

18 January 2023

Dear Prime Minister,

We, the undersigned, call upon you to formally recognise the Daesh atrocities against the Yazidis, Christians and other religious or belief minorities in Syria and Iraq as genocide.

We understand that it is a long-standing policy of the UK Government not to make determinations of genocide but to leave it for competent courts. As flawed as this policy is, and noting it is contrary to duties owed by the UK under the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the Genocide Convention), the UK Government has been standing by it for decades.

On 30 November 2021, a criminal court in Frankfurt, Germany, convicted an Iraqi national for his involvement in genocide, crimes against humanity and other crimes. This was followed by further convictions. On 27 July 2022, the Higher Regional Court of Hamburg convicted German Daesh member Jalda A. of aiding and abetting genocide as well as of crimes against humanity and war crimes for the enslavement and abuse of a young Yazidi woman.

As such, the courts put the evidence of the Daesh atrocities to detailed legal scrutiny, applying relevant international law, and recognised the atrocities as genocide.

A criminal court, in the view of the UK Government, is a competent court to make such a determination. Also, criminal courts in Germany are some of the world's most respected criminal courts to deal with issues of international crimes, particularly under the principle of universal jurisdiction.

Following the findings of genocide by German courts, we call upon the UK Government to formally recognise the atrocities committed against the Yazidis, Christians and other religious or belief minorities in Syria and Iraq as genocide.

We look forward to hearing from you as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely,

**Organisations**

Accountability Unit

A Demand for Action

Coalition for Genocide Response

Free Yezidi Foundation

International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute

Yezidi Emergency Support. (Y.E.S). UK

### **Individuals**

**Aarif Abraham**, barrister, Garden Court North Chambers

**Lord Alton of Liverpool**, Member of the House of Lords

**Andy Bailey**, Director, APPG on Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity

**Peter Burns**, Executive Director, IRF Summit

**Christopher Cocksworth**, Bishop of Coventry

**Andrew Copson**, Chief Executive, Humanists UK

**Rt Hon Baroness D'Souza CMG**, Member of the House of Lords

**Ryan D'Souza**, Curator, 'Nobody's Listening: Forgotten Voices of Sinjar' Virtual Realty Exhibition

**Dr Tatyana Eatwell**, barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

**Emily Foale**, Project Manager, IBAHRI

**Lord Hannay**, Member of the House of Lords

**Mia Hasenson-Gross**, Executive Director, Rene Cassin

**Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**, Member of the House of Lords

**Prof Azeem Ibrahim OBE**, Director, New Lines Institute

**Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws**, Member of the House of Lords, Director of the IBAHRI

**Nadine Maenza**, President, IRF Secretariat

**The Lord McInnes of Kilwinning**, Member of the House of Lords

**Anne Norona**, Founder of Yazidi Emergency Support. (Y.E.S). UK

**Dr Ewelina Ochab**, Programme lawyer, IBAHRI, Coalition for Genocide Response, co-founder

**Brendan O'Hara MP**, Chair of the APPG on the Yazidis

**Kirsten Oswald MP**, Officer of the APPG on International Freedom of Religion or Belief

**Prof. John Packer**, Neuberger-Jesin Professor of International Conflict Resolution and Director, Human Rights Research and Education Centre, University of Ottawa

**Emily Prey**, Director, New Lines Institute

**Benedict Rogers**, Deputy Chairman, Conservative Party Human Rights Commission

**Jim Shannon MP**, Chair of the APPG on International Freedom of Religion or Belief

**Mervyn Thomas CMG**, Founding President, Christian Solidarity Worldwide

**Yasmin Waljee OBE**, Partner, International Pro Bono, Hogan Lovells International LLP

**Dr Aldo Zammit Borda**, Reader in International Law, City, University of London