

[logo: Alliance of Iraqi Minorities Network]

{transcript of English text: I was planning to speak on the significance of attending to how the contemporary minority rights this course emerges out of a combination of two distinct imperial projects and histories - that of capitulations and indirect rule.]

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Forum on Minority Affairs

16th session

30 October – 1 December 2023

Presentation

Article 3 of the agenda

-Arabic-

Presentation by: Michael Benjamin Dawoud, Alliance of Iraqi Minorities Network/Iraq

Mr. President, thank you for this opportunity.

My name is Michael Benjamin, President of the Alliance of Iraqi Minorities Network, and I am speaking to you on behalf of 28 organisations, among them are representatives of 14 ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

Twenty years ago today Iraq implemented a new constitution recognising the rights of minorities, the most important [part of which] is Article 125.

However, the legislation has remained incomplete, despite the fact that the article concludes with the phrase “that is to be regulated by law”, and despite discussions about it that have lasted two decades and the UPR report in three consecutive sessions included more than 45 recommendations about the article.

The focus of the alliance is based on the text of the article regarding the “administrative, political, cultural, and educational rights” of minorities. This can therefore be a comprehensive law, addressing many of the challenges that threaten Iraqi diversity. The law can recognise most minorities that the constitution does not fundamentally address.

It can also address many of the critical issues facing minorities, including: ongoing demographic changes on their historical territories, their falling victim to internal, territorial and even regional conflicts, putting in place mechanisms to ensure their true and effective participation in public life, opening the door to amendments to academic curricula that reflect diversity and the values of coexistence, and to include procedures to prohibit discrimination against persons belonging to minorities at various levels and basis.

Therefore, we recommend to the Iraqi parliament to enact the “Protection Of Minorities Rights” law based on Article 125 as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your attention.

Address: Iraq, Kurdistan Region, Erbil, Biaban Compound

Website: <https://aim-iq.org>

Phone: +964 7507809005

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