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Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

9645th

meeting

Wednesday, 5 June 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

President: Mr. Hwang. (Republic of Korea)

Members:

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| Algeria. | Mr. Bendjama |
| China. | Mr. Geng Shuang |
| Ecuador. | Mr. Montalvo Sosa |
| France. | Mrs. Dime Labille |
| Guyana. | Ms. Persaud |
| Japan. | Mrs. Shino |
| Malta. | Ms. Gatt |
| Mozambique. | Mr. Fernandes |
| Russian Federation. | Ms. Zabolotskaya |
| Sierra Leone. | Mr. George |
| Slovenia. | Mrs. Blokar Drobič |
| Switzerland. | Mrs. Chanda |
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. | Mr. Kariuki |
| United States of America. | Ms. Wu |

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

Letter dated 24 May 2024 from the Acting 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 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2024/408)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President: I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Pedro Comissário Afonso, Permanent Representative of Mozambique, for his service as President of the Council for the month of May. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Afonso and his team for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security

Letter dated 24 May 2024 from the Acting 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 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2024/408)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, Acting Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team established pursuant to resolution 2379 (2017), to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2024/408, which contains the text of a letter dated 24 May 2024 from the Acting 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 addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Ms. Peyró Llopis.

Ms. Peyró Llopis: I am pleased to present today the twelfth report (see S/2024/408) of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

In line with resolution 2697 (2023), which extended the mandate of the Special Adviser and the Investigative Team only until 17 September 2024, the Team initiated its drawdown and liquidation to ensure an orderly withdrawal from Iraq by that date. At the same time, the Team continues to deliver its activities mandated under resolution 2379 (2017). That is being done in close coordination with the Government of Iraq and other relevant stakeholders.

Since my appointment, I have met regularly with the Chair of the National Coordinating Committee, as the designated representative of the Government of Iraq. I have engaged with other Iraqi authorities, notably the judiciary, who have contributed significantly to our investigations and evidence-collection efforts. I have met with survivors and with local civil society organizations. All stakeholders were eager to intensify cooperation prior to the conclusion of the mandate, particularly on the delivery of evidence, other materials and analyses, as well as on capacity-building.

Based on that engagement, the Team has developed a working calendar with specific dates of planned delivery for its remaining mandated activities. The calendar, which is currently being implemented, has been welcomed as an example of clear and transparent planning and as a guide for the final phase of the mandate. Those activities are being conducted in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and terms of reference of the Team. The importance of the agreed legal framework has been highlighted during all my meetings with the Iraqi authorities, and particularly paragraphs 27 and 28 of the terms of reference. They state that the competent Iraqi authorities shall be the primary intended recipient of the evidence, other materials and analysis, and that the Team shall share them in accordance with United Nations policies and best practice and relevant international law, including international human rights law, rules and standards. In accordance with that legal framework, efforts have been made to return evidence to the Iraqi authorities in a digital format that the Team has consolidated and enriched while developing its evidentiary holdings.

In March, the Team returned 28 terabytes of evidence to the Iraqi judiciary, which represents the majority of the 40 terabytes held by the Team. Two days ago, on 3 June, another tranche was also returned consisting of evidence collected from a range of other Iraqi authorities. It also included online and open-source information collected by the Team. Finally, evidence

collected from Kurdistan regional authorities is ready for delivery and will be returned to those authorities in the coming days as well.

Some of that returned evidence was generated because of the close collaboration between the Team and the Iraqi authorities, such as when excavating a mass grave together and collecting physical evidence or acquiring data from seized Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) digital devices held by the Iraqi authorities, with technical support from the Team, or also through the digitization of millions of ISIL-related paper records stored in criminal courts across the country.

The Team has also been active in delivering its own materials and analyses to the Iraqi judiciary along with underlying evidence. That includes evidence originally collected and produced by the Team. Those are the products of its investigations and have allowed the Team to assess, in line with its mandate, that acts committed by Da'esh in Iraq may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

An analytical report on Diwan Bayt Al-Mal, or the Treasury Department of Da'esh, was delivered to the Iraqi judiciary in February. A case assessment report on the Tikrit Air Academy massacre was also delivered two days ago — on 3 June. And an analytical report on sexual and gender-based crimes and crimes against children against the Shia Turkmen has also been prepared for delivery over the next days. Finally, additional evidence, other materials and analyses will be delivered to the Iraqi authorities by 17 September.

As agreed with the Iraqi authorities, the Team has also prioritized the delivery of capacity-building activities. That continued during the reporting period in the areas of mass grave excavations and victim identification, digitization and archiving of Da'esh-related records, digital forensics and witness protection and support. A further 40 activities are scheduled in the working calendar for the remaining weeks ahead with an emphasis on making the contribution of the Team in those areas sustainable. For instance, training will be provided this month to a specialized team designated by the Government of Iraq on commercially available evidence management software and systems that the competent Iraqi authorities could tailor to help manage the evidence delivered by the Team.

I also wish to note that, over the past six years, in cooperation with the competent Iraqi authorities,

the Team has excavated 67 mass graves, digitized 18 million pages of ISIL-related paper records and extracted data from a significant number of seized ISIL digital devices.

The Team has also continued to respond to requests from third-State jurisdictions during the reporting period in support of their national investigations and prosecutions. To date, a total of 20 third States have requested assistance, with 246 requests received overall. Some 67 requests remain ongoing. Those were recently reviewed by the Team and prioritized with the intention of completing as many as possible prior to the conclusion of the mandate.

In January, the Central Criminal Court in Lisbon, Portugal, convicted an Iraqi Da'esh member for committing war crimes in Mosul, largely based on evidence provided by the Team in close cooperation with the Iraqi judiciary. That included 13 survivors and witnesses who testified by videoconference from Iraq and copies of a case pending before a court in Mosul. That is just one of the many examples where Iraqi judicial counterparts have supported the Team in responding to requests from third-State jurisdictions. It speaks to the crucial role Iraq will play in ensuring the global accountability of Da'esh after the conclusion of the mandate.

From an administrative perspective, the drawdown and liquidation of the Team includes the closure of its offices and the proper management of its human resources and assets. That is ongoing.

The preparation of the records and archives of the Team, which include evidentiary and non-evidentiary records, has begun as part of the drawdown and liquidation, as well for the purpose of ensuring their transfer to the United Nations Secretariat by 17 September. That is being done in line with the terms of reference and guided by the report of the Secretary-General of 15 January (S/2024/20).

The importance of maintaining, preserving and managing those archives has been at the centre of my discussions with the Chair of the National Coordinating Committee. As further developed in my report, it has been acknowledged in those discussions that the competent Iraqi authorities would retain custody and preserve, store and manage the original evidence in Iraq, which will have been delivered by the Team in line with the terms of reference. That will be for use in domestic criminal proceedings and achieving accountability at

the national level. It has also been acknowledged during those discussions that a copy of the original evidence would be kept by the United Nations Secretariat as part of its records and archives, together with other evidence originally collected by the Team and other materials and analyses it has produced. The United Nations records and archives would be preserved and stored in a manner that would ensure that they remain protected and accessible, in accordance with United Nations policies on classification and access.

The twelfth report is the last mandated report of the Team to the Council, and this is the last foreseen oral briefing, based on Security Council resolution 2697 (2023). Given that fact, I wish to refer to the impact of the Team and the overall legacy that will be left behind. That legacy, and the importance of preserving it, was acknowledged in almost every meeting I had over the past few weeks, including with the Iraqi authorities.

In that regard, it is important to recall that this year marks the tenth anniversary since Da'esh declared itself a caliphate. Ten years later, the calls for accountability to hold those responsible for the international crimes they committed in Iraq remain.

As mandated by the Council, the Team has contributed to addressing those calls by factually and legally assessing that the acts committed by ISIL in Iraq between 2014 and 2017 may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. The evidence collected and processed by the Team and the other materials and analyses that it has produced are also a useful asset. That is the result of our work over the past six years, taking witness testimonies, supporting mass grave excavations and victim identifications, digitizing ISIL-related records, acquiring data from seized Da'esh digital devices, and using open-source intelligence techniques to locate and forensically capture ISIL content online. All of that is now consolidated into one centralized digital archive, organized in a manner that makes it easily searchable. More importantly, the chain of custody associated with that evidence has been established to an international standard in order to maximize its possible use in judicial proceedings. Those products will remain beyond the closure of the Team, and Member States, including Iraq, could consider them in the future to hold ISIL perpetrators accountable for the international crimes that they committed in Iraq.

A significant factor behind that legacy has been the personnel working with the Team. They are

professionals from all over the world and from different fields of expertise, but with a shared commitment to promoting accountability. That includes Iraqi personnel, who have been indispensable in the implementation of the mandated activities. The Team has sought to develop their skill set so that it can be utilized by Iraq going forward. The same mindset of transferring and sustaining capacity has guided the technical advice, trainings and equipment delivered by the Team to the Iraqi authorities and local civil society organizations over the course of the mandate. That has positioned them to take the next step in areas relevant to their work and to Da'esh accountability.

In closing, let me recall that the request from the Government of Iraq in 2017 and the establishment of the Team by the Council in response paved the way for six years of work that have permitted the Team to legally assess that the acts committed by ISIL in Iraq may amount to international crimes. It has been six years of working closely with the Iraqi authorities and other stakeholders to implement the mandate — six years working with survivors, victims' families and affected communities, including the Christian, Kaka'i, Shabak, Shi'a, Sunni, Turkmen and Yazidi communities. I wish to use my last words to acknowledge the extent of their support and the contribution individuals from those communities have made by coming forward to give their account and share their horrific stories and painful memories. They are, in many ways, inseparable from the legacy of the Team, and they represent the reason why the pursuit of accountability for the international crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq must continue. That is critical, not just to hold those who committed those crimes to account, but also, as the Council underlined in 2017, to ensure that the interests of the survivors in achieving that accountability are fully recognized.

The President: I thank Ms. Peyró Llopis for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): First, let me congratulate the Republic of Korea on the assumption of the presidency for the month of June and pay tribute to Mozambique for its excellent stewardship of our business during the month of May.

I would like to welcome Acting Special Adviser Peyró Llopis. I thank her for her briefing and for her efforts and those of the United Nations Investigative

Team to Promote Accountability for the Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) to work with the Government of Iraq to ensure the smooth closure of UNITAD. I also welcome the representative of Iraq to our meeting.

As we approach the end of UNITAD's mandate in September, it is important to reflect on what it has achieved over the past six years. That includes the vast collection and digitization of evidence of Da'esh atrocities so that it can be meaningfully accessed and searched; support to judicial proceedings in 20 jurisdictions, leading to 15 convictions; and the excavation of mass graves, which has facilitated the return of remains to the families of victims. That has all been possible thanks to the close cooperation between the UNITAD Team and the Iraqi authorities, as well as the brave and unwavering commitment of survivors to give their accounts and document the atrocities that occurred. It is the pursuit of justice for such heinous crimes that led the United Kingdom to support the establishment of UNITAD in 2017 with Iraq. We believe that there is more work to be done.

Looking ahead to the final few months of UNITAD's mandate, we encourage the Special Adviser and the Government of Iraq to intensify cooperation to ensure that the Team's closure is smooth and effective. We also encourage UNITAD to share evidence with Iraq wherever possible and to continue capacity-building so that the Iraqi authorities are well placed to continue accountability efforts after September, and in that regard, we welcome the Special Adviser's remarks today. It is also essential that UNITAD evidence retained by the United Nations remain fully accessible so that it can continue to contribute to prosecutions against members of Da'esh for international crimes, wherever those members may be.

The United Kingdom does not see the closure of UNITAD as the end of the fight for accountability for Da'esh. As we mark the tenth anniversary since acts of genocide were committed against the Yazidi people, the United Kingdom remains committed to working closely with the Government of Iraq, the United Nations and the Security Council to ensure justice for the survivors, both in Iraq and around the world.

Mr. Fernandes (Mozambique): As this is our first formal meeting this month, allow me to congratulate the Republic of Korea for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. We assure you, Mr. President, of our fullest support during your tenure.

We express our gratitude to Council members, the Secretariat, technical staff, interpreters and security personnel for their efforts to ensure smooth operations during Mozambique's presidency in May. We also thank Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, Acting 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), for her briefing and update on the work of the Investigative Team. We acknowledge the presence of the representative of Iraq in this meeting.

Mozambique commends UNITAD's work in implementing resolutions 2379 (2017) and 2697 (2023); they reinforce the international community's commitment to hold Da'esh/ISIL accountable for crimes committed in Iraq. We also commend the progress made in the drawdown and liquidation of the Team towards the completion of UNITAD's mandate by 17 September, as established in resolution 2697 (2023). It is crucial that the closure of the mandate take place in an orderly manner, respecting Iraq's sovereignty and jurisdiction over crimes committed in its territory. In that regard, we welcome the sharing of evidence originally collected and produced by the Team with the relevant Iraqi authorities, in accordance with United Nations policies and practice and the relevant international law, as established in the UNITAD terms of reference. The Team's engagement with the Iraqi authorities towards fulfilling that objective, as outlined in the report (see S/2024/408), is commendable.

Ensuring accountability for the crimes committed by Da'esh/ISIL, which may amount to crimes against humanity and genocide, must continue at the national level even after UNITAD's closure. To that end, we emphasize the need for capacity-building and training, including forensic capacity to allow the Iraqi authorities to make the best use of the evidence collected by the Team throughout its mandate. We also encourage the support provided to the Iraqi authorities by the Team, in the form of either technical assistance or the implementation of domestic legislation. The capacity of Iraqi civil society organizations to preserve documentary evidence, as outlined in the report, also deserves our appreciation.

The cooperation between the Team and the Iraqi authorities, particularly the judiciary, including the support of third States, played a pivotal role in the efforts to ensure accountability for the crimes committed by Da'esh/ISIL and bring the perpetrators

to justice. The support provided by the Team to the judicial authorities of Germany and Portugal, with the tangible results mentioned in the report, is a good example of such cooperation.

In conclusion, Mozambique would like to thank UNITAD for its contribution to accountability, justice, peace and stability in Iraq. Its legacy lies in its commitment to justice, evidence preservation and ensuring accountability for the crimes committed by Da'esh/ISIL. That must be preserved beyond its mandate. The pursuit of justice is essential for Iraq's transition from conflict to stability.

Mr. Bendjama (Algeria): As this is the first public meeting of the month, allow me to assure you, Mr. President, of our unwavering support during your presidency and to congratulate Mozambique on its successful stewardship last month. I also extend my sincere gratitude to the Acting Special Adviser of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) for her comprehensive briefing, and I welcome the participation of the representative of Iraq in our meeting today.

Combating terrorism and ensuring accountability for the perpetrators remains a paramount priority for Algeria. In that context, we have closely monitored UNITAD's activities in promoting accountability for the crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq. In that regard, I would like to highlight the following points.

First, I wish to commend the unwavering efforts of the Acting Special Adviser and her Team to ensure a smooth and orderly conclusion of UNITAD's mandate by 17 September. The collaborative approach with the Government of Iraq is indispensable for fostering trust and confidence in the process, especially for the victims seeking justice.

Secondly, transparency regarding the remaining investigative activities, evidence-delivery timelines and protocols is of the utmost importance. We are reassured by UNITAD's open and transparent engagement with the Government of Iraq, including the designated National Coordinating Committee, throughout its drawdown and liquidation phase.

Thirdly, ensuring the proper conservation, preservation and storage of all evidentiary and non-evidentiary records and archives necessitates close cooperation with the relevant Iraqi authorities, bearing in mind that the competent Iraqi authorities will be the

primary intended recipient of the evidence collected, preserved and stored by the Investigative Team.

Fourthly, capacity-building activities to enhance Iraqi capabilities, particularly in areas such as mass grave excavations, archiving, digital forensics and witness protection, remain critically important as UNITAD's work draws to a close. We urge all relevant stakeholders to further prioritize those programmes over the remaining months of UNITAD's mandate. Doing so will cement sustainable progress in the relevant Government institutions and agencies.

UNITAD's contributions would not have been possible without Iraq's steadfast support and cooperation at every stage of the process. Respecting Iraq's sovereignty and jurisdictional authority over crimes committed on its soil has been the foundational pillar of UNITAD's work. We call on all actors to continue upholding that sacrosanct principle as future accountability efforts are pursued.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize that the continued partnership among the Iraqi authorities, the United Nations and the international community remains vital to upholding accountability for crimes committed by terrorist groups.

Ms. Zabolotskaya (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Let me start by thanking the Republic of Mozambique for its successful stewardship of the Security Council in May and by welcoming the Republic of Korea as this month's President of the Council. We also welcome the representative of Iraq to today's meeting. We welcome Ms. Peyró Llopis as Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) and thank her for her informative briefing. We also appreciate her courage in deciding to lead the Team now, after years of feigned activity under the leadership of the allegedly brilliant men who briefed the Council on many occasions. Now the time has come to actually fulfil the mandate of UNITAD and complete its work. We hope that, under the leadership of Ms. Peyró Llopis, UNITAD will make every effort to come closer to fulfilling its main task — to hand over to Iraq absolutely all the evidence that was collected during its work. We realize that that is not an easy task, and not only because the Team is on the home stretch on the road to closure but because of systemic failures that were made by the previous management of the Team. We will come back to that issue.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to the issue of bringing terrorists to justice. In that regard, we firmly believe that the main role should be played by the authorities and judicial bodies of the States in which militants committed their crimes. That is particularly relevant for countries such as Iraq, where the actions of terrorists have had catastrophic consequences throughout the country.

In that context, we continue to closely monitor UNITAD's fulfilment of its mandate to support national efforts to collect, preserve and secure evidence concerning crimes committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2379 (2017) and 2697 (2023) and the terms of reference endorsed by the Council.

My delegation would like to draw attention to a technical but important detail — the need to bring the name of the terrorist group ISIL in UNITAD documents and on relevant websites into line with Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), which established the Investigative Team. Arbitrary renaming of terrorist entities should not take place, especially in the light of their listings in national legal systems.

Returning to the essence of the matter, it was only in the seventh year of UNITAD's work that positive momentum in cooperation with the Iraqi authorities began to emerge. Before that, we had been pushing for years to have former adviser Khan ensure transparency in his work. However, he essentially kept the Council in the dark and misled it, justifying his inaction with various excuses — a dangerous environment, the secrecy of the investigation, the absence of national legislation or Baghdad's alleged lack of cooperation. As it turns out now, instead of actually collecting evidence of criminal activity by ISIL, Mr. Khan was mainly engaged in obtaining information from the Iraqi authorities themselves. He provided access for Western countries to the evidence collected by UNITAD. He not only failed to obtain Iraq's permission, but the entire endeavour was actually kept secret from the host country. What is more, he denied Iraq such access.

We have regularly reminded both Mr. Khan and Mr. Ritscher that UNITAD was not established by the Security Council under Chapter 7 of the Charter of the United Nations. Its task is to provide technical assistance to the Iraqi authorities in ensuring justice for the crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq. The Team did

not have the task of replacing national justice and was not entitled to try to impose any decisions on Baghdad.

We are convinced that if UNITAD, from the very beginning of its activities, had strictly and conscientiously observed the mandate entrusted to it, actively obtained evidence of ISIL crimes and supported the national efforts of Iraq's law enforcement and judicial authorities by providing them with all the necessary evidence in full, the Iraqi judicial system would have already completed the process of bringing terrorists to justice. That, unfortunately, has not occurred.

The original intent was for UNITAD to work hand in hand with Iraqi law enforcement agencies, assisting them with analysis and technical support in their investigative activities, rather than secretly collecting materials that, as we understand it, in many cases cannot even be considered evidence because of the lack of compliance with basic procedural norms. As a result, the only real evidence that UNITAD has to date is the evidence that the Team received from the Iraqis themselves.

Therefore, years of sabotage by UNITAD's leadership of its key mandate have resulted in thousands of ISIL fighters not being punished. Many of them have since escaped from Iraq and fled to other countries. Such dubious results undermine the credibility not only of UNITAD but also of United Nations technical assistance in criminal justice in general.

For us, the measure of UNITAD's success in the key aspect of its mandate has been the number of trials conducted under Iraqi national jurisdiction on the basis of evidence collected and systematized by the Team. Unfortunately, to date, after seven years of UNITAD's work, the number of such cases is zero. That means that UNITAD has failed in its primary task. UNITAD is less than three months away from completing its mandate. The question arises: who will be held accountable for such poor mandate delivery? The former leaders have already left their posts, apparently unwilling to take responsibility for the results of their work. It appears that one can gain political capital through empty briefings to the Security Council and then move on to more interesting assignments.

The current leadership should make every effort to maximize its support for the launching of the Iraqi trials now, before the curtain falls on UNITAD. To that end, all the materials collected should be handed over

to the Iraqi authorities as soon as possible and without preconditions. We trust that that key task will be accomplished in the time remaining before the closure of UNITAD, that is, by 17 September 2024.

The Russian delegation firmly believes that the international crimes of ISIL terrorists have no statute of limitations and that all those who were involved in their perpetration must be punished under the Iraqi national judicial system.

On the matter of where to store the collected materials, the answer is clear to us. Paragraph 10 of the UNITAD terms of reference, which were approved by the Security Council, stipulates that, upon conclusion of the Investigative Team's mandate, the United Nations and the Government of Iraq shall agree on arrangements regarding the custody of original versions of the evidence and materials collected, preserved and stored by the Investigative Team in Iraq, as well as any materials and analyses produced by UNITAD. Therefore, we assume that after UNITAD's closure, issues of the preservation of collected materials will be resolved bilaterally between the United Nations and the Iraqi authorities, with full respect for Iraq's sovereignty and jurisdiction over crimes committed on its territory.

We must remember that the United Nations was invited to help. Technical assistance should respect the sovereignty, interests, values, traditions and specifics — cultural, legal, historical, religious and linguistic — of the host State.

In conclusion, we would also like to say a few words about preserving the legacy of UNITAD. We hope that the full implementation of the mandate will be the Team's main legacy. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency lately to create residual mechanisms that serve as "memorial monuments" to various United Nations mechanisms after they wind down their activities. We do not think that is the right way to spend the United Nations budget.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Allow me to begin, Mr. President, by congratulating the Republic of Korea on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. You can count on the full support of the Chinese delegation. I also wish to applaud Mozambique for conducting and completing its presidency with flying colors last month. I thank Acting Special Adviser Ms. Peyró Llopis for her briefing. I welcome the presence of the Iraqi representative.

Last September, the Security Council adopted resolution 2697 (2023). The resolution decides to extend the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) until 17 September 2024 only. We welcome the positive progress achieved by the Team in the past six-plus months in drawdown and liquidation. We encourage UNITAD to continue to implement Council resolutions and complete its withdrawal in a timely and orderly manner, based on extensive consultations with the Iraqi Government.

Handing over evidence to the Iraqi Government is a priority in the drawdown stage. We encourage the Team to transfer in a systematic way the full set of evidence to the host Government without delay. It is imperative that the Team uphold transparency and non-discrimination and obtain prior consent from the Iraqi Government before sharing evidence and archives with a third State. Where evidence and archives are already shared with a third State, the Team shall inform the Iraqi Government promptly.

While the mandate of the Investigative Team is drawing to a close, we cannot and will not relent in our counter-terrorism efforts at the international level. Iraq remains at the forefront of the global fight against terrorism. The international community must continue to support Iraq's capacity-building to prevail over terrorism and its efforts to maintain national security.

Ms. Persaud (Guyana): I join in congratulating Mozambique on a successful presidency in May, and I wish the Republic of Korea a very successful presidency for this month. It has Guyana's full support.

I thank Ms. Peyró Llopis, Acting 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) for her briefing, and I welcome the participation of the representative of Iraq in today's meeting.

Guyana commends UNITAD for its work in investigating and documenting the crimes committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), in accordance with the mandate provided by the Security Council. The atrocities inflicted by that extremist group have left a legacy of immense pain and suffering for the people of Iraq and the wider region. The accountability sought through UNITAD's mandate not only covers past crimes but is a cornerstone for peace, stability

and the rule of law in the affected regions, as well as a deterrent to future atrocities. Guyana stands firmly with the global community in pursuing accountability by Da'esh/ISIL and in supporting all efforts to deliver justice for victims and survivors.

We recognize the critical contribution of UNITAD over the past six years in collecting, preserving and analysing evidence of the crimes committed in Iraq and in storing and organizing the evidentiary material. We note the progress made in the investigations, including those into crimes committed against minority groups.

Guyana commends the efforts of UNITAD towards ensuring a smooth conclusion of its mandate and promoting the continuity of its work. The increased cooperation with the Iraqi authorities during this drawdown period is particularly important in pursuing efforts to hold Da'esh/ISIL operatives accountable for their crimes. We welcome in particular the enhanced efforts by UNITAD at capacity-building and training, which are being undertaken at the request of the Iraqi authorities, recognizing the importance of that in equipping them to take essential next steps on mass grave excavations and victim identification, archiving and digitization, digital forensics, witness protection and psychosocial support.

The importance of maintaining, preserving and managing the archives of the evidence collected by UNITAD cannot be overstated. Those records must be preserved and remain accessible for use in future judicial proceedings. In that regard, we note the recommendation in the Secretary-General's January 2024 report (S/2024/20) that the archives at the United Nations Secretariat be maintained in a specific manner. That is in addition to the other requirements of the resolution.

In conclusion, while the mandate of UNITAD will end in a few months, accountability efforts for the crimes of Da'esh/ISIL must continue.

Ms. Dime Labille (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to congratulate Mozambique for its effective stewardship of our work during its presidency in May. I also take this opportunity to assure you, Mr. President, of France's full support during your presidency this month.

I would like to thank the Acting Special Adviser, Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, for introducing the twelfth report on the activities of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed

by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) (see S/2024/408). As it is the final such report before UNITAD's mandate ends, I would like to thank the successive Special Advisers at the helm of UNITAD and all their teams for the work that they have done. The Special Adviser only recently assumed her role, but we are already seeing the brilliant results of her work. We encourage her to continue working to ensure the closure of UNITAD in the most orderly possible fashion.

I thank and welcome the presence of the representative of Iraq and Iraq's crucial cooperation with the international community and with UNITAD over the past few years in order to ensure justice for all the victims of the crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq.

Thanks to UNITAD's work on the ground alongside the national and local Iraqi authorities, significant progress has been made towards ensuring justice for the crimes committed by Da'esh. UNITAD has thus made an important contribution by gathering a large body of evidence that has made it possible to classify the actions of Da'esh as acts that may constitute international crimes, in accordance with the mandate given to it by the Security Council.

The report takes stock of the fact that the investigative work carried out has made it possible to document crimes committed against different religious communities and minorities, sexual and gender-based crimes and violence, crimes committed against children, crimes committed through the use of chemical weapons and the destruction of cultural heritage. The expertise and technology deployed by UNITAD to prevent the loss or degradation of the evidence collected, along with its forensic expertise and the collection of numerous testimonies made those crucial advances possible, in cooperation with the Iraqi authorities. We also commend the victim-centred approach and the gender perspective that UNITAD has adopted in all its work, along with its engagement with Iraqi civil society.

As UNITAD's mandate comes to an end in September, we underscore the importance of continuing to work together to hold the perpetrators of Daesh's crimes in Iraq accountable. The fruits of the work carried out by UNITAD in accordance with the mandate given to it by the Council must not be lost. The evidence collected by UNITAD during its mandate must remain accessible, including to third States, at the end of its mandate and must be retained, in accordance with

United Nations policies on classification and access. To that end, coordination efforts with the relevant services of the United Nations Secretariat, in consultation with the Iraqi authorities, must continue.

The fight against impunity must continue, and justice must be rendered for the victims and their families. It is important that the perpetrators of those crimes be brought to justice, wherever they may be. France reiterates its commitment to the fight against terrorism and the fight against impunity. The threat posed by Da'esh has not disappeared. In conjunction with its partners, in particular the Global Coalition against Da'esh, France will continue to stand with Iraq in the fight against terrorism.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I begin my statement by congratulating and wishing the Republic of Korea every success in conducting the work of the Council. I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the successful work of Mozambique over the past month.

I thank Ms. Peyró Llopis, Acting 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), for her presentation of the report (see S/2024/408), and I welcome the representative of Iraq to this Chamber.

Seven years after its establishment, and with less than four months to go before its mandate ends, we note that UNITAD has proven to be an example of cooperation with Iraq, other States and international organizations. Its work, focused on the collection, preservation and storage of evidence, has underpinned Iraqi efforts to bring the perpetrators of serious crimes to justice.

With resolution 2697 (2023), the Security Council, responding to Iraq's request, extended UNITAD's mandate one last time until 17 September. UNITAD's ongoing constructive dialogues with the Iraqi authorities to ensure an orderly withdrawal, including the National Coordination Committee, are key to achieving that goal. A critical issue raised by the conclusion of UNITAD's mandate is preserving and managing the evidence collected and using it in criminal proceedings. In that regard, Ecuador agrees with the Secretary-General's recommendations that UNITAD must, in observance of international law and the terms of reference and with respect for Iraq's sovereignty, return the evidence received from the Iraqi authorities

and provide them with any other evidence that it is able to share. We must bear in mind that the Iraqi authorities are the main recipients of such evidence, as it is up to them to continue with the tasks of investigating and prosecuting those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. In that regard, the establishment of a repository of evidence within the Secretariat to ensure that confidential information remains protected will facilitate requests from Iraq, other States, survivors and civil society organizations. UNITAD's contribution to strengthening the capacity of Iraqi institutions should continue through the promotion of technical cooperation initiatives that are tailored to national needs.

In conclusion, Ecuador underscores the need to preserve UNITAD's legacy as a testimony to the efforts of Iraq and the international community to prevent the crimes committed by Da'esh from going unpunished.

Mrs. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): Allow me to join others in congratulating you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency. We wish you success in steering the Security Council through the month of June and assure you of our full support. I thank the Acting Special Adviser, Ms. Peyró Llopis, for the presentation of the twelfth report 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) (see S/2024/408), and I welcome the representative of Iraq to the meeting.

We highly appreciate the work of UNITAD and its valuable contribution to ensuring justice for all victims of crimes committed by Da'esh on Iraqi territory. Thanks to its efforts on the ground, more progress has been achieved. With the initiation of UNITAD's drawdown and liquidation plans, we value the fact that, during this phase, priority is being given to preparing evidence, other materials and analyses for delivery to the competent Iraqi authorities, in accordance with resolutions 2379 (2017) and 2697 (2023) and the terms of reference. We welcome the fact that many of those activities have been undertaken alongside the relevant Iraqi authorities within the framework of capacity-building and training.

In that regard, I would like to make the following three points.

First, this year marks a sombre anniversary: 10 years since Da'esh declared itself a caliphate, the apex of its reign of terror in Iraq. Towns and villages were

razed, and entire societies were torn apart, left to bear immense loss. Terrorism has inflicted, and continues to inflict, deep wounds on the societies affected in Iraq and beyond. Women are often the first targets. After nearly 10 years, those survivors continue to yearn for justice. That should be a reminder that we must do our utmost to ensure that those responsible for the crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq are brought to justice. The work of UNITAD alongside Iraqi national and local authorities on the ground is critical to holding members of Da'esh accountable for crimes committed against Yazidis, Christians and Shia Muslims and, in some cases, against Sunni Muslims, Kurds and other minorities, as well as sexual and gender-based crimes and crimes against children.

Secondly, we greatly value UNITAD's survivor-centred approach and their perpetrator-centred investigations. The documentation and evaluation of cases of sexual and gender-based crimes, in particular those against women and girls from minority communities, is essential to ensuring accountability, as sexual and gender-based violence, including human trafficking, sexual slavery and forced marriage, were used as weapons of terror by Da'esh. There must be no impunity for those serious crimes. Victims and survivors deserve justice. For that, it is essential to criminalize, in national legislation, international crimes, in particular those related to sexual and gender-based violence. We encourage the Government of Iraq to adopt such national legislation as soon as possible. Slovenia stresses that such legislation must preclude the application of the death penalty, in line with United Nations best practices.

Thirdly, the materials and analyses produced by UNITAD have allowed it to assess, within its mandate, that the acts committed by Da'esh in Iraq may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. It is critical for those materials to be used effectively to serve international criminal investigations and proceedings, both in Iraq and elsewhere. The only way we can achieve that is by ensuring that all evidence and other documents are stored in active and accessible archives that ensure further analysis of the evidence collected and its probative value.

While some of the investigations may not be finalized by the end of UNITAD's mandate, and some requests for mutual assistance from third States may go unanswered, we call on the Government of Iraq to ensure that the crimes committed by Da'esh continue to

be prosecuted in accordance with international law and the principles of the rule of law. UNITAD's support to the Iraqi authorities provides a ledge from which they can take the next step. Even though UNITAD's mandate is drawing to a close, the fight against impunity must continue. UNITAD's legacy must be preserved. The best way to do that is by ensuring that UNITAD's products can be used effectively. We owe that to all the survivors, to all the courageous witnesses who come forward to share their stories. Their stories must not be overlooked or forgotten, nor should the memories of the victims who perished. The best way to honour them is to hold the perpetrators accountable, no matter where they are.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): I would first like to congratulate the Republic of Korea for assuming the presidency for the month of June. It can count on Malta's support. I would also like to thank Mozambique for its stewardship of the presidency last month. I thank Ms. Peyró Llopis, Acting 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) for her report (see S/2024/408) and for her briefing. I also welcome the representative of Iraq to this meeting.

This meeting provides a timely opportunity to recognize the important work done by the Investigative Team in the field of international criminal justice and in fulfilling its mandate to promote accountability for acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/Da'esh (ISIL/Da'esh). Notably, the Team produced a rich set of materials and analyses that consolidated and delivered factual and legal findings. Member States, including Iraq, and their competent authorities can consider those findings as they work domestically to hold ISIL members accountable for the crimes committed in Iraq. Malta therefore commends the role played by the Team in supporting accountability efforts in cooperation with the Iraqi authorities. Moreover, Malta appreciates the survivor-centric approach that the Team has adopted and implemented throughout its mandate, as well as its field-based presence and engagement. That gave survivors and witnesses the opportunity to contribute to the accountability process.

It is important to preserve the legacy of UNITAD. That includes the storage of evidentiary and non-evidentiary records and archives. In that sense, Malta applauds the capacity-building support delivered

by the Team to the Iraqi authorities, in particular the archiving and digitalization support, enabling the Iraqi criminal courts to preserve their holdings and expedite their work. We also see as a positive development the progress made by the Ministry of Interior to move closer towards fully establishing its witness protection and support unit. In line with that development, we reiterate our call for the adoption of a domestic legal framework enabling the prosecution of international crimes, namely genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Such legislation, in line with United Nations best practices, should preclude the application of the death penalty.

We also welcome the delivery of capacity-building and training in other relevant areas with a view to cementing the progress achieved over the course of the mandate and ensuring sustainability beyond it. We highlight in particular the training provided to relevant civil society organizations on trauma-informed approaches, problem management and witness protection.

I would like to also refer to the information provided in the report about the crimes investigated. We note that gender and age were key factors in determining the crimes that ISIL perpetrated against the targeted victims. The crimes committed against the Yazidi community, including murder, rape, sexual violence, torture, enslavement, sexual slavery and the conscription of children into an armed group, are particularly concerning. Their stories and the memories of the victims who perished must be remembered. They are the foundation for ensuring accountability for the crimes of ISIL, a process in which truth is essential.

In conclusion, I reiterate that the work of UNITAD constitutes an important example of how the United Nations can help post-conflict countries in their efforts to achieve peace and security. It also serves to show how progress can be achieved through active cooperation with national institutions. Malta therefore supports an orderly drawdown phase that fully addresses the need to appropriately deal with the confidential and sensitive evidence in the Team's possession. We express our appreciation for the Team's work over the years and its important contribution in ensuring that there is no impunity for the atrocity crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq.

Ms. Wu (United States of America): Allow me, Mr. President, to join my Security Council colleagues in congratulating Mozambique on the completion of

its successful presidency in May and in wishing the Republic of Korea a successful presidency for the month of June. You have the United States full support.

I would like to thank Acting Special Adviser Peyró Llopis for her comprehensive briefing on the efforts of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) in pursuit of accountability for Da'esh's crimes in Iraq. We appreciate the progress she has made since she assumed that post. We also welcome the participation of the representative of Iraq in today's meeting.

There is no disputing the importance of UNITAD's work. As other Council members have noted, we are approaching the 10-year mark since Da'esh began committing genocide and crimes against humanity against groups in areas that were once under its control — including against Yazidis, Christians, Kurds, Shia Muslims and other minorities, as well as some Sunni Muslims. A decade later, those communities still seek justice. The United States stands with them. We believe that accountability for those crimes will contribute to peace and security in Iraq and the region.

UNITAD provides wide-ranging support to the Iraqi authorities. It builds the capacity of the Iraqi judicial system, facilitates the exhumation of mass graves, collects evidence, engages with victims' families and survivors and analyses battlefield evidence to help identify the perpetrators of atrocities and understand Da'esh's structure and operations. UNITAD has also contributed to justice beyond the borders of Iraq by supporting efforts to ensure that members of Da'esh, including foreign terrorist fighters who have been repatriated, face prosecution in their home States. The perpetrators of grave international crimes should not escape justice.

The Council must do all it can to help Iraq's post-conflict transition once UNITAD's mandate ends in September. That includes ensuring the transfer of evidence and other holdings in a manner that preserves their evidentiary value. Iraq and other Member States should also continue to receive support to pursue accountability wherever victims and perpetrators are found. We urge Member States to continue using the evidence compiled to prosecute their nationals who joined Da'esh and committed international crimes and terrorist acts.

Given the critical importance of that work, the United States has made clear that it expects an

orderly and deliberate drawdown and liquidation of UNITAD's functions. In that spirit, and as indicated in the December 2023 letter from the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General (see S/2024/53), which was circulated as a document of the Security Council, we welcome the Government of Iraq's affirmation that it would like to share evidence with all States after UNITAD has shut down its operations.

Additionally, the United States encourages UNITAD to continue working with the Government of Iraq to turn over as much evidence as possible. Those efforts must be in accordance with UNITAD's terms of reference, adhere to witness-protection standards and ensure the informed consent of witnesses. At the same time, we acknowledge that, for various reasons, UNITAD will not be able to turn over all its evidence to Iraq by September. The United States therefore supports ensuring that all UNITAD's evidence, whether held by Iraq or the United Nations, be preserved in an active manner, with appropriate analytic capacity, so that it remains accessible to law enforcement authorities.

As this is the last scheduled briefing of UNITAD, the United States urges the members of the Council to work together to ensure that we continue our collective efforts to deliver justice for the crimes of Da'esh. We stand ready to work with stakeholders to explore all options to that end.

Mr. George (Sierra Leone): Sierra Leone would first like to take the opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, and the Republic of Korea on assuming the presidency of the Security Council. We assure you of our full support. In a similar vein, we commend and congratulate Mozambique on its successful presidency of the Council in the month of May and recognize the important work done.

With respect to today's meeting, let me also thank Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, Acting Special Adviser and Head of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for the Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), for her comprehensive briefing on the Team's twelfth report (see S/2024/408). I welcome the participation of the representative of Iraq in today's meeting.

As this is our first statement in the Council on this agenda item, we want to emphasize the importance of ensuring accountability for atrocity crimes and an end to impunity. We therefore express our strong support

for the work of the UNITAD Team. We are committed to prioritizing accountability efforts throughout our time on the Council and commend UNITAD's efforts since its mandate began in 2017. We also take note of Iraq's commitment to working with UNITAD.

Sierra Leone welcomes the positive developments, including steps taken by the Government of Iraq to investigate and document crimes by Da'esh in Iraq, to hold the group accountable and to ensure justice for the victims and the society at large. We also urge the Iraqi Government to continue to implement robust reforms in the security and justice sectors, and we look forward to its continuing efforts to adopt the appropriate national legislation and regulatory mechanisms to ensure the rule of law, both now and post-UNITAD.

In line with our commitment to international law and accountability, we would like to make the following three points.

First, we take note of the assessment provided by the Acting Special Adviser regarding the drawdown and liquidation plans and commend the Investigative Team for its efforts in documenting and investigating heinous crimes committed in Iraq during the reporting period. While we express our support for UNITAD's efforts, we also recognize the potential risks associated with unaddressed mutual assistance requests from third-party national authorities and the significant impact that could have on future investigations and prosecutions of crimes committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. Addressing those challenges is crucial to ensuring that crimes committed by Da'esh are prosecuted in accordance with international law and the rule of law.

Secondly, accountability and justice are also crucial for preventing atrocities and establishing lasting peace. We commend UNITAD for investigating and documenting crimes committed by Da'esh in Iraq and urge the Iraqi Government to adopt relevant national legislation to ensure adherence to the rule of law post-UNITAD. We firmly believe that accountability mechanisms such as UNITAD provide a legacy of transparency, trust and stability, ultimately leading to more peaceful and prosperous societies. The Government of Iraq must sustain its efforts to give a voice to the victims of Da'esh, including women and children who were subjected to horrific sexual violence.

Thirdly, we also welcome the views and assessment of the Acting Special Adviser and Team. We note that with the proper, orderly and consistent implementation of

that plan, the Investigative Team will successfully fulfil its mandate by September, when the mandate expires.

The unified repository of digitized information of evidence gathered by the Investigative Team is a welcome development. The Government of Iraq, interested parties and other Member States must have access to that digital repository, guided by established parameters of United Nations policies and best practice and relevant international law, rules and standards regarding the sharing of evidence. In that regard, we commend the Team's transparent engagement with the Government of Iraq and relevant United Nations departments and stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of documenting, preserving and managing both evidentiary and non-evidentiary material. The storage and preservation of the materials of the Investigative Team post-UNITAD must be guided by the systems that have been put in place not only to maintain the integrity of the evidence but also to protect the victims and information providers who so bravely provided the facts and details during the investigation. The Investigative Team must also provide Iraqi authorities with adequate training in that regard.

We emphasize the importance of regional and international cooperation to facilitate progress in Iraq and to also bring perpetrators of various crimes to justice. Long-term initiatives are also needed to promote reconciliation and prevent future violence. We can use UNITAD's efforts in Iraq to advocate for future accountability measures in other situations as appropriate.

The lessons learned from UNITAD operations in Iraq are crucial as the country transitions from conflict to stability and prosperity. UNITAD has been instrumental in excavating mass graves, collecting and documenting evidence and holding Da'esh members accountable for crimes against various groups in Iraq and neighbouring countries. Considering that, the Iraqi Government must pursue justice and accountability for historical transgressions while strengthening legal reforms and judicial infrastructure. The international community, including the United Nations field team, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, should continue to collaborate with the Iraqi Government on infrastructural and socioeconomic development.

In closing, the impact of terrorism in Iraq and the neighbouring countries has caused significant harm, with women and children bearing the brunt of the

suffering. Nevertheless, Iraqis must look ahead and maintain their unwavering commitment to building a safe, secure and stable nation.

Mrs. Chanda (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like first of all to congratulate Mozambique for its successful presidency in May and assure you, Mr. President, of Switzerland's full support for your mandate in June.

I would like to welcome Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, the Acting Special Adviser, and wish her success in this crucial period. I also welcome the participation of the representative of Iraq.

I would like to make two main observations.

First, the plight of the victims of the crimes committed by Da'esh must remain a common priority. While we welcome the ongoing efforts to implement the road map for an orderly conclusion of the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), we expect Iraq, as well as all other States concerned, to continue ensuring that all crimes committed by Da'esh are prosecuted in accordance with international law. The end of UNITAD's mandate must not lead to impunity for the perpetrators of those crimes. Switzerland therefore continues to support the work of the Investigative Team and the work of an impartial justice system committed to ensuring justice for the victims and the protection of their rights. UNITAD has also engaged with Iraqi civil society and succeeded in establishing an important dialogue. The loss of that point of contact at the end of the mission is regrettable.

Secondly, the management of evidence and the preservation of UNITAD's legacy are essential. In view of the many legal proceedings that will not be completed before the end of UNITAD's mandate, we must ensure that its work is preserved and that the evidence collected remains accessible. Switzerland therefore welcomes the exchange between UNITAD and the United Nations Archives and Records Management Section aimed at establishing a current archives system. An innovative solution along those lines would ensure permanent access to the evidence held by the Investigation Team in order to continue holding accountable the perpetrators of the crimes committed by Da'esh on a global scale.

In that respect, access to evidence must be granted in accordance with United Nations policies and best practices. We therefore reiterate our opposition to

the sharing of evidence in judicial proceedings that could lead to the death penalty. Also, because of its incompatibility with respect for human dignity and human rights, Switzerland is opposed to capital punishment in all circumstances.

As demonstrated by the numerous requests for assistance from Member States, UNITAD's contribution to accountability efforts is crucial. The Team's work with survivors, families and affected communities must also be highlighted. Their stories, along with the memory of the victims who perished, must not be forgotten. We therefore support continued cooperation between Iraq and UNITAD in the final phase to find lasting solutions to ensure that the crimes committed by Da'esh continue to be prosecuted in Iraq and elsewhere.

Mrs. Shino (Japan): I would like to join others in congratulating Mozambique for its successful presidency in the difficult month of May. Also, we are very much looking forward to working with our closest neighbour country, the Republic of Korea, for a productive month of June, under its presidency. It may be assured of our full support.

I thank Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, Acting 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) for her briefing. And I welcome the representative of Iraq to this meeting.

Through its resolution 2697 (2023), the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of UNITAD only until 17 September. We recall that its closure by the coming month of September is in line with the request by the host country, Iraq.

We took note of the progress made in the consolidation and delivery of the investigative results, which was highlighted in the report of the Acting Special Adviser (see S/2024/408). With regard to the investigations undertaken by its six field-based and two thematic investigative units, it is unfortunate to see that some of them will have to remain incomplete owing to the conclusion of the mandate or the need for prioritization. That being said, we commend the work of UNITAD since its last mandate renewal. We understand that UNITAD has striven to finalize the investigative results to deliver to the competent Iraqi authorities as much as possible in a much shorter period of time than previously expected.

It is encouraging to learn that the drawdown and liquidation process of UNITAD is steadily proceeding and that the Team has been committed to transparent planning and more active engagement with the Government of Iraq. In particular, the deepening understanding between the Government and UNITAD on the handling of evidence and other materials is a positive development. We hope that that will continue until the end of the Team's mandate.

Since its establishment in 2017, UNITAD has greatly contributed to ensuring accountability for crimes committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. As the closing date for UNITAD approaches, its legacy that serves that purpose needs to be properly preserved and carried forward. The Team has been rigorously engaged in collecting copies of original evidence and other materials, which may be used for legal procedures in the future. Therefore, the modality of that archive must be thoroughly discussed among stakeholders. We too are ready to engage constructively in that discussion.

To conclude, recalling the contributions that the Team has also made to the healing of survivors, victims' families and affected communities, we would like to express our great appreciation for the dedication that UNITAD has shown throughout its mandate.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Allow me first to thank the Acting Special Adviser for her briefing and welcome the representative of Iraq to the Chamber.

We are all unified in agreeing that Da'esh perpetrators must be held criminally accountable for their heinous crimes in Iraq and other States. With a shared commitment to pursuing justice and accountability, we adopted resolution 2379 (2017) at the request of the Iraqi Government. The Republic of Korea commends the tireless pursuit by the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) of evidence-based justice that establishes the truth and fulfils the requests of victims in Iraq.

In order to preserve the legacy of UNITAD, which has commendably laid the foundation for ensuring accountability for the crimes committed by Da'esh, both in Iraq and around the world, I would like to emphasize the following three points.

First, we reiterate the importance of collaboration between Iraq and UNITAD. That includes helping to build the capacity of the Iraqi judiciary system in the areas of witness protection, digital forensics and mass grave excavations. As such, the Republic of Korea calls for tailored initiatives beyond the closing of UNITAD by United Nations system entities to help the Iraqi authorities in their fight to combat terrorism moving forward.

Secondly, the uninterrupted chain of sharing and storing UNITAD evidence is of high importance to ensure continued accountability. In particular, access to UNITAD's archives by other States is integral in pursuing criminal accountability for the crimes committed by Da'esh worldwide. Da'esh cannot rely on impunity by fleeing abroad. The Republic of Korea echoes the calls of other members to establish a system for sharing the UNITAD archives in litigation in States other than Iraq, based on consultations with the Iraqi Government.

Thirdly, the Republic of Korea welcomes UNITAD's focus on sexual and gender-based crimes and crimes against children committed by Da'esh. As a proud signatory of the statement of shared commitments on women and peace and security, the Republic of Korea affirms the importance of protecting women in armed conflict and enhancing their key roles and participation in all stages of peace processes. After the conclusion of UNITAD, we call on the Iraqi Government to continue UNITAD's efforts, not only to punish the perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict, but also to end the culture of impunity for gender-based violence.

The depth, breadth and speed of the work that UNITAD has undertaken for the past six years has been a source of global optimism for our common pursuit of justice against terrorism. Yet, our quest for justice against Da'esh does not stop in September. Da'esh remains and is still committing crimes and spreading terror. UNITAD's legacy must send a clear message to its members: their reign of impunity is over.

The Republic of Korea stands firmly with the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi people to deliver justice for Da'esh atrocities.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Marzooq (Iraq): I thank you, Mr. President. Allow me to deliver my speech in Arabic.

(spoke in Arabic)

At the outset, I congratulate the Republic of Korea on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month and wish its delegation every success. I also congratulate the delegation of Mozambique on its successful stewardship of the Council's work during the month of May.

I express the appreciation of my country's Government to the United Nations and its main organs and offices for their efforts, resolutions, recommendations and decisions and for all the international efforts to support Iraq in its fight against terrorism, taking into account its demands regarding the drawdown of the work of United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD) and the completion of those efforts at the national level. I thank the new Head of the Investigative Team, Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, and her Team for their tireless and remarkable efforts during this short period and encourage them to continue their efforts, in coordination with the National Coordinating Committee, to find appropriate solutions to the remaining issues regarding the delivery, preservation and storage of evidence in Iraq, as stipulated in resolution 2697 (2023).

We welcome the twelfth report of UNITAD (see S/2024/408) and the briefing by Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, Acting Special Adviser and Head of the Investigative Team, in implementation of resolution 2697 (2023), and the activities undertaken related to the gradual drawdown and liquidation of the Team.

The report mentioned several important points that reflected the seriousness of implementing the liquidation and closure requirements on time and the progress made in the Team's activities and in reaching those stages of work in Iraq in cooperation with my country's Government, in achieving accountability and justice, and in providing support and training to the Iraqi national team, which was established to take over the tasks and legacy of the Team following the drawdown of its work.

The position of the Government of Iraq regarding terrorism was and continues to be focused on taking and supporting measures aimed at eradicating that dangerous scourge. The Government is working to build its national counter-terrorism capacities and to strengthen its judicial system, in line with the principles of human rights and respect for Iraq's international

obligations, as stipulated in the Iraqi Constitution. It is also taking the necessary legal preparations to use in national courts the evidence that Iraq will receive from the UNITAD's Investigative Team, thereby enhancing its national legal and judicial capabilities. The first reading of the bill on establishing an Iraqi criminal tribunal for the crimes committed by members of the Da'esh terrorist organization has taken place in the Iraqi Parliament in preparation for that legislation to be adopted. That legislation will ensure the use of evidence before the Iraqi judiciary in prosecuting crimes committed by members of Da'esh that can be classified as international crimes perpetrated against the Iraqi people.

In the light of the foregoing and before the conclusion of the closure procedures, we look forward to the results of the investigations and the evidence collected by the Investigative Team in Iraq over the previous period being obtained by the relevant judicial authorities in Iraq, in accordance with paragraph 39 of the terms of reference, which mandated the Investigative Team to provide appropriate legal assistance to the Government of Iraq and to build its capacity. The Iraqi people are the main victims of the actions and crimes perpetrated by the Da'esh organization in Iraq. That will be an incentive to reveal more evidence of the other crimes committed by the terrorist organization and to take the necessary measures to preserve and store evidence in Iraq.

We note in that regard that the Government of Iraq represents the victims and their families and has undertaken to ensure redress for the victims and to achieve justice. The main role in achieving that is undertaken by the competent Iraqi judicial authorities, who have made, and continue to make, great efforts to achieve accountability, and through parallel efforts to achieve justice and redress and to offer support to the survivors of the victims and their families. Iraq will therefore spare no effort, no matter how long it takes and no matter the delays, to achieve justice and accountability regarding all those whose hands are stained with Iraqi blood and all crimes committed by that organization. Just as Iraqis defeated and uprooted the Da'esh organization, it will be Iraqis who will achieve justice and accountability, in accordance with fair and just national legal measures consistent with Iraq's legislative jurisprudence.

The Government of Iraq reiterates its desire and readiness to share evidence with all States in the post-completion phase of the closure of UNITAD in Iraq by the end of 2024, including evidence possessed by Iraq

and handed over to UNITAD and evidence produced and developed by the Team, which will ultimately be returned to the Government of Iraq, in accordance with the Team's mandate. That is based on Iraq's firm position of upholding accountability at the national level and assisting other countries in achieving that. We support the continuation of collective international efforts to pursue those involved in the crimes perpetrated by the Da'esh terrorist organization, along with those who support and fund it, in order to preserve international peace and security and confront threats to national and global security in accordance with the national measures of States, while ensuring that those terrorists who have been able to flee Iraq have no safe havens.

The Government of Iraq reaffirms its commitment to cooperating with the International Investigative Team and to supporting it through the competent National Coordinating Committee so that it can proceed with its gradual drawdown, closure and liquidation with full respect for Iraq's sovereignty and jurisdiction over the crimes committed on its territory and against its people.

We would like to clarify that Iraq will review the evidence that has recently been received from the Team. At the same time, we understand that the Team's new leadership is currently dealing with many tasks, which must be accomplished within the gradual liquidation and drawdown phase. So we urge the Head of the Team to continue her efforts regarding delivering evidence to Iraq as soon as possible and to work to develop mechanisms for preserving and storing evidence in Iraq. We recall that the course of cooperation between Iraq and the Team is governed by the terms of reference, as Iraq is the main recipient of the evidence and any materials or analysis produced by the Investigative Team.

In conclusion, I would like to express our thanks and appreciation to you, Mr. President, to the other members of the Security Council and to all the friendly countries that have supported my country as we have confronted terrorism and sought to ensure UNITAD's success. We thank them all for the support given to Iraq in its efforts to ensure accountability for those crimes perpetrated by the Da'esh terrorist organization. I would also like to thank the former Advisers of the Team, Mr. Karim Khan and Mr. Christian Ritscher, who led UNITAD. We thank them for their efforts during their mandate in Iraq.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.