

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the United Nations secretary-general's high-level Panel for an extraordinary work in very difficult circumstances of the COVID 19. We recognize that the publication of report is the result of solid work, and we would like to take advantage of this occasion to express our support and readiness to cooperate in finding durable solutions to end the crisis of IDPs at a global level.

This issue has a humanitarian, economic and social impact which represents an extra burden for any displacement-affected country. We are deeply concerned that the number of people who are forcibly displaced has reached the highest level of around 55 million at the end of 2020 owing to Natural disasters, conflict, persecution, and violence, including terrorism. Unlike refugees, internally displaced people do not have a special status in international law with rights specific to their situation, which requires a more holistic approach to respond to their conditions.

Chairperson:

We took notes of the recommendations, and we highly appreciate the hard work. However, these recommendations in general should not be translated as interference in national sovereignty or prevail the national priority of the state.

Regarding recommendation (1), we highly support the principle of whole-of-government priority, and we would like to draw your attention that the Iraqi government has placed the file of the displaced among its priorities and has harnessed all its capacities and institutions to confront this phenomenon and provide essential aids. As you know, the main cause for the internal displacement in Iraq is the terrorism when ISIS began in 2014 to take over large swaths of territory, triggering mass displacement during the following years, resulting in approximately 6 million Iraqis displaced. After the end of the major military operations against terrorism in 2017, the government carried out good planning through cooperation with stakeholders to successfully contain the crisis and avoid its repercussions. As a result, the number of displaced camps decreased from 126 to 28, reflecting government encouragement and people's resilience. Despite the various challenges facing Iraq, including the impact of the global coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19), the government of Iraq has taken several measures to mitigate the impact of displacement and finding durable and practical solutions.

It is worth mentioning that in April 2021, the Government of Iraq published its National Plan to end Displacement under the auspices of the Ministry of Migration and Displacement and the Ministry of Planning. The National Plan is a significant step that can help the GoI and humanitarian actors to create durable solutions; it

focuses on studying and analyzing the obstacles for returning and finding solutions by identifying the necessary activities and distributing responsibilities among the implementing authorities within a specified timeframe. After that being said, Iraq is ready to share or exchange the acquired experience with all, particularly with displacement-affected countries.

Chairperson:

Now, I would like to comment on recommendation (2) by saying that we do agree that the situations on internal displacement should be addressed through diplomacy with States, particularly to advocate for solutions in which it will strengthen the political will on national and international levels. Therefore, appointing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Solutions to Internal Displacement could ensure predictable engagements on the issue of solutions to internal displacements with displacement-affected states and the UN system.

About strengthen the quality of protection and assistance to IDPs, we believe that humanitarian assistance plays a significant role in saving the lives of millions of people displaced worldwide. This recommendation is achievable through sincere cooperation and coordination between the government and relevant humanitarian organizations. However, we need to follow a careful approach regarding the text. We expressed before our concern on this recommendation (no. 9) in consultation meeting dated on 29th of July before the submission of this report and we reiterate it now regarding the mechanism in applying this recommendation. We call again to work collectively with the concerned countries to address the concerns of Member States in terms of national sovereignty, and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs.

Further, I believe that the report and recommendations will receive different reactions or inputs from member states. Thus we suggest documenting the interventions and responses to the report in this and upcoming meetings.

Finally, we invite the Panel to have more consultation with Iraq regarding this case, primarily since Iraq is represented neither in the SG's high-level Panel on displacement nor in its advisory group. Iraq has affirmed on many occasions the necessity of having balanced geographical distribution in any committee. Therefore, whatever the plans, mechanism for the way forward in advancing this report, we call on further consultation and better representation for the countries impacted by internal displacement in the upcoming mechanism of the SG's high-level Panel.