



Ambassador Abdul-Karim HASHIM MOSTAFA remarks

2025 World Humanitarian Day

Tuesday, 19 August 2025 at 4 p.m.
Outside Room XX, E Building, 3rd Floor, Door 40
Palais des Nations, Geneva

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

On the 19th of August each year, Iraq solemnly recalls a tragedy engraved in our national memory and in the collective conscience of the international community — the terrorist attack on the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad in 2003. This heinous act claimed the life of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Sergio de Mello, along with a number of dedicated humanitarian workers. It was a direct assault on the mission of the United Nations. Yet it also strengthened the international community's resolve to protect humanitarian personnel wherever they serve.

Six years later, on the 19th of August 2009, Iraq endured another devastating terrorist attack on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Baghdad, which took the lives of 47 of our cherished colleagues and injured nearly 600 others. We pay heartfelt tribute to the resilience of our colleagues, who returned to their duties with renewed determination — manifesting our nation's resolve to resist forces of darkness and to deny violence in our society.

Today, as Iraq advances along its path toward peace and sustainable development, we place humanitarian action — and the safeguarding of humanitarian personnel, at the top of our priorities.





The statistics from recent years reveal the grave dangers faced by humanitarian personnel. In 2024 alone, 377 lost their lives worldwide, and since the beginning of this year, 24 more have perished, most of them in conflict zones such as Gaza and Sudan, bringing the total to more than 400 lives lost in less than two years — the highest toll in recent memory. Beyond these tragic figures lies a deeper reality: persistent challenges — restrictions, harassment, and unfounded accusations — faced by humanitarian organizations such as UNRWA in Palestine under the policies of the occupying power.

These are not only numbers. They are stories of lives devoted — and ultimately sacrificed — in service to the highest ideals; of families mourning beloved sons and daughters; of communities deprived of compassion in their most desperate hours. They are a call to conscience—urging us to strengthen protection mechanisms, hold accountable those who violate international humanitarian law, ensure accountability for perpetrators, and guarantee that humanitarian assistance reaches those in need safely, swiftly, and with dignity.

On this World Humanitarian Day, Iraq stands in full solidarity with all humanitarian workers. We salute their courage and dedication, and we pledge our full support to all international efforts aimed at safeguarding their lives and enabling them to carry out their noble mission.

May the souls of the martyrs of humanitarian service rest in peace. And may the values of compassion and solidarity continue to guide us to build a more humane and peaceful world.

Thank you

