

**Mr. Alhakim** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to congratulate the Kingdom of Spain on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month and to wish it every success in carrying out its duties. I should like also to thank the Russian Federation for its outstanding presidency of the Council last month.

I wish to express my gratitude for the opportunity provided us to deliver a statement on this important issue, especially given the difficulties facing women in general and Iraqi women in particular in the face of the escalating waves of terrorism that our country sweeping through our country.

I congratulate Spain on the work it did in connection with the adoption of resolution 2242 (2015) this morning. The constitutional and legal empowerment of women will not lead to any fruitful results unless we condemn all fatwas that permit the enslavement and forced marriage of women and girls, the terrorist attacks that we have been witnessing, and the acts of aggression committed in Iraq by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). There have been innumerable attacks against civilians of all factions, all of which has undermined the peaceful coexistence, sustainability and stability that have characterized Iraqi society for decades.

The strengthening of the rule of law is essential to the economic empowerment of women and their participation in decision-making processes. Iraq has established four courts on domestic violence and family affairs. Concerning the legal framework for women's empowerment, the Iraqi Constitution has given Iraqi women married to non-Iraqis the right to Iraqi citizenship for their children, on the basis of article 18 bis of the Constitution. Women also have the right to participate in decision-making mechanisms and in fact constitute one fourth of the members of the Iraqi Parliament.

I take this opportunity to urge the international community to liberate the women captured by ISIL, who are daily subjected to systematic sexual violence. I also call on States and the relevant international organizations to provide medical and psychological treatment for sexually abused women, to rehabilitate them psychologically and socially, and to provide them with the education necessary to ensure their integration into society, so that they can reassume their important role in society and contribute to its rebuilding.