**UPR34 – IRAQ**

**STATEMENT BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

The Czech Republic welcomes the delegation of Iraq. We appreciate Iraq’s detailed presentation as well as its national report. The Czech Republic acknowledges the serious security and terrorism challenges faced by Iraq while emphasizing that these must be tackled in accordance with international human rights law. We welcome Iraq’s cooperation with Special Procedures and progress made since the last UPR in some areas such as the drafting of a national human rights plan. However, we are concerned about the recent outburst of violence during demonstrations and the reported use of excessive force against protestors that resulted in a high number of deaths and injuries.

The Czech Republic makes the following **recommendations** to Iraq:

* First, to facilitate the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and protect protesters, including by ensuring that only security forces trained in the proper management of assemblies are deployed and that these are held accountable for any use of excessive force against protestors;
* Second, to step up the efforts in combating impunity for acts of torture, including by ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OP-CAT) and ensuring that all confessions obtained through torture are inadmissible in court;
* Third, to stem and prevent, in law and in practice, violence against women, gender-based violence and discrimination by, inter alia, passing a comprehensive law combating domestic violence;
* And finally, to bolster accountability for the gravest crimes by acceding to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Thank you.