



# WE CANNOT RETURN

Part 1: Collapsed security threatens the future of Yazidis & minorities in Sinjar

September 21, 2022



“We cannot return to our homeland,” declared Yazidi survivor, human rights activist, and Yazda Yazidi Survivors Network member Zena Haji at the Seventh Annual Commemoration of the Yazidi Genocide on August 3, 2021.

An elderly man – and survivor of *Da’esh* – walks past a destroyed home in his hometown in the village of Hardan in the north of Sinjar on June 30, 2021. The home was occupied and taken over by *Da’esh* as their headquarters in the center of the village. It was later bombed and destroyed in an air raid by the Turkish Air Forces.

Photo credit © 2021 by Yazda Organization



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# Glossary of terms

**Gol:** Government of Iraq

**HPE:** Protection Force of Êzîdxan

**IDP:** Internally Displaced Person

**KDP:** Kurdistan Democratic Party

**KRG:** Kurdistan Regional Government

**KRI:** Kurdistan Region of Iraq

**PKK:** Kurdistan Workers' Party

**PMF:** People's Mobilization Forces

**PUK:** Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

**UNAMI:** United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

**UNITAD:** Investigative Team to Promote Accountability  
for Crimes Committed by *Da'esh* / ISIL

**YBS:** Sinjar Resistance Units

**YPJ:** Women's Protection Units

**YSN:** Yazidi Survivor Network



## About Yazda

[www.yazda.org](http://www.yazda.org)

Yazda is a global community-led institution that protects and champions all religious and ethnic minority communities, including Assyrians, Chaldeans, Kakais, Shabak, Yazidis, other ethno-religious minorities in Iraq, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and Syria. Yazda was founded in 2014 at the onset of the Yazidi Genocide and crimes against humanity towards minority groups perpetuated by *Da'esh*.

Yazda is the lead advocacy organization for Yazidi and minority communities in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). Advocacy commitments include legally advocating for survivors to achieve justice in courts of law; documenting community-led evidence of genocide; driving genocide awareness and recognition through the Yazidi Survivor Network (YSN); and ending child militarization. The organization serves as the conveners of the official annual commemoration efforts of the Yazidi Genocide, with the patronage of Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi in 2021 and Iraqi President Barham Salih in 2020.

Yazda leads a portfolio of strategic humanitarian and community development projects for minority groups in Dohuk, Sinjar, and the Nineveh Plains, as well as global Yazidi diaspora hubs. Commitments include mobile health clinics; intangible cultural assets preservation; sustainable livelihood development; and securing safe and sustainable return to Sinjar.

The Yazda teams work together with global partners, including United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by *Da'esh* / ISIL (UNITAD), International Organization for Migration (IOM), donor governments, the Iraqi and Kurdistan Regional Governments, and community-based organizations. ◀



# Letter to readers

September 21, 2022

Dear friends of the Yazidi Cause and minorities in Sinjar,

Minority communities in Sinjar are still living every day the pervasive long-term effects of genocide and war crimes committed by *Da'esh* in Sinjar, with the breakdown of security, threatened sovereignty, and fragile rule of law blocking any return home.

This position paper represents a two-part policy paper series detailing critical challenges that require urgent multi-stakeholder action. The featured priorities and recommendations have been written to serve as an actionable policy manual during the formation period of the new Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government under Prime Minister Masrour Barzani. The Parliament of Iraq and the Parliament of Kurdistan both have the critical responsibility of enabling rule and enforcement of law. The international community, especially humanitarian agencies and donor partners to communities in Sinjar, are necessary drivers to bring accountability to policy and action. To ensure transparent self-determination and diverse representation of all communities that call Sinjar home, it is instrumental that any new policies, legislation, and actionable decisions be made with the direct and regular consultation of all minority groups.

Specifically, this paper presents and recommends immediate solutions to strengthening security in Sinjar. Until security is resolved, socio-economic recovery and development in Sinjar is significantly challenged. Minority communities continue to serve their life terms in internally displaced person (IDP) camps with hundreds of others who have quit on both Iraq and the Kurdistan Region. Sinjar is being left behind.

We count on the goodwill and agility of all friends of minorities and communities to close this insecure chapter for Sinjar together.

With our deepest respects,



Ahmed Khudida Burjus  
Director  
Yazda Organization



Lynn Zovighian  
Co-founder & Managing Director  
The Zovighian Partnership







# Background

On August 3, 2014, *Da'esh* attacked Sinjar, launching a campaign of genocide and crimes against humanity against minority communities in the Kurdistan Region and Iraq, murdering 1,298 Yazidis on the first day of their invasion.<sup>1</sup> 6,417 Yazidis were kidnapped.<sup>2</sup> Women and girls were sold into sexual slavery. Young Yazidi boys were captured and forced into re-education camps and ideological schooling.<sup>3</sup> *Da'esh* militants also targeted Assyrians, Chaldeans, Shabak, Syriacs, and other ethno-religious minorities with rape, murder, torture, forced conversion, and mass displacement.<sup>4</sup> Villages were pillaged and 6,000 houses were burned and/or destroyed.<sup>5</sup> More than eight years later, and 200,000 Yazidis remain internally displaced.<sup>6</sup> Hundreds of thousands of people across all minority communities have left, seeking asylum around the world. 2,760 Yazidi women and children are still missing and unaccounted for.<sup>7</sup> All are unable to return to their ancestral lands in Sinjar.<sup>8</sup>

Rates of Yazidis returning to Sinjar have varied over the past few years, but have significantly dropped most recently. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix reported that 8,488 families returned to Sinjar and Al-Ba'aj districts between June 8, 2020 and January 3, 2021.<sup>9</sup> However, 472 families have been re-displaced and have returned to the IDP camps in July 2021 alone, citing the inability to live in a destabilized and insecure environment with neither access to trusted services and housing, nor perceived prospects for a better future.<sup>10</sup>

Safety and stability remain dangerously compromised due to the chronic and growing presence of armed groups and militias. The threat of *Da'esh* cells and continued fundamentalist ideology in Sinjar remains pervasive.<sup>11</sup> Today, there are at least 11 armed groups representing different internal and external entities that control different areas of Sinjar.<sup>12</sup> These include the Iraqi army, Iraqi police, Peshmerga of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), the KDP-aligned HPE of Haider Shesho, the Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF; also referred to as the PMU), as well as two Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)-aligned groups comprised of Yazidis, Sinjar Resistance Units (YBS), and the Exidhan Asayish. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) also continues to

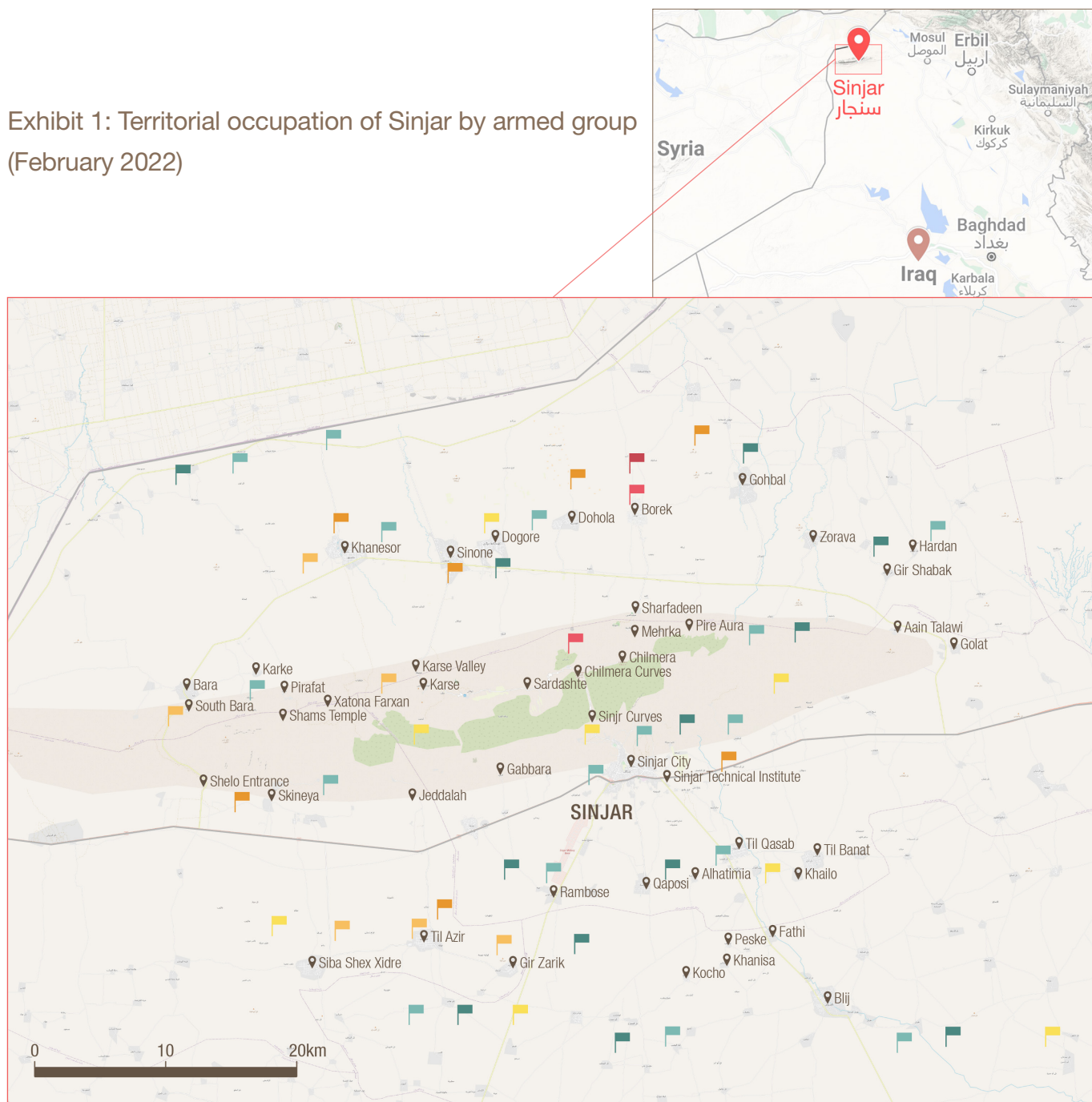
carry out demining operations in Sinjar, as explosive remnants of war (ERW) still pose a threat to Sinjaris.<sup>13</sup>

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) became a prominent player in Sinjar through the fight against *Da'esh*, and integrated Yazidi fighters under the YBS. The Government of Iraq provides financial support to the YBS, covering the salaries of several of their effectives. Often portrayed as a tool of the PKK, the YBS denies any ongoing affiliation.<sup>14</sup> The membership of Yazidis from Sinjar in the YBS makes their departure from the region implausible, given their strong socio-political support from residents of Sinjar.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan justified Turkish airstrikes and threatened a ground offensive when he publicly stated that he will not allow Sinjar to become a "new Qandil," or area controlled by the PKK.<sup>15</sup> Turkey regularly enters Iraqi air space and bombs Sinjar, citing the threat of the PKK. Turkish Air Forces conducted eight strikes in 2020 and claimed to hit 81 targets in a single day.<sup>16</sup> In February 2022, the Turkey conducted over 20 airstrikes in Sinjar, targeting five YBS positions.<sup>17</sup> It is estimated that 60% of these persistent attacks from Turkey resulted in civilian casualties.<sup>18</sup> In June, one of these strikes in Sinjar killed a 12-year-old Yazidi boy and wounded his brothers while in their father's shop. Another strike at a tourist resort in Zakho in July killed at least eight civilians and wounded twenty more, causing diplomatic tension between Iraq and Turkey and drawing international condemnation.<sup>19</sup> Villages and infrastructure have been seriously damaged with no budgets and plans for reconstruction. These incidents only contribute towards sowing increasing fear and insecurity among traumatized Yazidi civilians and members of other minority communities.














Sinjar is among 14 disputed territories claimed by Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional of Iraq. On October 9, 2020, the GoI and KRG signed the Sinjar Agreement under the supervision of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to address the complicated situation in Sinjar.<sup>20</sup> The Agreement includes the selection of a new mayor, the removal of all non-state armed factions, the appointment of 2,500 Sinjar community members to the Internal Security Forces, and an end to all PKK presence in the area. Minority groups from Sinjar were neither consulted in the drafting nor signing of the Agreement.<sup>21</sup> Implementation of the Sinjar Agreement has so far not been activated. Comprehensive and trusted security is a key pre-requisite to any socio-economic recovery in Sinjar. ◀

Exhibit 1: Territorial occupation of Sinjar by armed group (February 2022)



Sources: *The coming Sinjar war*; Murad Ismael cartographic analysis

### Legend

-  Villages, towns, & community landmarks
-  Mountains
-  Vegetation areas
-  Highways
-  Roads
-  District borders
-  Iraqi army & Iraqi National Security Services
-  Iraqi police
-  PMF (Popular Mobilisation Forces)
-  YBS (Sinjar Resistance Units)
-  *Exidxan Asayish*
-  *Qasim Shesho Peshmarga*
-  *HPÊ of Haider Shesho*



## **Key policy priorities & recommendations: Strengthen security in Sinjar**

Albeit the loss of widespread territorial holdings of *Da'esh* by end of 2017, Sinjar continues to be a militarized conflict zone. As such, it is premature for policies, rule of law reforms, and socio-economic recovery and development plans to treat Sinjar as a post-conflict environment.

The chronic absence of basic security is not just a significant detriment to the safe and sustainable return of displaced families. The deprived state of security and consequential fragile rule of law critically endangers the lives of families who have risked returning to Sinjar, has forced many to be re-displaced back to IDP camps, and offers little foundational basis for any deliberations on the future of over 250,000 citizens still displaced in abhorrent camp conditions. In other words, Sinjar is still gravely dangerous more than seven years since the genocide and acts against humanity by *Da'esh* began on August 3, 2014.

**...it is premature for policies, rule of law reforms, and socio-economic recovery and development plans to treat Sinjar as a post-conflict environment.**

Today, security threats and destabilization by armed groups are affecting local populations and inhibiting any means for rebuilding and recovery. Especially, the multiplicity of independently funded and motivated non-state actors taking rule of law into their own hands means:

#### On humanitarian response:

- Humanitarian actors, service providers, social workers, and program coordinators in humanitarian, development, and conflict resolution programs cannot safely and consistently serve communities with the highest standards and practices;
- Humanitarian goods cannot be safely sourced, distributed, and stored;
- Mobile medical clinics and medical professionals cannot move freely and consistently serve their patients;

**Today, security threats and destabilization by armed groups are affecting local populations and inhibiting any means for rebuilding and recovery.**

#### On justice:

- Mass graves cannot be safely exhumed in a protected and controlled forensic environment;
- Genocide evidence gathering and documentation cannot be collected safely in a controlled environment to ensure full data validity;

#### On law enforcement and government affairs:

- Local police and law enforcement forces cannot assume untampered and comprehensive control and oversight over all areas of Sinjar;

- Local government bodies like municipalities and localized public administration services cannot enable organized civil life and order for citizens;
- The Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government cannot assuredly earmark and disburse strategic public budgets to Sinjar for reconstruction, recovery, and re-development;

### On infrastructure:

- Roads, highways, and bridges cannot be deemed safe and dependable for travel;
- De-mining operations cannot be comprehensively planned for and funded;

### On strategic development:

- Villages and towns cannot be rebuilt with incentives and services to encourage historic residents to return and rebuild their lives in Sinjar;
- Villages and towns cannot establish a baseline for socio-economic development opportunities nor even ascertain basic local trade with the safe movement of goods for local populations to grow and thrive;
- Agricultural plots cannot be invested in for land preparation, harvest, and domestic socio-economic development, nor can agricultural produce and goods be guaranteed safe transport and storage;
- Investors, philanthropists, and institutional donors cannot be galvanized and encouraged to strategically and sustainably support and invest in Sinjar;

## On geopolitics:

- Turkey may continue to conduct airstrikes on local towns and villages with the geopolitical excuse that the presence of armed bodies compromises geopolitical and border safety; and
- Sovereignty remains critically compromised, affording political stakeholders the cover to not commit to Sinjar and the many communities that call Sinjar home.

Securing security in Sinjar is indispensable and must be treated with sensitivity, urgency, and multi-stakeholder accountability. Until security is enabled and institutionalized in Sinjar as a basic human right and dependable service the local population can count on, families have no – indeed, no – mechanisms for a safe and sustainable return to their ancestral homes.

As such, the below recommendations are addressed to the Government of Iraq, Kurdistan Regional Government, and international diplomats and agencies to re-establish security, and ensure rule of law, safety, and the enablement of Sinjar. They require the high participation and deep inclusion of all communities to assure self-determination and survivor-centricity in all decisions, mandates, and actions:

- 1** Re-visit the tenets of the Sinjar Agreement and set clear deadlines to strengthen its proposed mechanisms for sovereignty, security, and safety and comprehensively implement an authoritative and trusted community-inclusive security mandate with no further delay;
- 2** Allocate long-term budgets and activate programing for the capacity-building of local law enforcement bodies under the governmental mandates of the Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government, with recruiting mechanisms for local communities, including

women, to serve and receive training;

- 3** Close all non-state checkpoints, establish official state checkpoints only, and deploy trained and long-term funded local law enforcers to guarantee the safe and trusted movement of goods, aid, humanitarian workers, public servants, and communities;
- 4** Establish and fund a multi-stakeholder taskforce for Sinjar with seats allocated to community-appointed representatives for every local affected community, and the Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government, with an independent mediator and secretariat to ensure that security monitoring, decisions, and geopolitical stakeholder engagement include the equal voices of all;
- 5** Establish and fund a local communities-led grassroots independent monitoring and oversight body to track, study, document, and address direct and indirect consequences of the breakdown of security and rule of law on the welfare of local inhabitants, such as but not limited to, fueling discrimination, inciting of local and collective violence, and entitling other forms of persecution; and
- 6** Study, reform, and introduce legislation to ensure the constitutional right to safety and protection of citizens in Sinjar ascertained in the laws, policies, and strategic commitments of all stakeholders.

**Securing security in Sinjar is indispensable and must be treated with sensitivity, urgency, and multi-stakeholder accountability.**



All direct and indirect stakeholders have a time-critical responsibility towards Sinjar and its local people. Current development and diplomacy efforts must be bolstered and swiftly shifted to building strategic capacity and scale. Without agile and measurable action, Sinjar will not be given voice, and therefore, not get to meaningfully participate in the long-term recovery and future of Iraq. That scenario is dire and rapidly becoming a reality, leaving no opportunity for all minorities to live freely and safely. The recent events of *Da'esh* in Syria and inability to curtail terrorism and violence in the region make Sinjar even more vulnerable to being forgotten and its people left behind. Community members, global activists and thought leaders, diplomats, international and local NGOs and agencies, and friends of the communities of Sinjar are ready to play a constructive leadership role. They must be empowered – without further delay – to take charge, set the agenda, invite all to the table, and make Sinjar a priority for all. ◀



# Methodology

This paper brings together the very diverse views and perspectives of Yazidi community leaders and members, as well as key international and local stakeholders championing the Yazidi Cause. These voices were documented during a dedicated moderated consultative session and a community-wide leadership roundtable, as well as two annual commemorations on the Yazidi Genocide, between August 2020 and January 2022, all held on Zoom. Contributions and speeches were consulted from a total of 83 unique participants and speakers, including seven Yazidi women survivors, 18 Yazidi community leaders, 13 Iraqi and KRI government officials, 22 international officials and diplomats, eight representatives from international agencies, and 15 activists for minority communities. 41% represent female voices and 59% represent male voices. A literature review of verified and grounded grassroots, local, and international investigative reporting was also conducted. Community and journalistic accounts from the ground during the latest events in Sinjar in between February and June 2022 were also mapped and integrated.

To honor high participatory and community-centered self-determination research design, all raw data was collected using meticulous methodological notetaking, memoing, transcribing, and translating protocols in the English, Arabic, and Kurmanji languages. Open, selective, and axial coding was conducted following the Boyatzis thematic analysis method of qualitative analysis and coding to ensure a comprehensive capture of voice and the diversity of voices. All data collected and coded was presented in a proprietary collected raw data compilation to facilitate strategic analysis.

The insights and analysis presented in this paper examine key findings from a multi-stakeholder perspective, mindful of the urgencies, sensitivities, and extreme need for deep listening and deep collaboration at this time for Sinjar and its people. The writers and contributors engaged in a policy definition process to identify critical policy problematics, priorities, and recommendations that are featured in this paper.

This methodology applies to all papers in this policy series. ◀



# Notes

<sup>1</sup> “The Genocide,” Yazda, n.d., <https://www.yazda.org>

<sup>2</sup> Saad Salloum, “Genocide still haunts Iraq’s Yazidis,” *Al-Monitor*, August 8, 2018, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2018/08/yazidis-genocide-iraq->.

<sup>3</sup> *Legacy of Terror: The Plight of Yazidi Child Survivors of ISIS* (London: Amnesty International, 2020), <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/1299511/download>.

<sup>4</sup> The lack of data on these communities complicates the estimation of atrocities and casualties.

<sup>5</sup> Mohamed Maseer Al Rubai-y, Mayada Daood, Kalaf Haji Hamad et al., *Emerging Land Tenure Issues Among Displaced Yazidis from Sinjar, Iraq* (UN Habitat, 2015), [https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-04/emerging\\_land\\_tenure\\_issues\\_among\\_displaced\\_yazidis\\_from\\_sinjar\\_iraq.pdf](https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-04/emerging_land_tenure_issues_among_displaced_yazidis_from_sinjar_iraq.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> *Humanitarian Situational Report: No. 7* (Kurdistan Regional Government Ministry of Interior Joint Crisis Coordination Centre, August 2021), <https://jcckrg.org/en/article/read/407>.

<sup>7</sup> Ewelina U. Ochab, “The Missing Yazidis Women And Children Must Be Located And Rescued,” *Forbes*, September 25, 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2021/09/25/the-missing-yazidis-women-and-children-must-be-located-and-rescued/?sh=b7a23501697f>.

<sup>8</sup> Fred Strasser, “ISIS-Driven Displacement Remains Key Challenge as Iraq Prepares for Elections,” *United States Institute of Peace*, June 30, 2021, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/06/isis-driven-displacement-remains-key-challenge-iraq-prepares-elections>.

<sup>9</sup> *Displacement and Returns to Sinjar and Al-Ba’aj Districts*, IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, 2020, [https://iraqdtm.iom.int/files/IDP-Movements/20207204657571\\_DTM\\_ET\\_Sinjar\\_Baaj\\_Movements\\_16\\_Jul2020.pdf](https://iraqdtm.iom.int/files/IDP-Movements/20207204657571_DTM_ET_Sinjar_Baaj_Movements_16_Jul2020.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Amy A. Holmes, “As Afghanistan crumbles, Turkey’s airstrikes set up the next disaster,” *The Hill*, August 28, 2021, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/569838-as-afghanistan-crumbles-turkeys-airstrikes-set-up-the-next-disaster>.

<sup>11</sup> “Challenges & Solutions for Administration, Security, Safe Return, and Justice: Voices of the Yazidi Community Challenges & Solutions for Administration, Security, Safe Return, and Justice: Voices of the Yazidi Community,” Yazda, September 9, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> *An Uncertain Future for Yazidis: A Report Marking Three Years of an Ongoing Genocide*, (Yazda, September 2017), [https://irp.cdn-website.com/16670504/files/uploaded/Yazda\\_Publication\\_2017-09\\_Report3YearsOngoingGenocide\\_28062021\\_Download\\_EN\\_vf.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/16670504/files/uploaded/Yazda_Publication_2017-09_Report3YearsOngoingGenocide_28062021_Download_EN_vf.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Pehr Lodhammar, “The Federal Republic of Germany Provides Additional Contribution to UNMAS in Support of the Mine Action Sector in Iraq,” *United Nations Iraq*, February 17, 2022, <https://iraq.un.org/en/172405-federal-republic-germany-provides-additional-contribution-unmas-support-mine-action-sector>.

<sup>14</sup> Henriette Johansen, Kamaran Palani, and Dlawer Ala’Aldeen, *Ninewa Plains and Western Ninewa: Barriers to Return and Community Resilience* (Middle East Research Institute, 2020).

<sup>15</sup> Sibel Ugurlu, “Erdogan says Sinjar will not be ‘new Qandil’ for PKK,” *Anadolu Agency*, October 27, 2016, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/erdogan-says-sinjar-will-not-be-new-qandil-for-pkk/673511>.

<sup>16</sup> 2020 represents the most recent available data. Amy Austin Holmes, Diween Hawezy & Brett Cohen, “Five Years of Airstrikes: Turkish Aggression and International Silence in Sinjar, 2017-2021,” *International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism*, August 2, 2021, <https://www.icsve.org/five-years-of-airstrikes-turkish-aggression-and-international-silence-in-sinjar-2017-2021/>.

<sup>17</sup> *Iraq Report: Country Summary - Issue 164* (International NGO Safety Organisation, 2022).

<sup>18</sup> Ben van der Merwe, "Massacred by Islamic State, Yazidis now face Turkish airstrikes," *The New Statesman*, October 6, 2021, <https://www.newstatesman.com/international-politics/2021/10/massacred-by-islamic-state-yazidis-now-face-turkish-airstrikes>.

<sup>19</sup> "Turkey rejects blame for deadly Iraq shelling," *DW.com*, July 21, 2022, <https://www.dw.com/en/turkey-rejects-blame-for-deadly-iraq-shelling/a-62544187>.

<sup>20</sup> "Text of Sinjar Agreement," *Shafaq News*, October 10, 2020, <https://shafaq.com/en/Iraq-News/Text-of-Sinjar-agreement>.

<sup>21</sup> Hanar Marouf, "The Sinjar agreement has good ideas, but is it a dead end?" *Atlantic Council MENASource*, April 1, 2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/the-sinjar-agreement-has-good-ideas-but-is-it-a-dead-end/>. ◀



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# About The Zovighian Partnership

[www.zovighianpartnership.com](http://www.zovighianpartnership.com)

The Zovighian Partnership is a family-owned social investment platform, established by father and daughter in 2013. Deeply invested in R&D, the venture is committed to delivering ethical, inclusive, and innovative design, research, and prototypes. All commissioned research is scientific with customized deep-listening methodologies that safeguard strong participation and self-determination, all to deliver meaningful and ethical data. The team of researchers, strategists, and analysts serve communities, nation-builders, organizations, and governments, enabling early-stage ideas to already-established impact initiatives, programs, and ventures.

The team and family are re-investing financial, political, and intellectual capital into the ZP Public Office, a growing peace-building impact portfolio for communities and cities in crisis. The ZP Public Office is committed to delivering grounded self-determination methodology, sound governance, and rigorous strategic design to sustainable peace and socio-economic enablement efforts. ◀

## About Wilson Center

[www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org)

The Wilson Center, chartered by Congress in 1968 as the official memorial to President Woodrow Wilson, is the nation's key non-partisan policy forum for tackling global issues through independent research and open dialogue to inform actionable ideas for the policy community. The Wilson Center's Middle East Program serves as a crucial resource for the policymaking community and beyond, providing analyses and research that helps inform U.S. foreign policymaking, stimulates public debate, and expands knowledge about issues in the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. ◀

The main branch of Yazda is registered in the United States as a non-profit organization conducting charitable activities outside the United States under Article 501(c)(3). Yazda is also registered in Iraq, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Australia.



[www.yazda.org](http://www.yazda.org)