

CONFERENCE REPORT

ON THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENOCIDE AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

2024

Prepared By:

NORTHERN JUSTICE WATCH

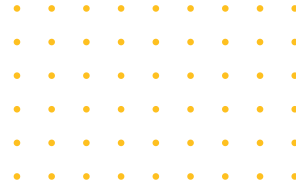
**DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE AND
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Prepared For:

**The Kurdistan Regional
Government**

Hope for Yazidis presents Northern Justice Watch's yearlong mission to aid the Yazidi community. This report details our strategic approach for advocacy, legal support, and humanitarian aid, while focusing on the outcomes of the 2nd International Conference on Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity. The report highlights the insights shared during the conference and outlines our commitment to restoring hope and justice for the Yazidis through global partnerships and dedicated action.

Who We Are



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Fighting Crimes Against Humanity and Seeking Justice for the Victims of Atrocity Crimes

Introduction

On September 16, 2024, the 2nd International Conference on Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity took place at Salahaddin University in Erbil, Kurdistan Region, Iraq. The conference, organized by Northern Justice Watch (NJW) in collaboration with Green Desert and Raba, and supported by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), focused on “Defending Dignity: The International Response to the Yazidi Genocide.” The event convened human rights advocates, government officials, survivors, and scholars to discuss critical topics surrounding the Yazidi genocide perpetrated by ISIS, including victim support, justice, and international collaboration.

The conference was also supported by The Duty Legacy from the UK, Action Human Rights Group, and 9 Yazidi organizations.



Conference Agenda and Speakers

Introduction

The conference featured four key sessions, each with a moderator, and renowned speakers who presented on various aspects related to the Yazidi genocide and crimes against humanity:



Sessions

- Welcome Session
 - Opening Speech: Dr. Dindar Zebari (KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy)
 - Keynote Speakers:
 - Serif Aydin, Dr. Shalaw Abdulhalq, Saed Jardo, and Hadiya Hussein provided introductory remarks, stressing the importance of the conference and its impact on international justice for the Yazidi community.
- Session 1: **Raising Awareness**
 - Moderator: Bahar Ali (Kurdish feminist and human rights activist)
 - Speakers:
 - Nazand Baighany: Focused on how educating the international community about the atrocities of the Yazidi genocide can foster a deeper understanding and empathy for victims.
 - Khiry Bozany: Spoke on the historical context of the Yazidi genocide and the need for continued global recognition of the crimes.
 - Mirza Dinnayi: Emphasized the importance of global awareness in securing justice for survivors and outlined ongoing efforts to support the Yazidi community.
 - Roza Amin Barkat: As a Yazidi survivor, she shared her personal experiences, highlighting the need for greater international efforts to locate missing family members and to support survivors.

Conference Agenda and Speakers



Introduction

Educating the international community about the atrocities committed against the Yazidis to foster deeper understanding and empathy for the victims. Providing a platform for discussions on the many Yazidis who remain unaccounted for, aiming to mobilize efforts to locate and reunite families.



Sessions

- Session 2: **Discussion on Missing Persons**
- Moderator: Khidher Domle (media and peacebuilding expert)
- Speakers:
 - Fawaz Abdulabbas (International Commission on Missing Persons): Discussed the role of DNA-led identification and legal frameworks in addressing the crisis of missing Yazidis and supporting their families.
 - Muhamad Kalary: Addressed the legal and logistical challenges in identifying missing Yazidis and the importance of maintaining accurate records and forensic data.
 - Bojan Gavrilovic (Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights): Presented on the international legal frameworks for addressing enforced disappearances and their impact on survivors.
 - Dr. Jwan Esmaeel Bakir: Focused on the psychological toll on families of missing persons and the importance of mental health support in community rehabilitation.

Conference Agenda and Speakers



Introduction

Exploring effective strategies for supporting the victims, including psychological aid, community rehabilitation, and legal assistance.



Sessions

- Session 3: **Victim Support**
- Moderator: Shayda Hesamy (Director of Humanitarian Aid and Journalism)
- Speakers:
 - Marie Oniwa (UNAMI Senior Women's Protection Adviser): Spoke about the importance of addressing sexual violence in conflict zones and ensuring justice for survivors of such crimes, focusing on the Yazidi experience.
 - Tammy Ames (Canadian Embassy, Erbil): Presented on Canada's efforts in providing trauma-informed medical and legal support for Yazidi women survivors of sexual violence.
 - Mukesh Kapila: Discussed strategies for supporting survivors by emphasizing their resilience and capacity for recovery, and why survivor empowerment should be central to genocide prevention.
 - Tanya Gily Xaylani (SEED Foundation): Addressed gaps in current support systems for Yazidi survivors and proposed more robust solutions for legal, psychological, and rehabilitative services.

Conference Agenda and Speakers



Introduction

Advocating for a coordinated global response to address the aftermath of the genocide, including justice for perpetrators and ongoing support for the Yazidi community.



Sessions

- **Session 4: International Action & Collaboration**
 - Moderator: Krmanj Othman (legal expert and human rights advocate)
 - Speakers:
 - Alex Neve (online, University of Ottawa): Presented on the international legal challenges in holding ISIS accountable for crimes against humanity, including war crimes and genocide.
 - Payam Akhavan (online, University of Toronto): Discussed the potential role of truth commissions in providing justice for Yazidi survivors and promoting healing through restorative justice mechanisms.
 - Steve Young: Focused on Canada's commitment to supporting Yazidi survivors through various resettlement and rehabilitation programs, including the resettlement of 1,200 Yazidi refugees.
 - Rayan Jawher Ebrahim: Discussed regional collaboration efforts and the importance of international partnerships in rebuilding the Yazidi community and securing long-term justice for the victims.
- The conference also included musical performances and networking breaks, offering attendees a chance to reflect on the presentations and engage in meaningful discussions.

Outcomes and Key Insights



Introduction

Key takeaways from the conference include advocating for international cooperation to hold ISIS accountable, providing comprehensive psychological and legal support for survivors, addressing the issue of missing Yazidis, and fostering global partnerships for ongoing support and justice for the Yazidi community.



Outcomes

Key takeaways from the conference include:

- **International Justice and Accountability:** Several speakers, including Alex Neve and Payam Akhavan, emphasized the importance of international cooperation in holding ISIS accountable through legal channels, such as the International Criminal Court.
- **Survivor-Centered Support:** Mukesh Kapila and Marie Oniwa discussed the importance of providing comprehensive support systems that focus on the psychological well-being, legal assistance, and rehabilitation of survivors, particularly women and children.
- **Addressing Missing Persons:** The need to locate and reunite missing Yazidis, many of whom were abducted during the genocide, was a recurring theme. Khidher Domle called for greater international collaboration and resources to address this ongoing issue.
- **Global Collaboration:** The final session emphasized the importance of international partnerships between governments, NGOs, and local organizations to provide sustained support for the Yazidi community.

Impact and Future Steps

Introduction

The conference reinforced the need for continued international efforts to support the Yazidi community through legal action, search and rescue operations, and expanded mental health and rehabilitation services. Future workshops in Düsseldorf and Paris will focus on concrete solutions for finding missing persons, legal support, and mental health.



Future Steps

The conference successfully highlighted the ongoing challenges faced by the Yazidi community while offering tangible solutions for justice and rehabilitation. Several action points were proposed:

- Increased **funding** for search and rescue operations to locate missing Yazidis.
- Continued **legal efforts** to hold ISIS accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity through international courts.
- Expanded **mental health** and **legal assistance** services for survivors, ensuring their holistic recovery and reintegration into society.

*Looking ahead, **Northern Justice Watch (NJW)** will organize three workshops in **Düsseldorf** and **Paris**, focusing on **finding missing people**, **legal efforts**, and **mental health**. These workshops will invite experts from relevant fields to collaborate and create a roadmap with concrete solutions to address the ongoing issues facing the Yazidi community.*

Attendees & Media



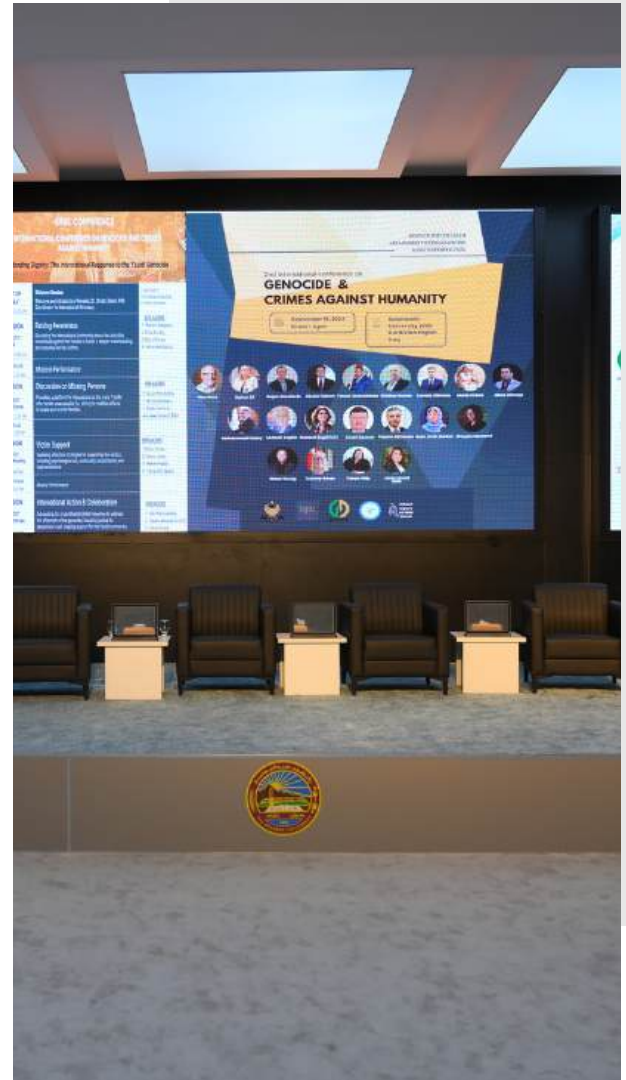
Event Participation:

This year's conference saw 289 attendees, including human rights activists, scholars, survivors, government representatives, and international organizations, all united in their commitment to justice for the Yazidi community.



Media Coverage & Outreach

The conference garnered significant media attention with coverage from Kurdistan TV, Kurdsat TV, Kurdistan 24 TV, KNN TV, Zoom TV, Rudaw TV, Jamawar, and Voice of Kurdistan Radio. These media outlets helped amplify the conference's message, reaching a broader audience across the region and internationally.







Conclusion

The 2nd International Conference on Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity marked a significant step forward in advancing justice for the Yazidi genocide victims. The discussions and collaborations that took place during the event will help shape future efforts in supporting survivors, reuniting families, and holding perpetrators accountable. The collective action of governments, human rights organizations, and international partners will continue to play a critical role in bringing justice and healing to the Yazidi community.

Contact Us :

For more information and to support this initiative, please visit our website at www.northernjusticewatch.org or follow us on social media.

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