

Six months after adoption of the Law on Yazidi Female Survivors no tangible progress has been made toward implementation

BAGHDAD, September 01, 2021 - The Iraqi Council of Representatives passed the Yazidi [Female] Survivors Law (YSL) No. 8 on March 1, 2021. The law formally recognizes acts of genocide and crimes against humanity perpetrated against the Yazidi, Turkmen, Christian, and Shabak communities by the self-declared Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Additionally, the YSL provides a sound basis for delivering long-overdue relief to Yazidi women and other survivors through mandating financial support for survivors, measures for their rehabilitation, the provision of land, housing, and education, and a quota in public sector employment.

Regrettably, six months later no tangible progress has been made toward implementation of the YSL. The Iraqi Council of Ministers has yet to adopt the necessary implementing regulations that were required by law to be completed by mid-June 2021. Moreover, the latest draft implementing regulations lacks a survivor-centered approach and does not clarify how the legislation will be implemented, leaving critical areas of ambiguity in the YSL unresolved. Additionally, the draft document fails to establish accountable mechanisms and processes for outreach, applications, and review of claims, as well as urgent distribution of reparations called for under the law. Concrete and comprehensive [recommendations](#) based on international standards and best practices submitted by 32 Iraqi NGOs, allied into the Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR), were largely ignored.

C4JR, therefore, believes that the draft implementing regulations, in its current form, does not provide sufficient basis for an effective and survivor-centered reparation scheme.

While C4JR applauds the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) for swift appointment of Ms. Sarab Elias as the head of the Directorate General for Survivors' Affairs and Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi for attending the opening of the Directorate's headquarters in Mosul, we wish to note that the Directorate General has not been provided with the necessary resources (e.g., budget, staffing and equipment) to perform its duties and responsibilities under the YSL.

Delayed and ineffective implementation of the YSL prolongs the agony and trauma of survivors, their families, and affected communities, who, once again, feel abandoned by the Iraqi government.

Members of the Yazidi Survivors Network commented:

"We are aware that the government's decision of legislating the Yazidi Survivors Law is a unique initiative and a good attempt to rehabilitate us. But unfortunately, if this law is not implemented in a proper way and at the right time, it is just words on paper for us. So far, there are no actual steps to implement the law. All that decision-makers do is to manipulate the feelings of the survivors through speeches, meetings, and promises, but without taking proper actions".

Shabak and Turkmen survivors, members of the C4JR's Survivors Council, added:

"We, as Shabak survivors, are asking the government to pay more attention to the survivors file by speeding up support for the Directorate and allocating funds in 2022 budget to be able to support survivors. We live now in dire conditions with no support whatsoever".

"We are aware that the government made good steps, but want them to open an office in Tal Afar supporting Turkmen as well".

As Iraq prepares for national elections in October, C4JR urges the Iraqi government and political actors to prioritize reparations and justice for survivors of ISIL atrocities and demonstrate national unity in supporting the effective implementation of the YSL

[C4JR member organizations]

1. ASUDA
2. Better World Organization for Community Development (BWO)
3. Bishkoreen Organization
4. Christian Aid Program Northern Iraq (CAPNI)
5. Civil Development Organization "CDO"
6. Dak Organization
7. Emma
8. Eyzidi Organization for Documentation
9. Ghasin Alzaiton
10. Hammurabi Human Rights Organization (HHRO)
11. Harikar
12. HÁWAR. help
13. Iraqi Educational Association AL Basra
14. Iraqi Institution for Development (IID)
15. Jinda Organization
16. Justice Organization for Minority Rights (JOMR)
17. Methra Organization
18. Nadia's Initiative (NI)
19. National Centre for Human Rights (NHCR)
20. Nisha Organization
21. Peace and Freedom Organization
22. SEED Foundation
23. TAJDID Iraq
24. The Free Yezidi Foundation
25. The Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights
26. The Lotus Flower
27. The Observer Human Rights Center OHRC
28. To Reconcile Organization (TRO)
29. Turkmen Rescue Foundation
30. Women Leadership Institute (WLI)
31. Women Legal Assistance Organization (WOLA)
32. Yazda

[Partners]

1. Amnesty International
2. Genocide Watch
3. Voice of Ezidis (VoE)