

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 28th session

Geneva, 25 March 2015

Item 2– Interactive dialogue

The human rights situation in Iraq in the light of abuses committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups

Joint Oral Statement submitted by Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities) and by Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers)

Mr. President,

Caritas Internationalis and the Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers) welcome the report of the OHCHR on the human rights situation in Iraq as well as its recommendations.

Ours are among the few humanitarian organisations maintaining a permanent presence in Iraq and we witness daily the relentless suffering inflicted on the entire Iraqi population. As we speak, hundreds of thousands of men, women, children and elderly are being subjected to horrendous atrocities. They are forced to flee their homes, deprived of their basic needs and, even worse, of their human dignity.

Mr. President, the international community has failed to ensure protection and security, as well as respect for the lives and dignity of the Iraqi population, especially women and children. Muslim groups that dissociate themselves from Da'esh as well as minority groups, including Christians, Yazidis, Kurds, Shabaks, Madaeans, Turkmens, among others, bear the heaviest brunt of violence and systematically are targeted and subjected to inhuman crimes.

As Pope Francis said: "I join the country's bishops in asking the government to preserve national unity through dialogue, and avoid war. (...) Violence generates more violence; dialogue is the only path to peace." [1]

We therefore urge the international community:

- To create conditions for a sustainable peace by immediately addressing the root causes of this crisis. Concrete actions urgently must be taken to stop fuelling the cycle of violence. This can only be achieved if all, including governments, engaged in directly or indirectly arming, training, financing and doing business with the perpetrators of these crimes, immediately suspend such support;
- To ensure effective protection of civilians, especially vulnerable groups, through the creation of a safe environment for them;
- To respect and uphold the right of internally displaced Iraqi children to access education by provision of adequate funding and resources to implement such initiatives;
- To provide additional funding for addressing immediate and basic humanitarian needs, including safe shelter, adequate nutrition, potable water, and health care;

- To take all necessary measures that facilitate safe and unimpeded access, by humanitarian actors to civilians in need ;
- To urge all engaged stakeholders to visit Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq in order to bring witness of international solidarity from the international community and to attain firsthand knowledge of the suffering of the affected populations.
- Finally, we call on the Human Rights Council and the OHCHR:
- To closely monitor the implementation of the recommendations formulated in the Report
- And we reiterate our call :
- To urgently re-establish the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq that was terminated in 2004 with the aims of regularly monitoring the human rights situation in Iraq and instituting an early warning mechanism for the international community engaged in response to this humanitarian crisis.

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[1]Pope calls for dialogue to avoid war in Iraq, 30 June 2014.

<http://www.romereports.com/pg157483-pope-calls-for-dialogue-to-avoid-war...>