many men humiliated prior to being killed.

Based on its independent investigative work, the Team has concluded that these acts constitute the war crimes of murder, torture, cruel treatment and outrages upon personal dignity. Furthermore, the Team has concluded, based on clear and convincing evidence, that a Da'esh video released in July 2015 showing these killings constitutes a direct and public incitement to commit genocide against Shia Muslims. The narration glorifying the horrifying images of these mass executions contains a repeated and clear exhortation to ISIL followers: “Kill them wherever you find them”.

As the Team has finalized its initial case briefs in relation to its initial investigative priorities, we have also established key additional lines of investigation into crimes within our mandate. This has included the establishment of a new field investigation unit dedicated to the investigation of crimes committed against the Sunni community in Iraq.

Information obtained from ISIL electronic devices has also led to the opening of a new investigation into the development and successful deployment of chemical and biological weapons by ISIL in Iraq. Evidence collected to date details how ISIL used laboratories at Mosul University as the epicentre of its chemical weapons programme, drawing on the expertise of scientists and medical professionals from Iraq and abroad. Initially weaponizing chlorine from water treatment plants overtaken in 2014, ISIL subsequently developed toxic lethal compounds, including thallium and nicotine, which were tested on live prisoners, leading to death. As its capacity strengthened, ISIL developed a sulfur mustard production system that was

deployed in March 2016 through the firing of 40 rockets at the Turkmen Shia town of Tazah Khurmatu.

This investigation is developing rapidly, with an initial case brief anticipated to be completed and available to national authorities within five months. By the end of 2021, the Team also anticipates the completion of case briefs addressing crimes committed against Christian, Kaka'i, Shabak, Shia Turkmen and Sunni communities in Iraq, as well as the massacre of predominantly Shia inmates at Badush prison.

In line with the mandate that the Security Council has provided, it is of course not sufficient for evidence to be collected and synthesized for findings to be reached and presented in reports. To fulfil this mandate, and most importantly to meet the expectations of survivors, our work must be put before national courts to prosecute those responsible for the horrific crimes that I have just described.

In this spirit, I am pleased to be able to confirm to the Security Council that arrangements have now been put in place with the Iraqi judiciary that have allowed us to transfer evidence collected by the Team concerning financial crimes committed in support of ISIL activities in Iraq. This represents an important initial step in ensuring that our work contributes tangibly to accountability efforts in Iraq in a manner consistent with our terms of reference.

I am also continuing to support efforts by the Iraqi Council of Representatives to adopt legislation establishing a legal basis for the prosecution of ISIL members in Iraq for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. This will be a further crucial step towards the delivery of comprehensive accountability for ISIL crimes in Iraq in partnership with our Team.

I am also pleased to inform the Security Council that, last week, legislation was presented before the Parliament of the Kurdistan region to establish a court with jurisdiction over international crimes committed by ISIL. I commend the President and Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government for their strong support for this legislation and for their efforts in securing accountability for these crimes. The adoption of this law could potentially represent an important moment in efforts to achieve the full implementation of our mandate.

In parallel with these initiatives in Iraq, the Team has sought to harness existing channels for the use of its evidence in criminal proceedings, strengthening its support to other national authorities in response to requests for assistance. As reflected in my report, a total of 14 States have requested the Team's assistance with respect to ongoing national proceedings. Drawing on our expanded evidentiary holdings, and in particular our exploitation of internal ISIL documentation, we have been able to respond positively to a significant majority of requests received.

Much of the progress and activities I have described to you today have emphasized one of the key principles of our strategic approach: innovation. As Council members may be aware, on Wednesday this week UNITAD will participate in an Arria Formula meeting highlighting some of the key ways in which we have harnessed technology and drawn on advanced psychosocial practices to accelerate our investigations.

However, equally important is the other core principle underlying all of our activities: that of partnership. This is reflected in particular through the excellent cooperation and collaboration our Team has developed with the Government of Iraq throughout my time as Special Adviser.

As reflected in my report, the cooperation and assistance received from the national coordinating committee responsible for facilitating our work in Iraq have remained central to progress achieved. The Iraqi judiciary has continued to

be exemplary in its engagement with the Team, working with us as partners in the digitization of evidence and providing extensive information that has accelerated investigations. The Kurdistan Regional Government has also provided steadfast support for our Team.

As channels begin to be opened for information-sharing with Iraqi authorities, we have also expanded our provision of capacity-building support. Last week, I was delighted to inaugurate a new 10-part training course on international criminal law for 27 senior judges and prosecutors. Delivered in collaboration with the Australian National University, this course will provide participants with in-depth knowledge of international criminal law and its application to the crimes of ISIL. Building on this basis, our Team will mentor individual judges in the construction of case files against specific ISIL members for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Combining this training with our ongoing support to Iraqi authorities in the excavation of mass grave sites and the digitization of documentary evidence, the Team has sought to establish a strong basis on which prosecutions of ISIL members for international crimes may be taken forward swiftly following the establishment of an appropriate legal basis in Iraq.

Our ongoing and strengthening partnership with survivor groups, non-governmental organizations and religious authorities has also continued to be central to progress in investigative activities. I would wish to extend my sincere thanks to all of our Iraqi partners for the invaluable contribution they have made in our collective pursuit of accountability for ISIL crimes.

Through the progress made by the Team in the collection of evidence and the parallel strengthening of channels available for its use in national courts, I believe a path has now been set, in collaboration with our Iraqi partners, for the successful completion of the Team's work.

Reflecting this, I have outlined in my report a series of steps that would allow for the conduct of trials in Iraq addressing key crimes committed against all impacted communities, drawing extensively on the evidence collected by the Team. I consider it possible that such trials could begin next year.

In taking these steps together, we must ensure that focus remains on those we have ultimately been mandated to serve. Throughout my time as Head of the Team I have sought to ensure our work draws on deep connections with the communities of Iraq. The message I have received from community leaders, religious authorities and survivor groups is consistent and clear. If we are to meaningfully address the legacy of ISIL crimes in Iraq, justice must be the basis on which such efforts are built.

The imperative of heeding these calls was underlined to me in March this year as our Team supported the return of remains of 103 Yazidi men recovered from mass graves previously excavated in Kojo village. In that profound setting, I was struck that the pain reflected among families present is also felt constantly by the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis from Yazidi, Shia, Sunni, Kaka'i, Christian and other communities who have lost family members or had their lives irreversibly impacted by the crimes of ISIL. So many will not even have the chance to bury those they loved.

It is fitting that we are joined today by Ms. Nadia Murad, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, whose call to action and appeal to our collective conscience gave rise to the establishment of UNITAD. As the Team moves into a crucial phase of its work, we must remain conscious of the promise made to Ms. Murad and all communities impacted by ISIL crimes that the international community will stand with them in ensuring those responsible for such acts are held accountable.

Annex II

Briefing by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad

It is an honour for me to join you here today as a Yazidi and a survivor of the atrocities of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS). I would like to start by expressing my gratitude for the Council's support of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) and relaying to you my community's hopes for the future.

When I sat in this Chamber, alongside my friend and lawyer Amal Clooney (see S/PV.8502), we asked for the Council's support to ensure that ISIS would not succeed in its goal of eradicating the Yazidi people from Iraq. Adopting resolution 2379 (2017) was a vital step, and I am grateful to the members of the Council for supporting UNITAD's creation and ongoing work.

UNITAD's work presents opportunities for justice. The Investigative Team is contributing evidence to a number of ongoing proceedings and a handful of survivors have been able to face their abusers in court. A few months ago, I was able to bury two of my brothers, along with over 100 victims of the Kojo massacre, thanks to the exhumation of mass graves and identification of remains. But we cannot rest on these accomplishments because much work remains. With successful investigations, the Council must now prioritize and accelerate concrete action to address the findings.

The evidence collected by Mr. Khan and the UNITAD team affirms the conclusion reached by the United Nations in 2016 — ISIS crimes against Yazidis constitute genocide. Formal evidence collection is, of course, critical for courts and history books. However, today I call on the Council to examine the human lives impacted by UNITAD's mandate.

The progress of the Commission for Investigation and Gathering Evidence is not only remarkable for its innovations in digital platforms, artificial intelligence and data analysis; the findings are monumental because each data point represents a human life and evidences its suffering. Together, this evidence tells the story of the Yazidi people, whom we lost, and what we survived.

Yazidis experienced the worst atrocities known to humankind. I will never forget the grief in my mother's eyes when she realized her sons had been executed — not knowing she would face the same fate. I can still feel my niece's hand being ripped out of mine as we were separated and loaded onto buses like cattle. And I can still calculate what my body was worth to those who bought and sold it.

For nearly seven years, Yazidis have been unable to move forward and resume our lives. Over 200,000 Yazidis remain in internally displaced person camps only hours away from their homeland where they wait, hoping for justice and the restoration of Sinjar's security, governance and infrastructure. And thousands of families continue to hope for the day when their relatives' remains will be exhumed from mass graves, so they can bury and honour their loved ones. But the true horror exists for the 2,800 women and children who remain in ISIS captivity.

Evidence of ISIS genocide paints a clear picture. ISIS never attempted to hide its intentions. Mass graves were clearly marked and decrees issued on the immorality of Yazidism. Manuals were published to codify the slave trade and auctions selling Yazidi women still take place online. Their intent to eradicate our community, religion, and culture was declared far and wide. ISIS was proud of their genocide.

Despite all of the horrors I just described, Yazidis continue to work together to rebuild their homeland, restart their livelihoods, and advocate for accountability.

They are eager to take part in the local governance and security of the greater community. Yazidis know that stabilizing Sinjar is the best hope for preventing further persecution. Yet, our progress is constrained by politics, competing interests and inaction. We try to turn the page, only to find there is no pen with which to write our next chapter.

The international community can give the Yazidi community the pen. I ask the Council to help us write a new chapter. Legal accountability for ISIS crimes would dramatically impact every aspect of my community's recovery.

I firmly believe that public trials and recognition of the genocide will help avert future violence and facilitate the healing of survivors. International monitoring is needed to ensure that Iraq's national courts see justice through. And international tribunals are needed to address the universal magnitude of ISIS crimes against humanity.

Amal and I called on the Council five years ago to create a clear plan for prosecution. We asked it to refer this genocide to the International Criminal Court or to establish a court by treaty. We were met with empty promises and competing priorities. Justice was deferred. Yazidis have been persecuted for centuries. These abuses have gone unchecked. When impunity is accepted, violence is repeated. Accountability is essential to defeating ISIS and formally acknowledging the trauma survivors continue to endure.

Survivors have spent years reliving and sharing their experiences, as I have today. Evidence has been found, but we are still searching for the political will to prosecute. It is time for the international community to do more than listen. It is time to act. If world leaders have the political will to act on this evidence, then justice is surely within reach. ISIS's genocide will not come to an end until all Yazidis can live a life of dignity in their homeland.

The Yazidis may be a minority community within Iraq, but the treatment of this case has major implications for the human rights of people everywhere. We must ask ourselves what message our collective conscience wants to send to women who have been used as weapons of war. Will we turn a blind eye to ethnic cleansing and sexual violence? Will we look on with pity murmuring "never again" until the next atrocity grabs our attention? Or will we finally say, "your body, your life, and your rights matter as much as mine"?

This is the potential of UNITAD's evidence: to hold perpetrators accountable for genocide and crimes against humanity. But transforming evidence into justice and accountability requires action. The international community has shown that it will act to counter ISIS's terrorism. But does it stand against genocide? Does it stand against sexual violence? Will it stand with Yazidis?

Annex III**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Geng Shuang**

[Original: Chinese and English]

China thanks Special Adviser Karim Khan for his briefing. In the past three years, he has led the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) in collecting evidence of crimes committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), pursued accountability for terrorist acts, done a great deal of work, and made much progress, which has China's positive evaluation. Mr. Karim Khan is about to leave for his new post, and I wish him every success in The Hague. I also wish to thank Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Ms. Murad for her briefing.

We have read the sixth report submitted by Special Adviser Karim Khan (S/2021/419), and I welcome the results of the investigation into the attacks against the Yazidi community and the attack on the Tikrit Air Academy. We hope that these developments will bring comfort to survivors, including Ms. Murad.

UNITAD has collected a large amount of evidence of crimes committed by ISIL. Only its timely transfer to the Government of Iraq can translate it into the tangible results of holding terrorists accountable, thereby achieving the intended objectives of resolution 2379 (2017). We hope that UNITAD will hand over the evidence to the Iraqi side in a timely and complete manner, in accordance with the relevant Council resolutions.

Terrorism is the common enemy of humankind. The international community should continue to support Iraq in its fight against terrorism, bring terrorists to justice and consolidate hard-won counter-terrorism gains. At the same time, the international community should also earnestly respect Iraq's sovereignty and jurisdiction over crimes committed on Iraqi territory, and support Iraq in its pursuit of accountability against terrorists, in accordance with domestic laws.

We appreciate Iraq's active effort to take forward its domestic legislation to hold former ISIL terrorists accountable. All the parties concerned and the United Nations should also support Iraq in dealing with foreign terrorist fighters on its territory.

In its report, UNITAD puts forward some preliminary ideas around a completion strategy, and China encourages the Investigative Team to fully communicate and coordinate with the Government of Iraq in this regard. The Council should study and discuss the relevant issues in due course.

Annex IV

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Estonia to the United Nations

I thank our briefers, Special Adviser Khan and Ms. Murad, for their detailed briefings. The ongoing investigations of crimes committed in Iraq by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) will help to end impunity and bring justice to the victims.

The personal tragedies of the many who have suffered due to ISIL, such as in the testimony of Ms. Murad, need to be heard. The personal accounts further underline the important work that the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) is doing. In that regard, I join others in recognizing the tremendous efforts that Mr. Khan has made while leading the team with utmost dedication.

Estonia acknowledges the successful work carried out by UNITAD during the last reporting period despite the challenging circumstances in the political and security spheres, as well as in the light of the coronavirus-disease restrictions.

We recognize the recovery of the 103 Yazidi victims from nine mass graves. Although a solemn affair, we commend UNITAD's efforts, in cooperation with Iraqi authorities, to help to ensure that the commemoration of the victims takes place in line with local traditions and customs. We look forward to seeing the outcome of the crucially needed interfaith dialogue, which is helping engage with religious communities seeking to engage in accountability processes.

We fully support UNITAD in its efforts to strengthen the capacity of Iraqi authorities, and commend the significant progress made in terms of using new resources and technical innovations. In particular, we would like to highlight the collection and digitization of extensive internal ISIL documentation through effective cooperation with Iraqi institutions.

We welcome the arrangement between UNITAD and the Iraqi judiciary, allowing the sharing of information about financial crimes committed in connection with ISIL activities in Iraq. It is a notable step as it paves the way for even stronger cooperation in the future.

We value UNITAD's work, as it meaningfully contributes to achieving accountability in Iraq with full respect for the principles and best practices of the United Nations.

I would also like to stress the importance of the continued work of UNITAD through the respective UNITAD special units on the issues of sexual and gender-based crimes and crimes against children; its focus on witness protection as well as providing psychological support for witnesses and survivors so as to avoid secondary trauma.

Annex V**Statement by the Minister Counsellor of France to the United Nations, Diarra Dime Labille**

[Original: French]

France wishes to thank Special Adviser Karim Khan and his team for their sixth report (S/2021/419) and to congratulate him on his work over recent years leading the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), as well as on his election to serve as Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. We sincerely wish him every success and assure him of France's support in the context of that future endeavour.

We thank Nadia Murad for her courageous testimony and her call for justice to be done by all victims of Da'esh, including the Yazidis. I welcome the presence of the Ambassador of Iraq, which once again reflects Iraq's commitment to working closely with the international community and UNITAD to ensure justice for all victims of crimes committed by Da'esh on Iraqi territory.

Regarding the sixth report, France take note of the significant progress achieved by the Special Adviser's Team since he briefed the Council on 10 December 2020 (see S/2020/1193). We are referring to the completion of evidence collection in both the initial cases opened by UNITAD — on the attacks against the Yazidi community in the Sinjar region, and on the mass killing of young military cadets at the Tikrit Air Academy. We encourage UNITAD to continue the open investigation into the development and use against civilian populations of chemical and biological weapons by Da'esh in Iraq between 2014 and 2016, as well as the implementation of the joint mass grave-excavation strategy.

The situation of victims, including victims of sexual and gender-based violence, is fundamentally important. We welcome the efforts of the Special Adviser and the Team to provide psychological support to victims, survivors and witnesses alike.

Despite the challenges of the coronavirus disease, UNITAD has found a way to achieve results by implementing creative and innovative solutions. The pandemic has given new relevance to the strategy developed by the Special Adviser and his Team, harnessing technological tools to deliver on its mandate, including through artificial intelligence. We commend the efficiency of the team, which has been able to deal with a rapidly growing body of evidence in the digitization project, with the participation of the Iraqi authorities.

We believe that the progress achieved and UNITAD's success are indeed the results of the very good cooperation that exists with Iraq and all its communities, including religious communities. In this regard, France welcomes the strengthening of collaboration between UNITAD and the national coordinating committee established by the Government of Iraq as well as the finalization of the agreement on facilitating information-sharing on financial crimes committed by Da'esh.

Improving Iraqi judicial authorities' understanding of the mandate of UNITAD, as defined by resolution 2379 (2017), of 21 September 2017, is crucial. We welcome the participation of UNITAD in training Iraqi investigating judges on international criminal law and on developing case files and prosecutions against members of Da'esh for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

It is important to recall the United Nations consistent position of non-transmission of material in the context of legal proceedings involving the possibility of a death sentence, wheresoever it may be. We encourage the Iraqi authorities to

continue in their efforts to finalize the legislative framework to bring members of Da'esh to justice, in accordance with the highest human rights standards and principles.

In conclusion, the fight against the impunity for all perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide committed in Iraq by Da'esh is imperative for stabilization, reconstruction and reconciliation not only for the Yazidis, as Nadia Murad highlighted, but for the Iraqi people as a whole.

To prevent Da'esh, in all its forms, from resurging, the Security Council must remain engaged and continue to support the efforts of the Iraqi authorities, including to prosecute the most serious crimes.

Annex VI**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative and Political Coordinator of India to the United Nations, Ravindra Raguttahalli**

I welcome Special Adviser Karim Asad Ahmad Khan and the Permanent Representative of Iraq, Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr Aluloom, to the meeting. I echo the appreciation of other colleagues for the Special Adviser's contribution to the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD). I wish him success in his next assignment as Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. I also welcome Noble Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad and thank her for her briefing.

India strongly believes that the credibility of our collective fight against terrorism can be strengthened only when we ensure accountability for the grave and inhuman acts of terror committed by terrorists and take strong measures against States that encourage, support and finance terrorism. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has carried out inhuman atrocities against the people of Iraq. Victims of ISIL's horrific crimes also include 39 Indian nationals. ISIL has systematically committed genocide, torture, rape, slavery and kidnapping throughout the territory under its control in Iraq and Syria. The Islamic State therefore cannot be seen as just another regional terrorist outfit; it is a global syndicate with affiliated terrorist groups across the world, including in our neighbourhood.

We are pleased to note that UNITAD, under the leadership of the Special Adviser, is fighting impunity and ensuring accountability for the crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq. Accountability for such crimes, especially those committed against various minority communities in Iraq, is critical for achieving smooth reconciliation and sustained peace in Iraq. In that regard, we welcome the adoption of the Yazidi Female Survivors Law. Implementation of that key law and the recent Sinjar agreement will help Iraq move closer to achieving justice for the victims and contribute to restoring normalcy in the lives of Yazidi survivors, as well as enhance their quality of life and pave the way for their safe return. UNITAD's work also supports the Iraqi Government's efforts aimed at national reconciliation. The completion of initial case briefs by UNITAD in the attacks against the Yazidi community in the Sinjar region and the positive progress in case briefs on other communities are also important developments.

We welcome UNITAD's investigation into the development and use of chemical and biological weapons by ISIL in Iraq. We note with concern the Team's observation that evidence collected and analysed confirms the repeated use of chemical weapons by ISIL against civilians. India firmly condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody and under any circumstances. On many occasions, India has highlighted the serious threat to international peace and security emanating from the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by ISIL and other terrorist groups, as well as the need for greater international cooperation to prevent it. We hope that UNITAD's investigation will also provide valuable insights in that regard so as to help global non-proliferation efforts, including through the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

We appreciate the close partnership and excellent cooperation between the Iraqi authorities and UNITAD. This partnership has been central to the effective delivery of UNITAD's mandate. The continued involvement of Iraqi experts in the work of the Investigative Team, alongside international experts, is crucial to UNITAD's success. Such joint work, along with the training of various Iraqi authorities, will ensure that national capacities are strengthened in order to ensure

accountability in the long-term for the horrific crimes perpetrated by ISIL. That also holds true for the efforts of UNITAD to jointly develop case files with the judicial authorities of Iraq to prosecute such crimes.

We note with satisfaction UNITAD's innovative use of technology in fulfilling its mandate and in overcoming the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic. The Shuhud digital platform deserves special appreciation, as it enables the victims and other Iraqi people to submit information and evidence to support the Team's accountability efforts in a much faster and easier way. Harnessing the benefits of technological innovation for the betterment of humankind is an important priority for India. We encourage UNITAD to continue its pursuit of advanced technological solutions to enhance the efficiency of its work.

India also welcomes the technical and financial support extended by other Member States to UNITAD. Such efforts should also contribute to strengthening Iraq's judicial system and law enforcement capabilities.

Terrorists and terrorist groups affiliated with ISIL have committed crimes against humanity in an unprecedented manner. The perpetrators of those crimes should be brought to justice in their respective countries of origin. The sharing of information and evidence collected by UNITAD with other Member States will further strengthen those efforts.

The full realization of UNITAD's mandate will not be possible until the Team is able to share its large volume of evidence with the Iraqi authorities. It is unfortunate that, despite a lapse of almost three years, UNITAD has been unable to fully service its primary client. We hope this will be rectified soon, in keeping with the timelines indicated in the Special Adviser's report (see S/2021/419). Delays in evidence-sharing will further delay justice to those victims and their loved ones whose lives have been devastated by the atrocities committed by ISIL.

The people of Iraq have made immense sacrifices in their fight against ISIL. Justice will not be delivered to them until those responsible for the atrocities carried out are held to account. The full implementation of UNITAD's mandate would help secure justice for the survivors in Iraq and beyond. India stands ready to offer its support to UNITAD in that regard.

Annex VII**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations**

I would like to thank Special Adviser Karim Asad Ahmad Khan for his report (see S/2021/419) and briefing today. Before I begin my statement, and as this is Mr. Khan's last briefing to the Security Council in this role, I want to take the opportunity to acknowledge his service and leadership over the past three years.

I would also like to thank Ms. Nadia Murad for her powerful briefing this morning. As she did when she advocated for the creation of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), she again eloquently set out the very real need of survivors of the crimes of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) for justice and accountability. That is the reason we must ensure that evidence of atrocity crimes is preserved, and her courageous testimony today is central to that task.

In spite of the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus disease, it is clear from today's briefing that UNITAD's work has continued apace with the completion of initial case briefs on its two core investigative priorities — the attacks against the Yazidi in the Sinjar region and the mass killings at the Tikrit Air Academy. I want to commend the Team's use of innovative technologies to gather and analyse evidence, including through the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning and translation.

Tangible evidence of the results of those efforts and the cooperation between UNITAD and the Iraqi authorities can be seen in the important work that led to the excavation of mass grave sites and the identification and return of the remains of 103 Yazidis — per the wishes of the Yazidi community. Faced with this horrific evidence of ISIL's crimes, we want to acknowledge the work done by the Team and the Iraqi authorities in adopting a victim- and survivor-centred approach.

We know that accountability is essential to heal the wounds of conflict and build sustainable peace. However, the manner in which we pursue justice is also important.

We welcome the detail provided in the most recent report on the Team's approach to the investigation of sexual and gender-based crimes and the terrible crimes against children. It is noteworthy that, in spite of restrictions on the Team's presence in Iraq, the Sexual and Gender-Based Crimes and Crimes against Children Unit has commenced an investigation on ISIL crimes against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex community, has conducted interviews with survivors of sexual violence and has appointed focal points within field investigations units. We strongly support UNITAD's work to enhance the provision of psychosocial support to survivors and witnesses, in particular women and children.

When it comes to conflict-related sexual violence, truth-telling, lifting stigma and documenting crimes are critical. However, it is essential that we move from evidence-gathering to the prosecution of, and conviction for, crimes of sexual violence committed by ISIL and to real accountability. Ms. Murad and all survivors deserve nothing less.

We also welcome the Yazidi Female Survivors Law, introduced in recent weeks, and its inclusion of Turkmen, Christian and Shabak communities and other survivors of atrocity crimes. We look forward to the full implementation of this landmark law by delivering on reparations for survivors.

We commend the support provided by UNITAD to the Iraqi authorities to develop a domestic legislative framework that would enable the domestic prosecution

of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. We also note the training provided by UNITAD, including to the Iraqi judiciary, in order to assist in the development of case files against ISIL for atrocity crimes. We strongly urge the continuation of that important work.

We also welcome further work to develop a means of sharing evidence that complies with United Nations policies and best practices for use in fair and independent criminal proceedings — one that is consistent with applicable international law, including international human rights law. In that regard, I want to recall Ireland's unequivocal opposition to the use of the death penalty in all cases and circumstances.

We look forward to engaging with colleagues on the Security Council ahead of the renewal of UNITAD's mandate in September, and once again wish to pay special tribute to UNITAD, its important work and the excellent briefing we received today.

Annex VIII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, Martin Kimani

On behalf of Kenya's delegation, I congratulate Special Adviser Karim Khan on his election as the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

Kenya thanks the Special Adviser for his briefing and welcomes the progress the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) has made, as reflected in its sixth report (see S/2021/419). We also welcome the briefing by Ms. Nadia Murad.

All acts of terrorism, whether by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)/Da'esh and its affiliates or by any other terrorist group, must be met with the full force of the law. The survivors, their families and communities and the world at large expect the perpetrators to be held legally accountable as a minimum requirement for justice to be done. We urge the international community to recall that ISIL's monumental crimes went beyond targeting individuals; it rose to the level of genocide.

As the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic found, ISIL undertook a genocidal campaign against the Yazidi community and people. It also documented the extensive use of gender-based and sexual violence, as well as other atrocities and crimes against humanity.

For countries that have pledged to combat genocide, whether now or in the past, holding ISIL and its members accountable is critical. The same is true for those that have determined that sexual and gender-based violence must be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. I therefore reiterate Kenya's unequivocal support for the prosecution of members of ISIL — not only for their core terrorist acts, but also for related crimes, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

As we point out ISIL's crimes, it is critical that we do not lose sight of the unfortunate fact that its ideas, ideals and aims are still being perpetrated. In multiple countries and continents, ISIL's affiliates and those of its parent group, Al-Qaida, are waging war against the innocent. ISIL's crimes are inspiring others, including in multiple countries in Africa. Kenya strongly urges the Security Council and the international community to once again stand tall against terrorism. The fight against terrorist groups has been long and costly, but to relent is to give them the opportunity to recover their momentum and confidence.

Returning to the briefing at hand, Kenya takes note of the improved cooperation and close collaboration between the Team and the relevant authorities of the Government of Iraq. That collaboration and partnership has facilitated progress, including in the implementation of the joint strategy on the excavation of mass grave sites in Kojo village and Badush prison. It has also led to the collection of additional evidence of ISIL carrying out rape, enslavement and other atrocities against members of the Christian community.

Kenya commends the Iraqi authorities for formulating appropriate legislation and establishing a specialized tribunal that will enable the prosecution of ISIL/Da'esh suspects for international crimes. The support given to that initiative by the Investigative Team, in line with resolution 2379 (2017), is appreciated.

Enhancing capacity-building and funding to law enforcement agencies is a critical element for the success of counter-terrorism measures. Kenya welcomes the conclusion of the agreement for UNITAD training so as to enable Iraqi investigative

judges to develop strong case files that meet the requisite evidentiary threshold for prosecution and conviction.

Kenya is encouraged by the continued integration of advanced technological tools in the Team's work. The responsible use of such technology can help build strong case briefs and can also help protect the mental health of its members.

Kenya commends UNITAD for preparing and making its standard operating procedures publicly available on its website. This will be an important resource to national, regional and other practitioners on such topics as conducting interviews with children and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. We encourage additional ways of sharing of information and best practices.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Kenya's support for the difficult work of UNITAD even against the backdrop of the coronavirus disease pandemic and budgetary constraints. We caution against budgetary cuts and call for increased and urgent funding in order for UNITAD to effectively fulfil its mandate.

We wonder, however: how secure is the technology being employed by the Information Systems Unit in terms of safeguarding prosecutorial independence and attorney-client privilege? And will its clear benefits during investigations run into evidentiary problems that would affect its admissibility?

Annex IX**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, Juan Ramón de la Fuente Ramírez**

[Original: Spanish]

Mexico thanks Special Adviser Karim Khan for his latest report (see S/2021/419) on the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD). Such grave atrocities as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide must never go unpunished, and the efforts of UNITAD to ensure accountability in Iraq are critical. I also thank Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nadia Murad for her valuable testimony and welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Iraq.

With regard to the latest report of the Special Adviser and Head of the Investigative Team, I would like to highlight several points.

Mexico recognizes the importance of UNITAD's cooperation with the Iraqi authorities in a number of areas. That includes the excavation of mass graves, the cooperation of judicial authorities in sharing information with the Investigative Team, as well as UNITAD's training and capacity-building of Iraqi authorities in the investigation and prosecution of international crimes.

We look to the Iraqi legislature to move forward with the implementation of national legislation to enable domestic prosecutions for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and to hold members of the Islamic State/Da'esh accountable. We also call for cooperation with other States, mechanisms and international courts to ensure that those crimes do not go unpunished.

It is worth highlighting the importance of technology and artificial intelligence in advancing the collection of relevant information for UNITAD's investigations. We also believe that efforts to digitize the evidence obtained are essential for its preservation.

I would like to stress the importance of recognizing the victims of these crimes and of working with them in order to advance justice and reconciliation. In that regard, it is essential to intensify UNITAD's work for the timely recognition of the trauma suffered by victims and witnesses. We commend the adoption of an approach that, at last, fully considers mental health.

Equally important are other actions such as the recovery and return of 103 Yazidi bodies to their families — honouring their culture and traditions. We must be able to bring closure to these episodes of pain and violence in order to move on to a new stage of personal, family, social and national healing. In all such cases, mental health services are a priority.

Finally, recognizing that this is Mr. Khan's last report to the Security Council in his capacity as Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD, I would like to thank him for his commitment and efforts in leading the work of the Investigative Team, and wish him every success in his new duties as Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

Annex X**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Abdou Abarry**

[Original: French]

I thank Mr. Karim Asad Ahmad Khan for his briefing. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish him every success in his new role as prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. I also thank Ms. Nadia Murad for her moving testimony, and welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Iraq, who has joined us for this meeting.

My delegation congratulates the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) on the progress made since the submission of the Team's fifth report (see S/2020/1107) six months ago, despite the particularly difficult conditions associated with the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. We particularly welcome the successful completion of investigations into the attacks on Yazidis in the Sinjar region in August 2014 and the massacre of unarmed air force cadets at the Tikrit Air Academy in June 2014.

We encourage the Investigative Team to continue its efforts to finalize the case files relating to other crimes committed by the fighters of Da'esh, including the massacre of prisoners in Badush prison in Mosul on 10 June 2014 and the crimes committed against the Sunni, Shia, Christian, Turkmen, Shabak and Kaka'i communities.

I would also like to highlight the importance of the development of the new Shuhud digital platform for the remote submission of evidence by witnesses. I also commend the efforts that led to the identification and handover to their families of the remains of 103 Yazidis found in nine mass graves in the village of Kojo, who were subsequently buried in accordance with the wishes and traditions of their community.

All those successes would not have happened without the support of the Iraqi people and authorities. We therefore welcome the increased cooperation between the Investigative Team and the National Coordinating Committee appointed by the Iraqi Government, including in the continued implementation of the joint national mass graves excavation strategy.

We also welcome the agreement reached between UNITAD and the Iraqi judiciary to share information on financial crimes committed in the context of the activities of Da'esh in Iraq, in line with the Team's mandate. This will undoubtedly enhance cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of those who facilitated and benefited financially from the crimes committed by the terrorist organization in Iraq, as they too are guilty of these crimes, by association.

In conclusion, my delegation takes note of the continued integration of advanced technological tools into the work of UNITAD, including the partnership with Microsoft in the use of artificial intelligence, machine learning and machine translation in order to rapidly extract facial data from collected images and videos, as well as the increase in evidence collected by investigators during the reporting period due to innovative collection methods.

Finally, my delegation would like to reiterate its call for no crime committed by members of Da'esh — in Iraq, Syria or anywhere in the world — to go unpunished. We fully support the provisions of resolution 2379 (2017), as well as the work of UNITAD to establish responsibility and accountability for the acts committed by Da'esh fighters, which may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide.

Annex XI**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations, Mona Juul**

First, allow me to thank Special Adviser Khan for his comprehensive briefing today, as well as for his outstanding work leading the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) over the past three years. Norway is grateful for his service and looks forward to supporting him in his future role as the next Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

Let me also thank Ms. Murad for her strong testimony. Her determination and perseverance in demanding justice for victims of crimes committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is an inspiration and a clear call to action that the Security Council must strive to meet. Norway is a staunch supporter of UNITAD. The Team's work to collect, store and preserve evidence of crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq is crucial to ensuring accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims and survivors — prerequisite conditions for achieving sustainable peace, with the rule of law at its core.

Norway is encouraged to note several positive developments since the Special Adviser's previous briefing to the Security Council (see S/2020/1193). In particular, we were moved by news of the burials of Yazidi victims that took place in February in Kojo, which finally offered loved ones a sliver of closure after years of uncertainty. We commend UNITAD for the support they provided Iraqi authorities in the exhumation and identification processes, allowing the burials to take place.

Norway is also pleased to note progress in UNITAD's priority investigations, particularly the completion of case briefs for crimes committed against the Yazidi community in Sinjar and for the massacre of unarmed personnel at Tikrit Air Academy.

I would now like to highlight three cross-cutting priorities that Norway considers crucial to UNITAD's ongoing work.

First, accountability is key. There can be no justice for victims or survivors and no reconciliation for the country at large, in the absence of accountability for perpetrators. In that regard, we welcome the ongoing engagement between Iraq and UNITAD in order to resolve outstanding legal obstacles that will allow the Team to share its collected evidence with national authorities, in accordance with its terms of reference. We also strongly support the assistance that UNITAD has provided other jurisdictions in their national legal proceedings.

Secondly, it is imperative that UNITAD continue to apply a survivor-centred approach to its work. Bringing perpetrators to justice and allowing for the proper burial of loved ones is key to supporting survivors' healing and rehabilitation. Yet we must simultaneously ensure that survivors — especially those providing testimony — have proper access to psychosocial and legal support and that they are questioned in accordance with established best practices to avoid retraumatization. In that context, we commend the work of the Team's Witness Protection and Support Unit.

Finally, drawing upon the high-quality work and expertise that UNITAD has acquired in the field, the Team must maintain a gender- and age-responsive approach across all activities. Although horrific crimes were committed against all members of Iraqi society, we know that women and girls were particularly and systematically targeted for sexual and gender-based violence — including sexual slavery and trafficking. Indeed, ISIL carried out these crimes as a deliberate tactic to recruit fighters, instil terror and traumatize families and communities into submission. Addressing the health, psychological, legal and social aspects of such

crimes, including their gendered dimension, must continue to guide UNITAD's work moving forward. In that context, Norway also welcomes the recent adoption of the Yazidi Female Survivors Law in the Iraqi Council of Representatives.

In conclusion, let me once again thank Special Adviser Khan and Ms. Murad for their briefings today, and reiterate my gratitude to the Special Adviser for his dedicated efforts to promote accountability for crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq.

Annex XII**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Gennady Kuzmin**

[Original: Russian]

We thank Mr. Khan for his briefing and the work completed. We also welcome Ms. Murad to the Council.

Fighting terrorism continues to be important. We are convinced that this evil can be effectively countered only through the broadest coordination of counter-terrorist efforts. We proceed from the assumption that all stakeholders involved in countering terrorism in Iraq must respect the sovereignty of the Iraqi State and coordinate all actions with Baghdad. Action must correspond to the stated goals — to fight against terrorism and assist the Government of Iraq in stabilizing the situation.

We closely studied the sixth report (see S/2021/419) of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), headed by Mr. Khan.

We welcome the finalization of case briefs regarding two key tracks of investigation — attacks on the Yazidi community in Sinjar and the killing of cadets at Tikrit Air Academy.

Hopefully, the results on the other investigation tracks will be just as quick. We noted that UNITAD took on some new tracks of investigation, such as the development and use of chemical and biological weapons by the terrorists. It is important that all such episodes be duly investigated and that those responsible be held accountable, no matter where those incidents took place. After all, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) was active not only in Iraq, but also in Syria. But while in Iraq's case things are called by their real names, as reflected in UNITAD's report, in Syria's case, with the abundant evidence of chemical-weapon use by terrorists, the investigations are constantly downplayed. Such double standards are unacceptable, and we must correct that practice.

It is our understanding that, apart from gaining new evidence of ISIL's crimes, UNITAD's priority tasks must include cooperation with Iraq's Government and the transfer of files to Iraq's competent authorities. Arrangements have been made with Baghdad with regard to access to data on economic crimes associated with ISIL's activity. Now the most important thing is to have those arrangements honoured and implemented. As for the transfer of materials regarding other crimes, we do not see any reason to make this sort of cooperation depend on legislative reforms. The Security Council never prescribed such an approach. UNITAD's mission, as articulated by the Council, is to support Iraq's domestic efforts to hold ISIL terrorists accountable in the framework of Iraq's national system of justice. Resolution 2379 (2017) defines the relevant Iraqi authorities as the primary intended recipient of evidence collected by UNITAD, without other conditions.

Hopefully, the next UNITAD reports will inform us of the progress of court proceedings regarding the actions of ISIL fighters in Iraq.

Annex XIII**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Halimah DeShong**

We begin by extending our gratitude to Special Adviser Karim Khan for his briefing. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines thanks him for the dedication he has shown to the people of Iraq and for all of his constructive cooperation with the Security Council. We congratulate him on his appointment as Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, wish him continued success and look forward to engaging with the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) under the guidance of his successor. We also thank Ms. Nadia Murad for again providing a very clear analysis and insights on the actions most urgently needed.

We welcome the progress made by UNITAD on its investigation into crimes against humanity as it relates to the Yazidi community and the massacre in Tikrit. It is commendable that, despite a reduced footprint as a result of the coronavirus disease, UNITAD has continued its efforts to discharge its mandate. To that end, we recognize the role played by the Government of Iraq, particularly the judiciary, which continues to engage constructively with the Investigative Team. We encourage further collaborative efforts between the Government of Iraq and UNITAD, with full respect for Iraq's sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity, and its jurisdiction over crimes committed within its territory.

The people of Iraq have suffered immensely under the surge of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and concerted efforts are needed to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation. UNITAD's focus on the mental health of victims and survivors is a critical part of this reconciliatory process, and we encourage the continued provision of psychosocial support. The Trauma-Informed Investigations Field Guide is an invaluable resource that will assist investigators, including in Iraq, to better understand the effects of trauma on witnesses.

Another element of the reconciliation and reconstruction process is building the capacities of various Iraqi institutions. This is critical to ensuring that all branches of Government are capable of holding accountable all individuals and entities guilty of violating domestic and international law, as such violations are inimical to peace and justice, and threaten the safe and dignified return of displaced persons. We welcome discussions on the draft legislation that establishes a legal basis for the prosecution of ISIL members for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Such crimes must be prosecuted in a way that reflects their gravity and provides a form of justice to the victims and survivors. We urge all stakeholders to work towards achieving comprehensive accountability for these atrocities.

We also note the findings that ISIL used chemical weapons in Iraq between 2014 and 2016. Chemical-weapon atrocities cannot be ignored, and neither should there be impunity for the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors. Accountability is necessary for the protection of civilians, and we thank the Special Adviser and his team for their efforts to bring these matters to the fore.

In conclusion, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines would like to recognize the support provided by UNITAD to the Government of Iraq in returning the remains of Yazidis to be laid to rest by their loved ones. Nothing can undo the grief suffered over the loss of loved ones and communities; however, these efforts offer closure to families whose suffering is unjustified and immeasurable. We encourage further efforts in this regard, as this is an element of the broader reconciliation and reconstruction process.

Iraq's path is not one to be traversed alone. UNITAD's support, as well as efforts by the international community, including regional stakeholders, are critical. For Iraq to heal, all efforts must be made in good faith. There is no room for negative rhetoric and divisive actions. We affirm our support to the Government and the people of Iraq and the invaluable work of UNITAD.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, I would like to thank Special Adviser Karim Khan for briefing the Council on the sixth report (see S/2021/419) of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD).

I would also like to welcome the participation of Nadia Murad in this meeting. Tunisia fully supports her and all women and girls who have survived the abhorrent acts and crimes perpetrated against them by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

The testimony of Nadia Murad provides further confirmation that the Iraqi people have spent years waiting and yearning for justice. Accountability will undoubtedly help to heal the wounds of victims and their families. It will also contribute to attaining peace and stability in Iraq and eradicating terrorism once and for all. We cannot uproot this scourge without delivering justice and holding accountable all those responsible for the heinous crimes committed against many Iraqis. We must therefore all support the efforts of the Iraqi Government and the Investigative Team to proceed to trial as soon as possible.

Tunisia appreciates the significant progress made during the reporting period, despite the challenges posed by coronavirus disease (COVID-19)-related travel restrictions and the attendant constraints on field-based activities. Tunisia commends the Investigative Team on finding innovative ways to continue carrying out its mandate, including by interviewing witnesses remotely, creating the Shuhud digital platform to gather evidence and using advanced investigative techniques based on artificial intelligence and other modern technologies.

In that connection, my country welcomes the adoption of an approach that prioritizes gender and the rights of survivors and witnesses by respecting their privacy and providing the necessary psychosocial counselling. We also commend the Iraqi authorities and the Investigative Team on their commitment to honouring the wishes and traditions of victims' families and communities in handling the remains of victims.

Tunisia deeply appreciates the efforts made by the Iraqi Government to provide the Investigative Team with valuable and constructive support, as evidenced by the expanded areas of cooperation with the Iraqi national coordinating committee mentioned in the report. In addition, steps were taken to strengthen training and capacity-building programmes for the competent Iraqi authorities and to enlist the participation of various actors.

During the reporting period, the tangible results of this collaboration included the finalization of important case-briefs relating to crimes committed by ISIL in Sinjar and at Tikrit Air Academy.

In that connection, Tunisia reaffirms that, in accordance with resolution 2379 (2017), the relevant Iraqi authorities are the primary intended recipient of all evidence of crimes collected by UNITAD as it implements its mandate. That evidence should be used in fair and independent judicial proceedings conducted by competent national-level courts, with full respect for the sovereignty of Iraq and its jurisdiction over crimes committed in its territory.

Tunisia looks forward to the full implementation of resolution 2379 (2017), which provides for handing over the files of completed case-briefs to the Iraqi judiciary and moving forward with trials, with a view to delivering justice to the victims and survivors and ensuring that the perpetrators of those heinous crimes are held accountable.

Lastly, Tunisia reaffirms that the Security Council must continue to rally around and support the Government and people of Iraq in their quest to seek justice and accountability as soon as possible, rebuild the country and completely uproot all remnants of terrorism. In so doing, the Council should respect the national priorities and approaches of Iraq.

Annex XV**Statement by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations**

The United Kingdom welcomes Special Adviser Karim Khan's report (see S/2021/419) on the continued progress made in recent months by the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD). We commend UNITAD for its continued flexibility in the face of challenges related to the coronavirus disease pandemic and applaud the progress to complete initial case briefs on two core investigative priorities. And we welcome the launch of the Interfaith Dialogue Series; close engagement with religious communities is critical to achieving justice.

The international community must stand united in its resolve to hold Da'esh 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. This is why the United Kingdom 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 that 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 United Kingdom also notes the continued collaboration among the Team, the Iraqi judicial authorities and the Governments of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. We welcome progress on draft legislation to provide the domestic legal basis for the prosecution of members of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant 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 Da'esh 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.

The United Kingdom has so far contributed nearly \$2.8 million to the work of the Investigative Team. We continue to engage in New York, London, Baghdad and Erbil. Regular updates to the Security Council are key in allowing us to see the progress the Team is making. The Team must seek to engage both with us at the United Nations and with individual Member States that are providing staffing, funding and support.

The United Kingdom will host an Arria Formula meeting this Wednesday with the United States, Iraq, the Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates. We look forward to hearing from the Special Adviser and expert briefers on how innovation and technology help to advance investigations, support survivors and deliver accountability.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to officially note the United Kingdom's thanks and appreciation for the work the Special Adviser has championed over the last three years, in this, his last Council briefing.

Annex XVI**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Richard Mills**

Let me start by thanking Ms. Murad for her compelling and powerful testimony and for her insights into what steps need to be taken by the Security Council. Special Adviser Khan, thank you for your extensive briefing on this difficult topic as well. As the Special Representative takes on the position as the chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court, I would like to commend him and his team for setting up the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) and for doing so much excellent work since.

The “stock-taking section” of the Special Adviser’s report (see S/2021/419) is both an impressive list of accomplishments and a clear set of signposts for our path forward. In particular, I would like to especially applaud your efforts, Mr. Khan, towards returning the remains of 103 Yazidis recovered from nine mass grave sites in the village of Kojo. For their families, that return must have meant the world. Your work with the Yazidi community, including making sure that commemorations were dignified and accommodated Yazidi beliefs and practices, has helped these communities heal and puts them closer to national reconciliation with other Iraqi communities. And your legacy will be UNITAD’s continued efforts as it works to accomplish these sensitive tasks.

That work must continue. And it must continue alongside investigative work to hold the Islamic State in Iraq and the Shams (ISIS) accountable for its brutality. Specifically, UNITAD must continue to investigate the horrors perpetrated against members of the Yazidi community in the Sinjar region and the events of June 2014 at the Tikrit Air Academy, where unarmed cadets and military personnel were killed en masse. These investigations, as well as progress on similar cases involving other ethnic and religious communities in Iraq, will deliver justice to the Iraqi people. These investigations are critical for evidence-based trials. But we can never forget the human toll they take. Exhumations are a deeply painful process. We commend UNITAD and its partners for providing psychosocial support to staff, survivors and family members.

Finally, UNITAD must especially make progress on the investigation into the alleged development and use of chemical and biological weapons by ISIS. The international community cannot abide the use of chemical weapons, and those who use them cannot be allowed to do so with impunity.

With all of these investigative goals, success depends entirely on the partnership between UNITAD and Iraqi national entities. We support UNITAD’s expanded cooperation with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, including Iraqi law enforcement and judicial entities, survivor groups, non-governmental organizations and religious authorities. This increased cooperation will lead to more successful prosecutions of ISIS members in Iraq and abroad. And these partnerships will help ensure positive outcomes for the Iraqi people and the victims of these terrible crimes.

To push this effort to the next step, we urge Iraq to adopt legislation currently being considered by the Council of Representatives that would provide a basis for the Iraqi Government to prosecute atrocity crimes, including those committed by ISIS. This law will be essential to finalizing an arrangement for UNITAD to share evidence with competent Iraqi authorities in accordance with the terms of reference. And it will be in line with the excellent law passed recently by the Iraqi Government — the Female Yazidi Survivors Law — that recognizes the ISIS genocide against Yazidis

and other Iraqi communities and seeks to address the needs of the survivors of these unspeakable atrocities. We look forward to supporting the Iraqi Government's implementation of this law.

Similarly, we also commend the Kurdistan Regional Government for announcing its intention to establish a special criminal court in Erbil for ISIS crimes. This announcement represents an important step in holding perpetrators of crimes against Yazidis accountable. We will monitor this court's implementation very closely.

Finally, on the difficult question of foreign terrorist fighters, we urge Member States to repatriate them, prosecute them as appropriate and rehabilitate and reintegrate their associated family members. And we thank UNITAD for the valuable support it has provided to Member States, including the United States, to conduct such investigations and prosecutions.

Accountability is one of the most important pillars holding up our rules-based order. We thank the Government of Iraq and UNITAD for their hard work and continued cooperation to hold ISIS accountable for its atrocities.

Annex XVII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dang Dinh Quy**

Let me begin by thanking Mr. Karim Khan for his comprehensive briefing and the great job he has done as the Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD). We wish him great success in his new capacity at the International Criminal Court. I also thank Ms. Nadia Murad for her statement. And I welcome the participation of the Representative of Iraq to our meeting.

We welcome the sixth UNITAD report (see S/2021/419) on the progresses the Investigative Team made in the past six months in the implementation of its mandate. The finalization of initial case briefs in two of the Team's core investigative priorities is very commendable. The progress is all the more remarkable given the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic. We look forward to the completion of additional case briefs by the end of 2021, as anticipated in the sixth report and the Special Adviser's briefing today.

We are encouraged by the Team's innovative approach and its results. The application of advanced technologies and digital platforms has proven very efficient in evidence-collecting activities by allowing witnesses and survivors, including women, to submit information remotely. We also welcome the Team's plan to launch publications aimed at promoting good practices in this direction.

We commend UNITAD for its strengthened cooperation with the Iraqi Government, which is indispensable to the fulfilment of its mandate. We encourage the Team to continue its provision of training to relevant authorities to strengthen domestic capacity for the future prosecution of members of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

In this regard, we also value the active engagement of the Iraqi authorities and impacted communities, as reflected in the Team's reports, in all aspects of UNITAD's mandate. The cooperation of local authorities with the Team regarding ongoing domestic proceedings is the best example of trust in UNITAD and the national efforts in holding ISIL accountable for their crimes.

We also note the arrangements in place between the Team and the Iraqi judiciary that allow for the sharing of information in accordance with the Team's terms of reference. We hope that the two sides will continue their efforts to finalize further arrangements in the upcoming period. At the same time, we continue to emphasize the importance of protecting witnesses and survivors. We encourage the Team and Iraqi authorities to apply all the procedures and measures, including the use of technologies, to ensure that those people who cooperate with the Team can do so in safety and security.

Finally, we value the support of Member States for UNITAD through the provision of experts and financial contributions. It reflects the efforts and strong determination of the international community to fight against terrorism and prevent the resurrection of ISIL. We believe that the success of the Team is important for peace and stability in the region beyond Iraq's borders.

Annex XVIII**Statement by the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

It is an honour to begin my statement on behalf of my country by expressing our gratitude for the efforts of the main organs and offices of the United Nations, through their resolutions, recommendations and decisions, and for all international efforts to assist Iraq in combating terrorism and prosecuting terrorists. I would also like to congratulate the People's Republic of China on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May and wish His Excellency Zhang Jun, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China every success in this undertaking. I thank Mr. Karim Khan and his team for their significant efforts to implement his mandate in Iraq, especially amidst the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

In the aftermath of the military defeat of the terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in my country, Iraq, intensive efforts and greater international cooperation will be required in order to remedy the devastation wrought by ISIL terrorism and ensure that the perpetrators, supporters and sponsors of terrorist acts are prosecuted through national and international legal mechanisms. The ultimate aim is to ensure that those terrorist organizations do not re-emerge, thereby preventing them from posing a threat to the international community. That effort will, in turn, necessitate measures to coordinate and align the efforts of various States and international organizations so as to achieve effective synergies. The legal measures adopted by individual States to punish the perpetrators of terrorist crimes will not suffice. States will also need support from the international community in order to develop their legal, security and economic capacities, improve their political situations, guarantee fundamental democratic freedoms and protect human rights, as provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

With regard to the legal framework of international cooperation, my Government looks forward to the creation of an international legal system to monitor the implementation of Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions in all their aspects. Establishing such a system would demonstrate how serious States are about fulfilling their international obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions. In that regard, my Government stresses that all States must uphold their duties under international humanitarian law and international human rights law by complying with Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions.

The long-standing position of Iraq on terrorism is reflected in the measures it has taken to eradicate this perilous scourge. Domestically, my Government is working to build the capacities of its counter-terrorism professionals and strengthen the judicial system, in line with human rights principles and with the country's international obligations as provided for in the Iraqi Constitution. The Government is also making legal preparations to use evidence received from the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) before national courts, thereby enhancing their legal and judicial capabilities. The Council of Representatives completed the first reading of a draft law on an Iraqi criminal tribunal to try the crimes of ISIL that, when adopted, will ensure that evidence of crimes of genocide and other crimes against humanity perpetrated by ISIL is put to proper use. In connection with delivering justice to victims, Act No. 8 (2021) on Yazidi women survivors provides victims with the necessary protection and care.

We underscore that the next phase of the work of UNITAD is vital. After more than three years of continuous work and concerted efforts by the Government of Iraq and UNITAD to excavate mass grave sites, identify victim remains and return them to their next of kin — and especially now that expanded training has been provided to the competent Iraqi authorities in key areas such as the collection and analysis of forensic evidence and witness protection — it is crucial for my Government to obtain the results and evidence gathered by the Investigative Team in Iraq over that period. Pursuant to paragraph 39 of the UNITAD terms of reference, the Investigative Team is mandated to provide appropriate legal assistance and capacity-building to the Government of Iraq in order to strengthen its courts and judicial system. Sharing the results of the Team's investigative work with Iraq is only fair and just, given that the Iraqi people was the main victim of the crimes of the ISIL terrorist organization in Iraq. Doing so will serve as an incentive to unearth additional evidence of other crimes perpetrated by the terrorist organization against Iraqis and to proceed with the necessary measures to preserve and store said evidence in Iraq, in accordance with resolution 2379 (2017) and the terms of reference.

In that context, we would also like to emphasize that UNITAD should operate with full respect for the sovereignty of Iraq and its jurisdiction over crimes committed in its territory against its citizens. The Investigative Team must abide by its mandate and the periods of time specified therein, which have been extended with the approval and at the request of my Government. Justice must be achieved, and achieved promptly, by ensuring that the victims receive redress, terrorists are held accountable and evidence is not destroyed or erased by the passage of time. Justice thus realized would enable victims to recover and reintegrate into society.

In conclusion, allow me to express our thanks and appreciation to you and the other Council members and all friendly countries that have supported my country in its struggle against terrorism. We must continue to work together to bring perpetrators before the national judiciary. I once again thank Mr. Khan and his team for everything they have done during his time as Head of the Investigative Team over the past few years, exchanging experiences and urging States to provide support; preparing and rehabilitating national staff; and drawing attention to the magnitude of the violations inflicted upon the Iraqi people at the hands of ISIL terrorists. We wish him every success in his future endeavours.
