



16 October 2017

**VIA OVERNIGHT DELIVERY SERVICE**

HE António Guterres  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
United Nations Headquarters  
1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 46<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY, 10017

*RE: The Appointment of a Special Adviser Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2379*

Your Excellency:

By way of introduction, the European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ) is an international not-for-profit law firm located in Strasbourg, France, dedicated to protecting human rights and religious freedom in Europe and around the world. The ECLJ holds Special Consultative Status as an NGO before the United Nations. The ECLJ has submitted both written and oral statements to the United Nations Human Rights Council on the subject of this correspondence. The ECLJ respectfully submits this correspondence on behalf of its members and over 536,000 persons, including persons residing in 147 nations and territories.

On 21 September 2017, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2379 calling for the creation of an Investigative Team headed by a Special Adviser for the purpose of “collecting, preserving, and storing evidence in Iraq of acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by the terrorist group [ISIS] (Da’esh) in Iraq”<sup>1</sup>. Such evidence will then be used to hold Islamic State members “accountable for their crimes in Iraq”<sup>2</sup>.

This is the first crucial step in providing the relief that Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq so desperately need and the justice they deserve. It is also the first crucial step in sending the message that such barbaric behaviour will not be tolerated by the international community. In order to successfully prosecute the perpetrators of genocide, the evidence must first be collected. As we documented previously in our letter to you, members of the Islamic State have killed Christians and Yazidis by the thousands, have enslaved and raped thousands more because of their religion, and have destroyed their places of worship, their homes, and their livelihoods<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>S.C. Res. 2379, ¶ 2 (21 Sept. 2017).

<sup>2</sup>*Id.*

<sup>3</sup>GENOCIDE AGAINST CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS AND IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIANS (9 Mar. 2016), <http://indefenseofchristians.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Genocide-report.pdf>.

In our prior correspondence to your office, which we delivered to you in April 2017, we recognised that the first step to combat genocide is to declare that these atrocities are, in fact, crimes of genocide — and we respectfully urged your office to take all steps necessary to that end. The Security Council has now empowered you to appoint a Special Advisor to collect evidence of the genocide being committed against Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq by ISIS (otherwise known as the Islamic State, IS, ISIL, and Da'esh). This responsibility is of critical importance.

In a thoughtful letter we received from your Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, HE Adama Dieng, dated 12 September 2017, he echoed the importance of collecting and preserving evidence of these atrocities:

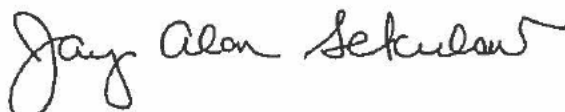
[E]fforts to investigate the facts and to bring perpetrators to justice should be prioritized. The most urgent need at the moment is to ensure that potential evidence is protected and that all efforts are made to ensure the integrity of such evidence. This is a challenge that both Iraqi Government and Kurdistan Regional Government authorities are facing. It is essential that there is a proper assessment of the needs of the Iraqi authorities in this regard, with the view of facilitating any necessary technical assistance required as soon as possible<sup>4</sup>.

We, therefore, respectfully and solemnly urge you to appoint someone who will be relentless and thorough in collecting and detailing the atrocities being carried out against Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq; and to appoint that person swiftly so this critical mission may be accomplished without delay.

The momentum is building to bring justice to the victims of these genocidal atrocities. We have received, and continue to receive, direct responses from key nation-states acknowledging the need for international intervention to stop the ISIS genocide, to help the victims, and to bring the heinous criminals to justice. The Security Council's critical resolution coincides with the understanding and posture taken by your Special Adviser, Adama Dieng, as expressed to us in his recent letter. The time for action is now.

We eagerly anticipate your appointment of a Special Advisor for this critical task. We stand ready to work with the Special Advisor you appoint and to assist in any way possible — including by connecting the Special Advisor and Investigative Team with key partners on the ground in Iraq who are already collecting, documenting, and preserving the required evidence against Islamic State actors.

Respectfully submitted,



Jay Alan Sekulow  
Chief Counsel



Robert W. Ash  
Senior Counsel

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<sup>4</sup>Letter from Adama Dieng, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, to Jay Alan Sekulow & Robert W. Ash, American Center for Law & Justice (12 Sept. 2017), available at <http://media.aclj.org/pdf/LetterFromUN-Re-Genocide-9-12-17.pdf>.