

**Statement by Mr. Raffi Gregorian
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Terrorism**

**Side Event “The Global Framework Joint Scoping Exercise in Iraq: Protection, Prosecution,
Rehabilitation, Reintegration” on the margins of the 77th Session of the United Nations
General Assembly**

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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations in New York

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to be with you here today. I would like to express our gratitude to the Republic of Iraq and the Kingdom of the Netherlands for holding this timely event and to the Permanent Mission of Iraq for hosting it.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It has been almost exactly one year since the Global Framework for United Nations Support on Syria/Iraq Third Country National Returnees was launched during the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in a side event which the Republic of Iraq and the Kingdom of the Netherlands also co-organized.

Made up of 15 UN partners, the Global Framework provides “all-of-UN” support to Member States facing challenges associated with nationals who return from conflict zones.

Today, we mark a crucial milestone, demonstrating the continued support by the international community to address this critical challenge and showcase progress in the UN’s response to one of the most urgent and vexing humanitarian, human rights, and security challenges the international community is facing.

It is difficult to overstate the complexity of the task at hand for Iraq: nearly 30,000 Iraqis with varying degrees of association to Da’esh — including as victims and survivors, and others with no willful association at all — who remain in limbo. The humanitarian and security conditions in

which they have been existing since the territorial defeat of Da'esh, already precarious, continue to deteriorate.

To this day, those stranded in camps and held in detention facilities have endured living conditions going from bad to worse, facing escalating violence.

Many lack basic needs and are subject to ongoing violations of their human rights, including intimidation and violent, often lethal, assaults from Da'esh enforcers within the camp population, or as recent events revealed, even *underneath* the camp. The current situation enables impunity for terrorist perpetrators and denies justice to victims, but also incubates short and long-term threats.

Despite these numerous challenges, the Government of Iraq made the commendable and courageous decision to bring home its citizens – suspected foreign terrorist fighters, women, and children. We applaud the Government of Iraq's continued commitment to returning its nationals, which serves as an important example internationally and demonstrates much-needed leadership on the issue.

To support Iraq with this complex endeavor, the United Nations Country Team, under the leadership of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC), with the support of UNOCT and UNICEF as Global Framework co-chairs, conducted a Joint Scoping Exercise (JSE), made possible only by a grant from the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The JSE, which is the foundational step in the implementation of the Global Framework in Iraq, enabled the UN Country Team to work with Iraqi authorities to identify the most critical unmet needs of returnees.

The findings of the JSE identified clear needs to support Iraq's response to the challenges posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters and associated family members.

The JSE also addressed current gaps in the UN response, with the aim of identifying priorities and strategic areas for UN programmatic engagement.

Specifically with regard to security and accountability, the findings identified the need to build capacity for screening and risk assessment for adults and more appropriate assessment processes for children.

The report called for the strengthened protection of human rights at all phases of the criminal justice process, an increased focus on evidence, more support to custodial rehabilitation programmes, and enhanced post-release monitoring, reintegration, and aftercare to prevent recidivism.

UNOCT, together with our partners, looks forward to extending our support to the Government of Iraq, including through a stopgap project to address these urgent needs.

To that end, I am thrilled by today's announcement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands that it will allocate additional funding that will enable the implementation of this stopgap project, without which the important momentum Iraq has built with its returns might otherwise falter.

I hope that other donors listening today will be inspired by the example set by the Netherlands and consider contributing as well, including to the Multi-Partner Trust Fund set up to support the Global Framework.

I also hope that those Member States who are struggling with issues surrounding repatriation will take strength from the example set by Iraq, benefit from its experience, and enlist the support of the Global Framework to help your country meet the challenges associated with returnees from Iraq and Syria.

Excellencies, Colleagues,

We look forward to further deepening our relationship with the Government of Iraq and any other Member State requesting support under the Global Framework.

You can count on the continued support of UNOCT and the entire United Nations system to end the suffering and security risks associated with the status quo.

Thank you.