



December 19, 2016

HE Fareed Yasseen
Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq
to the United States of America

Re: *The Genocidal Acts of ISIS in Iraq and How to Mobilize the International Community to Assist Iraq and End this Genocide.*

Dear Ambassador Yasseen:

By way of introduction, the American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ) is an organization dedicated to the defense of constitutional liberties secured by law. ACLJ attorneys have argued before the Supreme Court of the United States in a number of significant cases involving the freedoms of speech and religion. The ACLJ and its international affiliates are also dedicated to defending human rights around the world and its affiliate, the European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), has held Special Consultative Status as an NGO before the United Nations/ECOSOC since 2007.¹ The ECLJ has submitted both written and oral statements to United Nations bodies on the evils of the Islamic State genocide.

The purpose of this correspondence is two-fold. First, we join with Iraqi leaders who have recognized the brutal and savage acts of the Islamic State as acts of genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities. We ask that you publically reaffirm these statements. Second, it is our desire to do all that we can to mobilize the United States and international community to assist the Republic of Iraq in ending this genocide. As such, we welcome your suggestions and insight into how we may best work to help this occur.

¹NGO Branch, U.N. Dep't of Econ. & Soc. Affairs, Consultative Status for the European Centre for Law and Justice (2007), <http://esango.un.org/civilsociety/> (accessed by searching "European Centre: for Law and Justice" in the iCSO Database).



In August 2014, then-Foreign Minister of Iraq Hoshiyar Zebari condemned the Islamic State's atrocious acts and warned of the potential for those violent acts to spread to other countries:

[A]trocities are occurring [in Iraq] because of a group that calls itself the Islamic State. . . .

The massacre of villagers, the abduction of hundreds of women and girls, crucifixions, beheadings, burying victims alive and other horrific acts have driven a torrent of Yazidis, Kurds, Christians and Turkomen, as well as Sunni and Shiite Arabs, from their homes.

. . .

With thousands of Islamic State recruits hailing from Western nations and holding passports from those lands, these violent extremists can return to their home countries without visas to commit similar atrocities. This is why it is so important for all Iraqis and Iraq's neighbors and allies to respond rapidly and effectively to this threat.²

Similarly, in September 2014, President Fuad Masum stated

[ISIL] has transformed from a loose terror network to a state with an army, weapons, revenues and a steady supply of fighters who will stop at nothing to institute a rule from the dark ages....They systematically kill all those who oppose them, expel civilians from their homelands, force non-Muslims to convert or die. They have committed crimes of genocide against the Yazidis and Christians and expelled them from their ancestral homeland.

. . .

Eradicating ISIL is the duty of the whole international community, the fast expansion of their ideology imposes an extra duty on every state that wants to protect its people and its land from this cancer.³

In the two years since these statements were made, the Islamic State has continued to terrorize and target Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq because of their religion and/or ethnicity, committing unspeakable acts that are designed to eradicate people groups: acts of genocide.


²Hoshiyar Zebari: Iraq and the United State Face a Common Enemy in the Islamic State, Embassy of the Republic of Iraq (Aug. 22, 2014), <http://www.iraqembassy.us/in-the-news/hoshiyar-zebari-iraq-and-the-united-states-face-a-common-enemy-in-the-islamic-state> (first published by The Washington Post).

³President Masum: Stopping ISIL a Global Duty, Embassy of the Republic of Iraq (Sept. 24, 2014), <http://www.iraqembassy.us/in-the-news/president-masum-stopping-isil-a-global-duty> (first published by USA Today).

The ACLJ has consistently called upon world leaders to engage this issue and to take the first critical step of recognizing that genocide is occurring. The Islamic State genocide is bigger than any one nation and we believe that action by the international community is necessary in ending the Islamic State genocide against Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq, and we are aware that there is much that can be done.

With this in mind, we respectfully urge you to make whatever demands or submissions necessary to the United Nations to initiate and request the international community to honor its commitments and obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.⁴ Further, we respectfully request that you provide to us any suggestions on ways we may assist Iraq in mobilizing the international community to end the horrific and deadly acts of genocide and aid and protect the victims.

Respectfully submitted,



Jay Alan Sekulow
Chief Counsel



Robert W. Ash
Senior Counsel

⁴Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, art. II, Dec. 9, 1948, 78 U.N.T.S. 277 [hereinafter Genocide Convention].