

# **Appeal of Syriac-Assyrian christian co-leader of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria to the US, EU and global Christian community**

2017-01-26

## **Urgent appeal after many Christians fell in the struggle to liberate Raqqa**

Early January Mr. Sanharib Barsom, a Syriac-Assyrian Christian and Mrs. Fawza Yousuf, a Kurdish woman, have been elected to lead the executive body of the Democratic Self-Administration. The Federation now encompasses 25% of Syria (twice the size of Lebanon) and has several million citizens. This means that a Syriac-Assyrian Christian and a Kurdish woman effectively give leadership to an independent administration of several million people in the heart of the Middle East.

The Federation of Northern Syria started in 2013 as the Democratic Self-Administration that comprised mostly areas in Northern Syria with a Kurdish majority population. From the first beginnings this Self-Administration has been a multi-ethnic and multi-religious cooperation with freedom of religion and fundamental emphasis on the liberation of women. All ethnic and religious groups have been represented in the political bodies of the Self-Administration from the first start. Furthermore women occupied 40% of all political positions.

The Syrian Democratic Forces have been equally mixed in terms of ethnicities and religious groups as well as the participation of women in the armed forces of the Self-Administration. These forces have been the most effective force against ISIS and now cooperate with the US in the operation to liberate Raqqa.

Syriac Christians participated in this political progress ; the Syriac Union Party is a main partner of the Federation of North East Syria. The Syriac Military Council is a constituent member-organisation of the Syrian Democratic Forces.

The Syriac Military Council (MFS) took part in many operations in North East Syria, also in the liberation of Khabur Valley, Tal Abyad, Manbij, Al-Hawl, Shaddade, as well as Sinjar mountain in North Iraq. In the ongoing Raqqa operation the Syriac Military Council (MFS) lost last week 6 freedom fighters, who fought against the barbaric terrorists of ISIS.

In a personal call to the global Christian community Mr. Barsom stated: „I urge all Christians in the world to find ways to support us. Please demand from your government that your government supports us with Humanitarian aid and sends arms and other military support to the Syrian Democratic Forces who have to fight against ISIS. I urge you all to support our young democracy that we as people of Syria build ourselves. The culture of freedom that we realised is the fundamental answer to the fundamental problems of the Middle East and the best guarantee for the long-term existence and freedom of Christians in the Middle East.

We urge the US and the new Trump Administration to include the Syriac-Assyrian Christians in the

support to the SDF and no longer exclude the Syriac Military Council from support. Equally we emphasise the need to support the Kurds and Arabs in the SDF. We do not understand why Syriac-Assyrian Christians and Kurds are so far excluded from military support. We are all Syrians fighting against ISIS. The European Parliament called to support us already at 12 March 2015. With sufficient support it is for example highly likely that we would not have had so many casualties in the Syriac Military Council last week. We cannot defeat ISIS without more support.”

The hope of the Syriac-Assyrian Christians is that the world finally will understand that they have to be treated equally with Kurds and Arabs in political and military terms in both Syria and Iraq in the war against ISIS and the struggle for freedom.