

**Permanent Mission of India  
New York**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

Today, the Permanent Representative of India to the UN in New York H.E Ambassador T.S Tirumurti handed over India's voluntary financial contribution to Ms. Myriam Fillaud, Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD).

The contribution, which amounts to USD 200,000, has been provided to support the following two areas of UNITAD's investigations:

- a) Development and use of chemical and biological weapons by ISIL
- b) ISIL crimes against cultural heritage in Iraq

**Development and use of chemical and biological weapons by ISIL**

Firmly condemning the use of chemical and biological weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, under any circumstances, India has supported UNITAD's investigation into the development and use of chemical and biological weapons by ISIL in Iraq. **India's contribution will enable finalisation of initial case briefs in relation to the development and use of chemical and biological weapons by ISIL.** India has been highlighting the serious threat to international peace and security emanating from the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorist groups through an annual consensus resolution tabled in the UN General Assembly, since 2002, on "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction".

**Investigating ISIL crimes against cultural heritage**

ISIL's destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq is widely known. In its preliminary investigations, UNITAD has identified a number of crimes against cultural heritage committed by ISIL, including destruction of shrines and culturally significant sites of the Yazidi, Kak'ai, Shabak and Turkmen communities. Creation of specialized and dedicated capacities within UNITAD will strengthen its investigations into ISIL attacks against cultural heritage and enable prosecutions for such crimes. **India's contribution will help UNITAD will establish a dedicated Cultural Heritage Crimes Unit and facilitate the prosecution of those responsible for attacks on places of religious and cultural significance in Iraq.** From the Buddhas of Bamiyan to the cultural treasures of Timbuktu, India has strongly condemned the destruction of heritage sites and places of immense cultural value to entire humankind by terrorist groups.

India attaches great importance to the mandate and the work carried out by the UNITAD in helping the Iraqi authorities and other law enforcement authorities worldwide bring ISIL perpetrators to justice. The credibility of the international community's collective fight against terrorism can be strengthened only when accountability for the grave and inhuman acts of terror committed by terrorists and terrorist groups can be ensured.

**April 12, 2022**