

Iraq's comment on the report of Mr. Zuhair Lazgeen on Item 3

Iraq's governmental delegation listened attentively to what was brought forth in the intervention of Mr. Zuhair Lazgeen by the Pax initiative and we would like to clarify the following:

1. We agree with what the speaker brought forward, and express our solidarity with the Yazidi minority, which faced the crime of heinous attacks perpetrated against them, and against other minorities, by the terrorist organisation ISIS, which amounts to the crime of genocide for the Yazidis.
2. We also agree that the unrestrained religious and ethnic hate speech, which the available means of expression, such as satellite television and social networking sites, use, contributes to the spread of ignorance, backwardness and intolerance, which leads to the commitment of major crimes against citizens and different religious and ethnic groups, and must be prohibited.
3. The spread of the spirit of tolerance, coexistence and shared responsibility on the basis of citizenship needs intensive pedagogical and educational programs and systems, in addition to legislation to guarantee human and minorities' rights.
4. In regards to the abduction of Yazidi children, we would like to clarify that the crime of kidnapping is a crime, which the government strongly condemns and acts decisively to prevent. The government holds the perpetrators accountable and punishes them with sanctions. I regret to say, it is not committed against a certain group of the Iraqi society but the extraordinary situation that Iraq is going through is being exploited by kidnapping gangs active in some areas of low security and they commit kidnappings in more than one place. Tackling this phenomenon of organised crime is a priority for the Iraqi government to protect all members of society.
5. We have heard with pain the intervention by the representative of Alshabak Democratic Assembly his account of incidents of crimes committed by the terrorist organisation ISIS against Shabak citizens as well as other minorities that have fallen victim to ISIS. While what happened to our Shabak brothers pains us, we do not share the speaker's view that the Iraqi government or the provincial government deliberately neglect or are silent about these crimes, or distribute aid or provide protection camps for the displaced Shabak according to political considerations but rather humanitarian. Our delegation condemns any individual practice of discrimination against the displaced.