



**Opening Remarks by His Excellency
Dr. Abbas Kadhom Obaid
chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of
Iraq to the United Nations**

**“International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as
and when Conducive to Terrorism” event**

**12 February 2025, 1:15 – 2:30 am (EST)
Conference Room 7
United Nations Headquarters, New York**

Time Limit: (5 mins)

**Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,**

I would like to thank the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and its leadership, as well as all the members of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Compact Working Group on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, for co-organizing this important event.

The Republic of Iraq is proud to co-host this forum, which stands as a global testament of our collective determination to address the underlying drivers of terrorism and build a world of peace, security, and mutual respect.

As we all know, violent extremism conducive to terrorism poses a serious threat that undermines the UN and Member State's efforts to maintain peace and security, foster sustainable development and promote respect for human rights, that affects people of all ages, cultures, religions and nationalities.

The International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism is an opportunity to remind us of its importance and to highlight the essential commitment of Member States, the United Nations system and all relevant stakeholders—including civil society, religious leaders, youth, the private sector, academia and the media to its prevention efforts.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Today, as we mark this important day, we reaffirm our collective commitment to preventing violent extremism in all its manifestations. This is not merely a matter of security but a profound imperative for humanity - one that calls for actions rooted in the principles of dignity, inclusivity and sustainable peace.

It is widely acknowledged that Iraq fought terrorism, represented by (Da' esh) and other affiliated armed groups, on behalf of the entire world. The country endured significant sacrifices across various branches of the Iraqi security forces, with the support of the Iraqi people who stood by these forces in their fight against terrorism. Were it not for these sacrifices and the important stance of the Supreme Religious Authority in Najaf, embodied by Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani and his call to confront terrorism, that saved the country and its people from a genuine threat, as well as the assistance of friendly nations, the situation would have been drastically different.

We have made significant progress in pursuing terrorist elements following the liberation of all territories. Today, the liberated cities witness a transformation in terms of services, urban development, and humanitarian programs as part of the Iraqi government's plans for reconstruction, social peace initiatives, and the voluntary return of internally and externally displaced persons. These efforts also aim to uphold the principles of democracy, freedom, and protection, restoring the dignity and trust of individuals in the Iraqi state.

The Iraqi government has also adopted the National Strategy for Combating Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism to further consolidate these steps. It remains committed to ensuring the return of all displaced persons to their original places of residence after creating appropriate conditions. The government successfully reintegrated Iraqi families repatriated from Syria's Al-Hol Camp, amounting to 1,924 families comprising 7,556 citizens, and has returned 1,200 families to their original homes.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

This event provides an invaluable opportunity to translate the aspirations of the human rights-based and youth-centered strategies. Prevention requires

partnerships across governments, international organizations, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

The Republic of Iraq has long been at the forefront of the fight against violent extremism. Our history is a testament to the resilience of our people and the power of collective action. In recent years, Iraq has made significant strides in rebuilding communities torn apart by the scourge of violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

In line with the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, we have prioritized whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches. By engaging local communities, empowering civil society organizations, and fostering inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue, Iraq is working to build an environment where violent extremist ideologies cannot take root.

Our collaboration with the United Nations and our regional partners has further strengthened our capacities in addressing the drivers of violent extremism. We have seen the positive impact of initiatives that promote mental health and psychosocial support, counter violent extremist narratives, and raise awareness on the responsible use of new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence. Iraq remains committed to supporting these multilateral efforts and sharing the lessons learned from our experience.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Today's event offers a unique forum, uniting the UN system, Member States and global partners to share insights on how innovative programming support can assist Member States in proactively addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, to raise awareness about violent extremism

as and when conducive to terrorism, and to enhance international cooperation in this regard.

Let me reiterate Iraq's deep commitment to the prevention of violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism. Together, we can transform this day into a milestone for collective action - one that strengthens the pillars of peace and security for generations to come.

Terrorism is a byproduct of hatred and violence, stemming from extremism and fanaticism. These concepts have become more prevalent today for various reasons that are too numerous to detail. However, the most important aspect is that we are gathered here to protect our countries from these threats through constructive partnerships, cooperation, and the exchange of expertise, experiences, and information. We have no option but to move forward in charting a path toward global peace, in alignment with the principles of human rights and the divine laws, all of which categorically reject all forms of abhorrent extremism.

Thanks for your attendance and we look forward to hearing from you during the event.

Thank you.