



www.womenforjustice.net

@WomenforJustic3

info.womenforjustice@gmail.com

To

Foreign Affairs Committee

Parliament of Denmark

Accountability for Genocide against Yazidis from Sinjar/ Iraq

Support for Yazidis to overcome Genocide

Who we are

Women for Justice is an association of, by and for women. We found our association after the beginning of the genocide against Yazidis in Sinjar (Iraq), starting with the attacks of the so-called Islamic State on 3 August 2014. Women for Justice has working teams in Sinjar (Iraq), Northern Syria (Rojava), Southeast of Turkey and Germany. Our female professionals care of esp. female Yazidi survivors who were enslaved by the so-called Islamic State as they suffered most.

An ongoing Genocide

With the beginning of Yazidi Genocide, almost 400.000 people became within a few hours IDPs and many of them later refugees. 6.000 women and children were enslaved, raped and sold on slave markets in Raqqa (Syria) and Mosul (Iraq). It is an ongoing genocide: Still 3.000 women are in IS captivity, there is a big trauma within the community, no certain rebuilding in Sinjar area because of political reasons, and children born as a result of rape are not accepted in Iraq and Syria.

Situation today in Sinjar & needs of Yazidis to survive

In the meanwhile, 100.000 people moved back to Sinjar, but most are still afraid. There are several reasons. The Islamic State is active again in the region in Iraq and Syria, like by sleeper cells. These attacks are documented by different NGOs and institutions in the field. Also, people in Sinjar say that the Turkish air strikes are the biggest security problem today. Due to these attacks many people don't move back to Sinjar. By IS destroyed infrastructure is a big problem. There is almost no health care in the region; people have to drive hours to get to a

proper hospital. There is no women`s care hospital, no birth center and no mobile hospital ward for women. A women`s shelter is urgently needed to create a safe place for women who experience violence today in their family; which is also a trauma outcome of genocide. The people in Sinjar struggle for self-determination, by demanding e.g. to elect the governor or at least the mayor of Sinjar, but Bagdad and Erbil don`t listen to them and signed an own agreement on Sinjar without involving Yazidis. This agreement is a big item of protests in the field. Until today, there was only one legal case in Iraq and a few in Europe dealing with suspected IS members who were accused of committed crimes against Yazidis. Efforts to create an international tribunal in Kobane (Rojava) against IS had to be stopped because of the beginning of Turkish attack on Rojava Region. Yazidis trust international approaches, and do not really trust regional and national levels because of their experience. After having been evidently defeated in Iraq and Syria, thousands of IS members are ducked and expected to stay today in Turkey and the Middle East. For instance, again a few weeks ago a new case of trying to sell an enslaved Yazidi girl who was only 7 years old became public in Turkey.

How Denmark could support Yazidis and Sinjar area

Denmark could take steps to prevent ongoing genocide and to support Yazidis.

- a) Denmark could support efforts to track down and return abducted Yazidis.
- b) Denmark could support services directed at the rehabilitation and treatment of Yazidis – a high percentage is suffering post-trauma stress disorder.
- c) Denmark could support the training of and capacity building of Iraqi, including Yazidi security forces that may serve to protect Yazidis from future attacks.
- d) Denmark could support initiatives directed at the care, education and rehabilitation of Yazidis children born in captivity and rejected by the communities and/or orphaned as a result of genocide.
- e) Denmark could remind on 3 August Yazidi Genocide.

Need of legal Justice and what Denmark could do

IS, its ideology and the committed crimes, named crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide crime are a threat not only for Yazidis but also for the world as a whole. The Yazidi case is the first genocide in the 21st century and the brute violence, esp. enslavement of women and mass killings, committed by means of violence.

Many states, parliamentary bodies and international institutions have recognized the attacks and ongoing violence by IS against Yazidis as Genocide. These include UNITAD, the US House of Representatives, the Scottish Parliament, the European Parliament and both houses of the French legislature.¹

¹Yazda Global Yazidi Organization, (undated), 'Genocide Recognition', Lincoln, NE: Yazda, available at <https://www.yazda.org/genocide-recognition>, (last accessed 22 October 2020).

In all the circumstances, given the broad acknowledgement within the international community that the Yazidis have been victims of genocide, the relevant countries in the region have clearly failed to discharge their duty to punish. Member states of the EU could take urgent steps to recognize the Genocide and achieve the trials against the perpetrators and their supporters.

Denmark can play an important role in preventing the ongoing genocide against the Yazidis. Denmark authorities could:

- Officially recognize that the attacks against Yazidis constitute genocide and that the genocide is ongoing.
- Call upon all states to comply with obligations to prevent genocide.
- Ensure and support steps are taken to ensure accountability for genocide committed against the Yazidis.
- Could ensure to collect the evidences in the region including mass graves.
- Could bring up the urgent necessity of transitional justice for survivors and trials against the perpetrators.

Could we please kindly ask you to forward the relevant questions you may have.

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. Leyla Ferman

Chair

June 2021