

Ladies and gentlemen present,

Mr. President, members of the presidency, good morning,

In my name and in the name of the Chaldean Syriac Assyrian popular council, we want to thank you for inviting us to convey the suffering of our people and demand its rights to life. We are the owners of the oldest civilization known to man; the Babylonian and Assyrian civilization from the country between the two rivers, which today is called Iraq. About four thousand years ago (1790 B.C.), the Babylonian King Hammurabi laid down the first law recorded in history in Mesopotamia in Babylon. It was a law divided in 282 legal articles addressing all the problems of life, punishing the abuser and compensating the harmed, and regulating the rights and duties of the members of society.

Today, Mr. President, we have become a minority. We, the owners of the epic of Gilgamesh, who was searching for death and immortality, and of the first guitar, whose strings humans played. Has the international community [ever] wondered why we became a minority? Was it really by our own free will or [was it] by the sword, and the exorbitant taxes and tributes, which were imposed on us since the Islamic era? We were oppressed by rulers and the state considered us their personal property, a gift from God, and the rulers commanded in the name of God. The God, in which we believed in is a merciful, and fair God, but we [see] him today as an unjust God [because of] the rulers, who rule in his name. If we believed in God, this would be one of our rights as human beings individually or collectively, but to be judged in the name of God, this is the problem. Do we need to recount the massacres that were committed against our Chaldean Syriac Assyrian people in the name of Jihad?

Do we need to count the massacres that were committed against the Yazidis? If this was the past of Iraq and the region, today we stand in front of the so-called organization of Islamic State “ISIS” and the infidel forces, who want to cling to the past, and spread by all criminal means ideological tyranny under various labels, clinging to a law created one thousand four hundred years ago intended to be imposed on us through killing, displacement, and genocide, as is happening to us today after the fall of Mosul, the Nineveh Plains, and Sinjar after the 10. of June 2014. What distinguishes this phase of the history of our Christian people is the fast attempts by the Islamist extremists to gouge our roots from our historical regions, where we were killed, displaced, uprooted, and our women enslaved.

More than 1086 sons of our Christian people were killed since the sectarian war in Iraq after 2003.

57 of our daughters and sons; 33 of our women and 24 of our men and children were enslaved.

[This i]n addition to the displacement of more than 150 thousand sons of our people from the Nineveh Plains to the Kurdistan region, and more than 25 thousand to the neighbouring countries, Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon, after most of the sons of our people were emptied from all the provinces of Iraq.

After the number of our souls in Iraq in the 1987 census counted one million and 200 thousand in Iraq, meaning 5% of the inhabitants of Iraq, today, after 30 years, we don't exceed 200 thousand of the Iraqi population, which reaches more than 30 million people, meaning 0.05% of the inhabitants of Iraq. This alarming decline is caused by killing, displacement, and operations of demographic change in the regions, as well as by the intimidation the sons of our people faced in Baghdad and the acquisition of their properties and buildings [in the capital] at the cheapest prices. [Another cause is] the operations of appropriation of Christian properties, which take place today. The failure of the Iraqi state to protect its citizens is based mainly on sectarian grounds far away from the respect of human rights and Iraq's commitment on its day of independence to the protection of the rights of minorities in 1932. Iraq as a state also committed to the protection of minority rights of the United Nations' International Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1965, which was adopted in January 1970.

It should be noted that Iraq was one of the first countries in the world to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1966, which was approved by Iraq in January 1971.

We must emphasize that the Article 26 of the International Covenant stipulates the following: "the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status", as well as in Article 27, devoted to the rights of minorities, which Iraq as a country signed, affirms that "In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language". Today, Iraq violates all these articles and texts through its legislative authority, and the Iraqi parliament issued [a law] in November 2015, which makes the conversion to Islam of minors of Christians, Yazidis, and Sabeen Manadean mandatory in case one of the parents converts to Islam, despite them being children.

The resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2007 must be noted and recalled in regards to the rights of native peoples in Article 8/II, which states that states shall put [in place] effective mechanisms to prevent the following:

- A. Any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities;
- B. Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources;

- C. Any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights;
- D. Any form of forced assimilation or integration;
- E. Any form of propaganda designed to promote or incite racial or ethnic discrimination directed against them

These points mentioned above are not applied by Iraq neither in general nor in particular, and it is [also] not committed to the protection of our people as a native people or as citizens. The Iraqi government's has a commitment to their protection, but conversely works on abridging their rights and human values, on confiscating their cultural right and characteristic through legislations, violating the principles of Human Rights and Rights of Minorities.

In view of this, we, the Christian Chaldean Syriac Assyrian people in Iraq, demand from you, the international community and organisations concerned with Human Rights, Rights of Minorities and the protection of native people, the following:

1. Enact the European parliament's resolution issued in March 2015 in regards to the international protection of the regions of the minorities in the Nineveh Plains and Sinjar and [get] its international approval in order to create safe areas of international protection for the regions of Sinjar and the Nineveh Plains in coordination with the governments of Baghdad and Erbil, to guarantee the return of (Yazidis, Shabak and Christians) after the liberation of their regions from the terrorist organization ISIS.
2. Intensify efforts to provide broader humanitarian relief from the United Nations agencies and international organizations.
3. The need to issue an international resolution to consider the regions of the Nineveh Plains and Qada Sinjar disaster areas subjected to ethnic cleansing, genocide. The resolution [shall] include a reference to what obligations are entailed to compensate for all the material and moral losses.
4. The relentless pursuit by all legal means to consider what happened in Sinjar and the Nineveh Plains a genocide and crimes against humanity with intensified efforts to liberate the abducted Yazidis, Christians, and Shabak from the terrorist organization.
5. Demand the repeal of the second paragraph of the Article 26 of the National Identity Card Law, which was approved by the Iraqi Parliament, and dictates the obligation to forcefully convert the sons of non-Muslim minorities to Islam. This contradicts human rights, and international conventions and regulations concerning freedom of belief, expression and opinion.

6. Demand the presence of an international rapporteur to periodically examine Human rights in Iraq, as minorities and human rights in Iraq face flagrant violations by different governmental agencies and organisations.
7. Confirming the report issued by the Economic, Social and Cultural Committee of the UN in its 65th session, held from the 21. September to the 9. October 2015, we demand that the government of Iraq and Kurdistan Iraq to remove all traces of operations of demographic change, and transgressions on the land and property of minorities in the Nineveh Plains, Sinjar, and throughout Iraq.

Geneva, 24. November 2015