

Bethnahrin Patriotic Union, Yezidi Exile Council of Sinjar and ESU visit Dutch MP Joël Voordewind on Sinjar & the Nineveh Plain

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The multicultural Nineveh province in northern Iraq houses a mosaic of religious-ethnic minorities: Chaldeans-Syriacs-Assyrians, Yezidis, Shab.....

Tuesday 25 June 2019, the Bethnahrin Patriotic Union from Iraq, the Yezidi Exile Council of Sinjar and the ESU, together with [Sallux](#), visited the House of Representatives in The Hague for a meeting with Member of Parliament Joël Voordewind of the ChristenUnie.

Chairman Fikret Igrek from Germany spoke on behalf of the Yezidi Exile Council of Sinjar. President Yousif Yaqoob Matti Danoo from the town of Bartella on the Nineveh Plain in Iraq and his foreign affairs representative Aziz Emanuel Al Zebari represented the Bethnahrin Patriotic Union. The visit follows the sad events of recent years. Mosul was taken over by ISIS in June 2014, after which a huge number of refugees from the Nineveh Plain fled for the Sinjar Mountains, the Kurdish Autonomous Region, Northern Syria and Turkey (and further on to the West). Under her horror, ISIS committed genocide against the Yezidis and non-Muslim minorities. In the [words of the European Parliament resolution \(July 2018\)](#):

"...whereas thousands of Iraqi citizens, including from minority communities, and in particular women and girls, were inhumanly exterminated or enslaved by Daesh in acts of war crimes and crimes against humanity;...; whereas more than 1,5 million Christian Iraqi citizens (Chaldeans, Syriacs, Assyrians and members of other Christian minorities) were living in Iraq in 2003, and whereas they constitute an ancient, native population group which is in serious danger of persecution and exile; whereas millions of Iraqi citizens, including Christians, were forced to flee the violence, either leaving their country completely or being displaced within its borders;

Fikret Igrek and Yousif Yaqoob Matti Danoo, on behalf of their non-Muslim minority, criticized the political attitude of the government in Baghdad and the KDP. The Iraqi government

and KDP use or create local tensions to divide and rule through proxies. The Yezidi Exile Council of Sinjar and the Iraqi Bethnahrin Patriotic Union made a joint Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian and Yezidi plea and asked the ChristenUnie to argue their case with the Dutch government and the EC: help with the reconstruction of houses, cities, churches and infrastructure on the Nineveh Plain so that the hundreds of thousands of Syriacs, Yezidis and other IDPs living in northern Iraq can return to their homes on the Nineveh Plain; more humanitarian aid. There are e.g. not enough doctors and medicines are scares. The current humanitarian aid is insufficient; Rapid and full implementation of the mentioned European

Parliament resolution which calls for self-rule for the Syriac and Yezidi people: “the European Parliament Encourages the international community and the EU to provide support for preserving the diversity of ethnic, cultural and religious identities in Iraq; calls, within the framework of the Constitution of Iraq, for ways to be explored to recognise, protect and enhance the local self-rule of ethnic and religious minorities living in areas where they have historically had a strong presence and lived peacefully alongside each other – for example in the Sinjar mountains (Yazidis) and the Nineveh plains (Chaldean-Syrian-Assyrian peoples); calls on the Iraqi authorities to allow Kurds, Christians and Yezidis to return to their original areas of residence and to ensure it is safe for them to do so;