

Mazen Ali

Thank you. My name is Mazen Ali and I speak for the [inaudible] initiative for Kurdistan. I am 19 years old. I left my homeland when I was only 2, and today some of my own family members still face deportation. My generation has grown up with fear, discrimination, and feeling invisible, and we want this to change. Peace cannot be built if Kurdish people are left out. For many years, Kurds have experienced displacement, discrimination, and limits on our cultural rights. Many of these issues still do not have real recognition or accountability. Today, Kurds face challenges, such as censorship, hate, arrests, and economic pressure, including reports of withheld salaries for Kurdish public workers. These realities make trust in any peace process very difficult. In some areas, Kurdish land and olive trees are reported to be taken or destroyed, and new settlements are created by different authorities. This changes the population and harms the chance for real coexistence. In other areas, Kurdish activists continue to be detained or even executed. Justice must protect culture, not punish it. Genocide against Kurds, including the [inaudible] genocide, still lack full recognition and reparations. At the same time, many states deport Kurdish families back to unsafe areas with very little rebuilding. These decisions are very often made without hearing from those affected. Transitional justice must center survivor. As Kurdish youth in the diaspora, we know we have safety, education, and a voice. But as a new organization, we need partners and recognition. Kurds must not be spoken about in their absence. We must be included in the justice process that shapes our future. Thank you.