

Welcome to the Seventh C4JR YSL NEWSLETTER

The Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR) is publishing regular newsletters on the Yazidi Survivors' Law (YSL) starting July 2023 in three languages; Arabic, English, and Kurdish (Kurmanji and Sorani). Our goal is to share accurate and up-to-date information regarding the YSL and share the views and experiences of all actors included in the implementation of this seminal transitional justice framework to address atrocities committed by ISIL in Iraq.

Latest News on the YSL

Application Statistics

The Directorate of Survivors' Affairs (Directorate) and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs announced the payment of reparations to 1,834 survivors of ISIL covered by the Yazidi Survivors' Law in June. More details can be found on the Directorate's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100076062182514>.

Implementation of the YSL

The YSL includes reparation benefits to be provided to each individual who is approved as a survivor. These include 1) monthly reparation payments; 2) rehabilitation services; 3) return to education; 4) priority in public employment; and 5) a housing unit or land. The Directorate is actively rolling out certain benefits like reparations payments, referring survivors to supporting NGOs for rehabilitation support, and allocating plots of land to YSL beneficiaries while continuing to address more complex benefits for future implementation.

Important updates:

- The Directorate and the Supreme Committee for Searching for Abductees have announced a financial reward for anyone who contributes to the liberation of an abducted person kidnapped by ISIL in 2014

from the Yazidi, Shabak, Turkman, and Christian components. To report a case, use the toll-free number **5775**. Additionally, details of the missing or kidnapped person must be registered [here](#).

- On International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, which coincided with the tenth anniversary of ISIL's invasion of Nineveh Governorate, Iraq's Prime Minister, Mr. Muhammad Shiaa al-Sudani received a group of male and female survivors and the Directorate's Director General Ms. Sarab Elias, to hear from survivors about their needs and the challenges facing the Directorate. The President confirmed the government's continued support and service provisions for survivors.
- In June, the Director General of the Directorate visited the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Paris, France, to learn more about the challenges facing the 150 survivors residing there. During a meeting with the Iraqi Ambassador, Dr. Wadih Batti, Ms. Sarab Elias discussed issues regarding survivors who have not yet received reparations under the YSL. They also spoke about establishing video conferencing to meet the requirement for criminal investigation documents that applicants to the YSL must fulfill. The Directorate continues to work on establishing this system in coordination with the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For more information about the visit, see the Directorate's [Facebook page](#).



A group of male and female survivors along with the Directorate's Director General met with Iraq's Prime Minister on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. Photo credit: General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs.

Related News

- The Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Mr. Masrour Barzani, [announced](#) a financial assistance program for 3,000 women and girls survivors of ISIL. The program is stated to improve survivors' financial situation, offer job opportunities, and ensure access to education and health services. Read more at the following [link](#).
- In addition to financial support, the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq [announced](#) a series of measures to support ISIL survivors' return to education. The Minister of Education, Alan Hama Saeed, detailed several provisions, including age requirement waivers and exemptions from certain educational prerequisites for those who completed 9th grade before captivity. Survivors will be able to pursue studies in any governmental college of their choice and free private education for five academic years. The decree will take effect for the 2024-2024 school year. C4JR hopes for coordination between Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region's reparation measures to avoid unnecessarily burdening survivors to enter different reparation programs.
- C4JR recently launched a guide for using human rights indicators to monitor the implementation and realization of the right to rehabilitation for survivors of ISIL crimes in Iraq, as guaranteed under the YSL. The guide, titled "Right to Rehabilitation as Reparation for Survivors of Grave Human Rights Violations," was produced by Professor Nimisha Patel from the International Centre for Health and Human Rights (ICHHR) and Dr. Bojan Gavrilovic, Head of Programs for Rights and Justice at Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights. The report can be read at the following [link](#). During the event, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Dr. Alice Edwards, delivered a keynote address on remedies, rehabilitation, and reparation for survivors of wartime sexual torture which can be downloaded [here](#).
- During an unofficial visit to Iraq, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture spent three days in Erbil and Duhok, consulting with dozens of local NGOs, C4JR members, and survivors. The main goal of her stay in Iraq, besides supporting work on YSL implementation, particularly its rehabilitation component, was to inform her forthcoming thematic report on responding to the wartime sexual torture to be presented to the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

- On June 24, a special session co-hosted by French Senator Nathalie Goulet, Yazda, and the Zovighian Partnership was held at Médicis Hall, Luxembourg Palace, Paris. *The Yazidis: A Forgotten Genocide* included keynotes from Baba Sheikh, Spiritual lead of the Yazidi Supreme Spiritual Council, and Nathalie Goulet, Senator of l'Orne in the French Senate. Human rights activists and members of the Yazidi Survivors Network (YSN), Manal Luqman Khalaf and Shireen Khero Khudeeda, joined panels to discuss justice efforts for crimes committed and advocate for the needs and demands of survivors ten years after the genocide. Read more about the event [here](#).
- The Free Yazidi Foundation, in collaboration with Fordham University School of Law, has published a report titled "Strengthening Implementation of the Yazidi [Female] Survivors Law: Recommendations Based on International and Comparative Best Practices." The report offers insight into international standards and comparative best practices in reparation implementation across various contexts worldwide. It also provides detailed recommendations for the Iraqi government and the Directorate. To read more, see the report [here](#).
- C4JR's podcast series "More Than Ink on Paper: Implementing the Yazidi Survivors' Law" released two new episodes. The first is a conversation with Clara Sandoval and Shireen Khero Khudeeda which you can listen to or read the full transcript of the conversations [here](#). The second episode is an interview with the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Dr. Alice Edwards. You can listen to or read the full transcript of the conversation [here](#).
- UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Pramila Patten, unveiled the *Mother and Justice* memorial for survivors worldwide at an event in Stuttgart on July 3. Nadia Murad, joined by other survivors of CRSV, Mr. Winfried Kretschmann, Minister-President of Baden-Württemberg was also present at the unveiling of the memorial which was inspired by the first Yazidi survivor who significantly contributed to securing the first judgment worldwide qualifying crimes against Yazidis as genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Ms. Patten voiced her concerns about hurdles in the full implementation of the YSL during the event, particularly regarding rehabilitation services and barriers facing survivors located outside Iraq. Her speech in full can be accessed [here](#). To learn more about the memorial visit this [link](#).



Mother and Justice--A Mobile Memorial was unveiled in Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany earlier this month. Photo credit: Nadia's Initiative.

Accountability Efforts

- On Thursday, July 11, members of C4JR's Criminal Justice Working Group, including Hasan Jameel, met with the Acting Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD, Ms. Ana Peyró Llopis, and the United Nations Secretary General's Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Mr. Stephen Mathias, in Erbil to discuss the wind-down of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), and what the way forward after UNITAD may look like. Read more about this [here](#).
- C4JR's Criminal Justice Working Group published a statement on July 17, International Criminal Justice Day, regarding the recent sentencing in Baghdad's Karkh Criminal Court of ISIL leader al-Baghdadi's wife, Asmaa Mohamed, to death under Iraq's anti-terrorism law and referring to YSL law Article 7 as justification. The statement urges the government of Iraq to pass legislation that incorporates international crimes in domestic legislation. Read the statement [here](#).

Challenges

In each newsletter, we highlight specific challenges faced by survivors or stakeholders involved in implementing the YSL. This issue focuses on the YSL Committee's request for intelligence documents, also known locally as biometrics. All applicants to the YSL must obtain biometrics to verify the information provided in their criminal complaint. However, many face significant bureaucratic hurdles in obtaining this security clearance, hindering their YSL application and restricting their access to reparations.

After filing a criminal complaint at a police station or court, YSL applicants must appear in person or be represented by a lawyer at the intelligence services office (istikhbarat) to undergo security clearance. During this process, the intelligence services may need to confirm information with local mukhtars or other community leaders and authorities. Survivors consulted by C4JR report various challenges, such as the passage of ten years since the events in their complaints, changes in mukhtar leadership, a mukhtar's absence from the area during the time referred to in the complaint, and local tribal and sectarian tensions. These

factors make it difficult for the intelligence services to verify information, resulting in delayed or incomplete biometrics and, consequently, incomplete YSL applications.

Previous newsletters have highlighted how the evidentiary requirement for a criminal investigation document contradicts international best practices in administrative reparation programs. International best practices emphasize that reparation programs for victims of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) should adopt special standards of proof and presume truth based on patterns of violence and other established facts. These guidelines aim to minimize the burden of proof on survivors and acknowledge the unique challenges they face.

The requirement for undergoing security clearances, along with the YSL Committee's demand for corroborating testimony from two individuals who were present with the applicant at the time of the crime and/or who have received reparations through the YSL, creates additional obstacles for applicants. These requirements hinder survivors from realizing their right to reparations. YSL applicants should not have to corroborate their criminal complaints by making multiple visits to intelligence services, police stations, or local tribal leaders. This process puts female YSL applicants, in particular, at risk of breaches of confidentiality, retraumatization, and stigmatization. Such requirements are not in line with survivor-centered practices of reparation programs, which aim to protect applicants as CRSV survivors and facilitate their access to justice and reparations.

Despite the burdensome nature of these requirements, the YSL Committee, authorities, as well as [some](#) survivors living inside Iraq, believe the criminal complaint mechanism should be maintained as a safeguard against false applications and to support the pursuit of criminal accountability for members of ISIL.

C4JR recommends that the Committee consider the financial, administrative, and social hardships placed on survivors obtaining a security clearance and work to alleviate these additional burdens by finding alternative means of corroborating YSL applicants' criminal complaints with testimonies already given. Adopting international best practices can help ensure that the YSL reparation process is more accessible, fair, and sensitive to the needs of all survivors.

THERE IS NO DEADLINE TO APPLY TO THE YSL! HERE IS HOW YOU CAN APPLY IF YOU ARE A SURVIVOR

The YSL provides reparations if you are a member of one of the following groups:

- Adult and minor female survivors of ISIS captivity from the Yazidi, Shabak, Christian, or Turkmen communities;
- Male Yazidis who were abducted by ISIS when they were under the age of 18 at the time they were abducted by ISIS;
- All persons from the Yazidi, Shabak, Christian, or Turkmen communities who were abducted by ISIS and personally survived a specific incident of ISIS mass killing.

Applications are made to the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs. You can apply in three ways:

- Making an appointment with the Directorate in their Sinjar or Mosul offices and visiting the office at the appointment time. You can make the appointment at <https://ur.gov.iq/login>. See this video on how to make an appointment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ARulcl4gYU&ab_channel=IOMIRAQ ;
- Filling out a hard copy form and take it to the Directorate physically. You still need to register online using the link above to get your unique registration code;
- Applying online: You may submit your application, together with copies of your ID and any supporting documents you have to the link above. See this video on how to apply online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfoDfQWwErE&ab_channel=IOMIRAQ

You can apply on your own - you do not need a lawyer or NGO to apply. If you would like any support with the application, you can contact NGOs in your area. **There is no deadline to apply for the YSL. There is also no fee to apply.**

You can follow the Directorate's announcements on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100076062182514>

Upcoming Events and Advocacy Efforts

As the tenth anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide approaches, C4JR members are conducting several events and advocacy campaigns to highlight ongoing challenges in securing justice and accountability for survivors:

- The Organizing Committee for the 10th Anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide, composed of several Yazidi-led civil society organizations, collectively decided to commemorate the Yazidi Genocide on August 3, 2024. To convey a clear and unified message, no other ceremonies or activities will be held in Iraq on that day. Events will begin at 9:30 at the Yazidi Genocide Memorial site in Sinjar.

#Yazidi_Genocide_10

Invitation to the Commemoration Ceremony of the 10th Anniversary in Sinjar

As we solemnly approach the 10th anniversary of the Yazidi genocide, we extend a heartfelt invitation to our community, supportive allies, diplomatic missions, state institutions, and civil society organizations to join us in commemorating this poignant occasion at the Yazidi Genocide Memorial in Sinjar

Scheduled Activities

- Delivering commemorative speeches to honor the martyrs and survivors
- Laying flowers and lighting candles at the graves
- Offering prayers for the souls of the victims and for the healing of the survivors
- Sharing personal stories and experiences

Date: 3 - August-2024 **Time: 9:30 AM** **Location: Yazidi Genocide Memorial, Sinjar**

We sincerely hope you will join us on this significant and somber day. Let us collectively remember the past, reinforce our community's unity, and express solidarity with the Yazidi cause

The Organizing Committee for the 10th Anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide

- Free Yazidi Foundation is releasing 5 comprehensive reports on critical topics affecting the Yazidi community in the lead-up to the tenth anniversary. The first report explores the status of the implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law and is accessible [here](#). The second report looks at the critical role of UNITAD and future perspectives for justice and accountability and is accessible [here](#). Follow Free Yazidi Foundation's Twitter to read more reports as they are released [here](#).
- Peace and Freedom Organization has released its latest report "Return to Sinjar: The Yazidi Community's Journey Home and the Challenges Ahead." The report identifies the lack of specialized mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and the absence of livelihood and economic opportunities in Sinjar, both guaranteed under Article 5 of the YSL, as significant barriers to the return of survivors. It also highlights other critical issues affecting Yazidis' return to Sinjar. The report can be accessed in full [here](#).
- Free Yazidi Foundation and Atlantic Council Middle East Programs are co-hosting a hybrid event in Washington DC on Monday, July 29 to highlight the Yazidi community's ongoing struggle for recovery. Register to attend the event [here](#).

C4JR Advocacy Campaign

10 Demands, 10 Years After ISIL Genocide

Almost a decade has passed since the genocide committed by ISIL against the Yazidi, Christian, Shabak, and Turkmen communities in Iraq. Yet, survivors and displaced communities continue to face immense challenges. To mark the August 3 anniversary, C4JR's Advocacy Group members have engaged with survivors to produce a report articulating their needs and aspirations in 10 demands, each linked to a series of recommendations.

Over the last few months, members have held ten separate consultations with survivors from the four communities recognized as eligible under the YSL–Yazidis, Christians, Shabak, and Turkmen—to form the basis of C4JR's "10 Demands, 10 Years After" campaign, which will be published in the coming days.

The demands and recommended actions are based on information gathered through consultations with diverse survivor groups to ensure that the perspectives of survivors with different ethnic and religious backgrounds, ages, genders, and geographical locations are represented. We hope to raise awareness at the national and international levels about the genocide committed by ISIL and the current situation of survivors living in Iraq and abroad, and for their demands to be met.

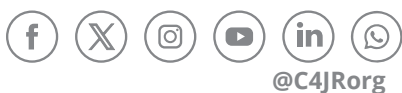
Our forthcoming report would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of C4JR's members, in particular JOMR, Jiyān Foundation, Free Yazidi Foundation, DAK Organisation, House of Coexistence, Better World Organisation, Farida Global, and Yazda, who conducted the consultations with various survivor groups, and whose findings are the basis of our report.



About the C4JR

The Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR) is an alliance of 34 NGOs calling for comprehensive reparations for civilian victims of atrocity crimes perpetrated during the ISIL conflict in Iraq. C4JR uses Iraqi law and international human rights law to support the reparation claims of survivors and to encourage Iraqi authorities to meet their obligation to provide reparations. C4JR also works to inform, advocate, offer viable solutions, and engage with different stakeholders to ensure survivors realize their right to reparations by providing space for deliberation, collaboration, and reflection.

You can visit our website at www.c4jr.org for more information.



C4JR updates
WhatsApp group



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