



Delegation of the European Union to Iraq – European Union Advisory Mission in Iraq

First commemoration of the International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism recently adopted by the United Nations, following an Iraqi-led initiative

Baghdad, 12/02/2023 – Today, 12 February 2023, marks the first commemoration of *the International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism* adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2022, following an Iraqi-led initiative also involving Austria, Belgium, Jordan and Qatar.

Ambassador of the European Union to Iraq Ville Varjola commented: *“The prevention of violent extremism is widely recognised, including in Iraq and in the European Union, as one of the most effective and sustainable responses to global terrorism. The European Union Delegation to Iraq and the European Union Advisory Mission in Iraq (EUAM Iraq) thank the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism for spearheading global efforts to raise awareness and bolster international cooperation in this important matter.”*

Ambassador Varjola added: *“The National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism demonstrates Iraq’s commitment to a comprehensive approach encompassing not only essential security-based counterterrorism measures but also systematic, preventive steps to address the underlying conditions that drive individuals to radicalise and join violent extremist groups.”*

On his part, Anders Wiberg, EUAM Iraq’s Head of Mission, declared: *“At the European Union Advisory Mission in Iraq and the EU Delegation, we are proud of our multifaceted partnership with the Iraqi government and other national stakeholders to promote the implementation of both the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism, and the National Counterterrorism Strategy. In our efforts to reduce the global terrorist threat, we remain firmly committed to further bolstering our partnership with the Iraqi government, civil society, and other national stakeholders to prevent violent extremism. Addressing the root causes of violent extremism in an inclusive, gender-sensitive, whole-of-society approach fully founded on the respect for human rights and the rule of law is in every country’s national security interest.”*

The European Union in collaboration with the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) will hold later in the week an “EU countering violent extremism training” to further exchange experiences and best practices with Iraqi partners, under the patronage of Mr Ilkka Salmi, Brussels-based European Union Counterterrorism Coordinator, and Mr Qasim al-Araji, Iraq’s National Security Advisor.

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