

Yezidi Community Calls on Swiss Government to Recognize Yezidi Genocide

12 April 2024

In August 2014, the Islamic State (known as IS, ISIS, ISIL or by its Arabic acronym, *Daesh*) launched its genocidal campaign against the Yezidi community in Sinjar, Iraq. The ensuing attacks, enslavement, and array of associated atrocities and criminal acts have been formally recognized as genocide by the United Nations and numerous governments and legislatures worldwide.

The Yezidi community remains deeply scarred and traumatized by the heinous human rights violations perpetrated from August 2014 onwards, which led to mass displacement and the unresolved fate of thousands of missing civilians nearly a decade later. Yezidi civil society organizations and activists have been unwavering in the pursuit of justice and in efforts to facilitate recovery, rehabilitation, and the implementation of programs aimed at fostering a brighter future for our community.

Recognition and remembrance stand as crucial pillars of this ongoing endeavor. It is imperative that law-abiding states and governments worldwide formally acknowledge the atrocities inflicted upon our people through parliamentary resolutions or governmental decrees. As we approach ten years since the dark days of August 2014, we urgently call upon the Swiss Government and Members of Parliament to issue a formal resolution recognizing the Yezidi Genocide. Such recognition not only honors the memory of the victims but also underscores the international community's commitment to upholding justice and preventing future atrocities.

In August 2023, marking nine years since the Yezidi Genocide, the British Government formally recognized that the Islamic State had perpetrated genocide against the Yezidis.¹ Preceding this, in January 2023, the German Parliament passed its own resolution affirming the genocide.² Earlier recognitions came in 2021 from Belgium and the Netherlands,³ following the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh/ISIL (UNITAD) determination in May 2021 that the Yezidis were victims of genocide.⁴ Numerous other governments and parliaments have already acknowledged the Yezidi Genocide, such as the French, Canadian, and Australian parliaments and the US State Department and House of Representatives.⁵ The Council of Europe and the European Parliament have adopted resolutions

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-acknowledges-acts-of-genocide-committed-by-daesh-against-yazidis>

² <https://www.dw.com/en/german-parliament-recognizes-yazidi-genocide-in-iraq/a-64450334>

³ <https://www.rudaw.net/english/world/07072021>

⁴ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1091662>

⁵ <https://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2016/12/06/01003-20161206ARTFIG00322-le-senat-vote-une-resolution-pour-reconnaitre-le-genocide-des-minorites-d-orient.php> ; <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/conservatives-yazidis-liberal-mccallum-1.3820299> ; <https://www.cnn.com/2016/03/17/politics/us-iraq-syria-genocide/index.html>

recognizing the genocide.⁶ Additionally, there have been three judicial determinations of genocide against Islamic State members.

Furthermore, in Baghdad, the Iraqi Parliament enacted the Yezidi Survivors' Law in March 2021.⁷ This law mandates the Iraqi Government to provide redress and concrete measures for survivor recovery and formally acknowledges the genocide committed by the Islamic State.

Therefore, we respectfully appeal to the Swiss government and parliamentarians to carefully consider this matter and to take all requisite measures to secure formal recognition of the Yezidi Genocide by August 3, 2024. We remain available to provide evidence and testimony. We also hope that once such a recognition has been enacted, we will be able to engage in discussions with you on the ongoing needs of our community in Iraq.

Sincerely,

Bassma Organization (Iraq)
DAK Organization (Iraq)
Eyzidi Organization for Documentation (Iraq)
Ezidi Millennium Organization for Development (Iraq)
Farida Global Organization (Iraq, Germany)
Free Yezidi Foundation (Iraq, USA, Netherlands)
Gazi Organization for Civil Activities (Iraq)
Halat Organization for Relief and Development (Iraq)
Hopemakers Organization for Women (Iraq)
House of Coexistence (Iraq)
Inhalation of Hope Organization (Iraq)
Luftbrücke Irak / Air bridge (Iraq, Germany)
Shingal Engineering Organization (Iraq)
Sinjar Academy (Iraq, USA)
Sunrise Organization for Civil Society Development (Iraq)
Tolay Organization (Iraq)
Voice of Ezidis (France)
We Are With You Organization (Iraq)
Yazda (Iraq, USA, multiple countries)
Yazidi Affairs in Germany (SJA) (Germany)
Yezidi Emergency Support (YES) (United Kingdom)
Youth Bridge Organization (Iraq)
Zentralrat der Êzîden in Deutschland (Germany)

For more information, please email info@freeyezidi.org. Your enquiries will be shared with all organizational signatories.

⁶ <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=22482&lang=en> ;
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2016-0051_EN.html

⁷ <https://c4jr.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Yazidi-Female-Survivors-Law-March-24-2021.pdf>