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## **IRAQ'S PRESIDENT CALLS FOR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO INVESTIGATE IS CRIMES**

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BAGHDAD

Iraq's President Barham Salih on Monday affirmed the necessity of documenting the Islamic State (IS) crimes while condemning the extremist group of committing crimes against Iraqis.

Salih's comments came during his meeting with UN Special Adviser and Head of the Investigative Team for the Accountability of IS (UNITAD) Karim Khan, during which he asserted the importance of taking those involved in crimes against Iraqis to international courts.

"Iraqis of all sects have suffered from the oppression and violence of the terrorist organization," a statement from the Iraqi presidency quoted Salih as saying.

According to the statement, Salih asserted the need of joint efforts and keen cooperation to "ensure reliable and comprehensive investigations that meet international standards in order to identify the IS elements who are the most responsible for the crimes and subject them to trial."

For his part, Khan demonstrated the efforts of UNITAD investigating and documenting IS crimes against Iraqis and said that they were communicating with survivors and other civil society organizations for this purpose.

During the meeting, Khan also said that "there are many necessary measures being taken to address what had happened, noting that the participation of various United Nations organizations and the international community will continue to be the most vital in this regard."

In December 2017, Iraq declared full liberation from the IS after the security forces and the paramilitary Hashd Shaabi units, backed by the anti-IS international coalition, recaptured all areas once seized by the extremist group.

However, IS remnants have since melted in urban areas or resorted to deserts and rugged areas as safe havens, carrying out guerilla attacks from time to time against the security forces and civilians.

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