

Nineveh Plain and Shingal

2019-08-03



Following the taking of the city of Mosul by ISIS in August 2014, the Nineveh Plain and the Shingal region sadly underwent the same fate when, with ISIS in eyesight, Iraqi and Kurdish Peshmerga forces unexpectedly retreated. This led to the massive exodus of our Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian people from the Nineveh Plain and the Yazidi people from Shingal. Christians fled Mosul by the ten-thousands. The Nineveh Plain Christian towns and villages followed shortly after. Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian religious and political leaders, churches, institutions and students were the target of attacks, killings, harassments and kidnappings. Our Yazidi brothers and sisters faced tremendous hardships, violence, kidnappings and sadly even genocide – as by EP resolution – at the brutal hands of ISIS.

The quick and imminent advance of ISIS in Northern Iraq and the taking of the Nineveh Plain and Shingal region marks another grave and dark period for the indigenous Christian and Yazidi people of Iraq. Five years on and the ISIS Caliphate gone, our internally displaced Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian people of the Nineveh Plain and the Yazidi's of Shingal still wait and long for the safe return to their homelands in Iraq to rebuild their houses and lives.

We remember the international community that from the 2003 onwards, our Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian people have been the continuous target of Islamist terror organisations in different parts of Iraq. This caused a significant reduction in our numbers, demographic changes and genocide – as by European Parliament resolution. The rise and fall of ISIS, its entire aftermath and the geopolitical proxy fights in the Middle East, once again represent an existential threat to our people in Iraq.

As European Syriac Union, we continue to work with our partner organisations in Iraq – the Bet-Nahrain Patriotic Union, the Yazidi Exile Council of Sinjar and the Democratic Self-Government Council Sinjar - to demand justice and the fundamental rights of our peoples. Three necessities must be met for our Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian people to survive today in their home country of Iraq: 1) security that we can trust and in which our people have a role; 2) we need direct help to our people with rebuilding our cities and economy; 3) we need a reasonable degree of self-government - fully in line with the Iraqi constitution - to get a familiar framework for our security and governance.

