

Declare Genocide in Iraq



21ST CENTURY
WILBERFORCE **The Layman**
INITIATIVE **SPEAK FREEDOM**

The international community must protect religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East before they are gone forever from their ancient homelands.

Calling the crimes ISIS is committing against Yezidis, Christians, Shia Muslims, Turkmen, Shabak and others **genocide** will bring with it the political and moral will needed to do something about these atrocities ...

[Click HERE to return to the Wilberforce Home Page](#)

What is Genocide?



Yezidi mass grave site

Article II of the United Nations 1948 *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* legally defines the term as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- Killing members of the group
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

Under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signatory states are required to prevent and punish genocide when it occurs. If the sovereign state where it occurs cannot or will not act on its responsibility to prevent and punish, then that responsibility falls back to the other signatory countries.

If genocide is declared in Iraq and its government is unable to act, then the issue of intervention can be brought before either the UN Security Council or an emergency session of the General Assembly. These bodies can authorize the use of military force either by UN peacekeeping, coalition or regional forces, as well as “diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means” to address the situation.

If the Security Council and General Assembly do not act, then historic precedent exists where individual countries or intergovernmental organizations may act without approval from the international community to prevent further loss of human life.

[To read more about the facts of genocide, click HERE](#)

Who has Acknowledged the Islamic State's Genocide?

Political, Religious,
Legal and Academic
Leaders Speak Out



An Iraqi mother, two of her sons, and her father. Her other two sons were killed in a mortar attack by ISIS while playing outside.

*In response to the Islamic State's ongoing atrocities against Yezidis, Christians, Shia Muslims and other religious minorities, many political, legal, academic and religious leaders the world over have taken a stand and acknowledged the actions for what they are: **genocide**.*

"In this third world war, waged piecemeal, which we are now experiencing, a form of genocide is taking place, and it must end."

- **Pope Francis**

"The United States and other countries also are working to counter ISIL militarily, but there still needs to be an international effort to bring ISIL to justice for its horrific crimes, including its acts of genocide."

- **Robert George, Chairman,
U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom**

"ISIS's mass murders of Chaldean Christians, Coptic Christians, Yazidis, Shia Muslims, and other groups that do not conform to ISIS's fanatical definition of totalitarian false 'Islam' definitely meets even the strictest definition of genocide."

- **Gregory Stanton, President,
Genocide Watch**

"These are in fact crimes of genocide committed against humanity that must be held accountable before international justice."

- **Mohamed Ali Alhakim,
Iraqi Ambassador to the UN**

[To read other leaders' quotes on genocide click HERE](#)



Ten Things **YOU** Can Do About Genocide

1. **Understand the issue.** Read the “What is Genocide?” page at [Genocide Watch](#) and link to this page through social media.
2. **Learn more** from the United Nations about the [Responsibility to Protect \(R2P\)](#), a relatively new doctrine that informs much of genocide prevention today
3. **Contact your Representative and Senators in Congress** (to look them up, [click here](#)) via e-mail or phone and let them know you want them to support legislation defining the situation in Iraq and Syria as genocide, such as [H.Con.Res.75](#).
4. Dr. Gregory Stanton has developed a framework for examining genocide, the [“10 Stages of Genocide.”](#) **Visit Genocide Watch’s web site** to learn more about this framework and the recommended preventative steps you can take to stop genocide early:
5. **Give to an organization** that provides aid for those who are oppressed because of race, ethnicity or religion and post about it on social media. Some suggestions: [Samaritan’s Purse](#), the [Global Jewish Service Corp](#), or [Women for Women](#).
6. **Visit United to End Genocide’s web site** and complete one of the [“Urgent Action”](#) items posted there.
7. Nicholas Kristof, a columnist for the *New York Times*, writes poignantly about genocide awareness. **Search the word genocide here.**
8. Genocide is ultimately about the loss of humanity and recognition of human rights. **Read the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)**, adopted in 1948 by the United Nations. Select one right you wish to promote in your community and write a letter to local groups or volunteer for an organization that supports that right.
9. **Download the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative report** from its fact-finding mission in Iraq. Share this link on Facebook and Twitter.
10. **Pray for those who are victims of genocide today**, for an end to governments and systems that allow genocide to continue, and for the courage and tenacity to be an active advocate for justice.

'Once again' breaking the promise of 'never again'

By FRANK R. WOLF September 15, 2015



USHMM Photo Archives

Outside of the Dachau concentration camp there is a sign written in five languages — Hebrew, English, French, German and Russian — saying “never again.” Following the unfathomable horrors of the Holocaust, the world rallied around a new word for a crime that has plagued human history. Following the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the international community, heavy with guilt, vowed “never again” to allow such atrocities to occur.

Sadly, this promise has been broken again and again, whether in Rwanda, Srebrenica or Cambodia. Once again, we are faced with the same evil as in the past, and, tragically, we are once again allowing it to continue.

After visiting northern Iraq in January, meeting with representatives from the region and closely following the reports over the last few months, I am convinced that what I witnessed was and is an ongoing genocide of Christians, Yazidis and other religious minorities.

Following Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's declaration of his so-called caliphate, members of these historic faith communities were given the option to “convert, leave or die.” Children as young as seven months have been ripped from the loving arms of their parents, some of them have been forced into sex slavery, others brainwashed and made into child soldiers for this inhuman insurgency.

Those allowed to stay are subjected to repression that masquerades as “religious tolerance” but are simply another means of ensuring the slow but steady eradication of any semblance of religious diversity under Islamic State rule. Put simply, actions committed against these groups meet every criterion for genocide spelled out in Article II of the 1948 Convention, and yet the actions continue. “Never again” has become “once again.”

We look back at our recent history as Americans and often lament that we did nothing to stop the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda and Srebrenica. As cable after cable, account after heartbreaking account came in, often the rest of the world stood by. When the dust settled and the investigators came, the costs of inaction and apathy became painfully apparent to those who watched from the halls of power and those who watched from their living rooms.

In his 1998 address to the survivors of the Rwandan genocide, President Clinton reiterated the world's promise to “never again” permit genocide to occur. “We did not act quickly enough after the killing began,” Clinton admitted. “We should have not allowed the refugee camps to become a

safe haven for the killers. We did not immediately call these crimes by their rightful name: genocide.”

The admission was true and the apology necessary, but had they come four years earlier, hundreds of thousands of lives might have been saved.

Probably the most disappointing reiteration of “never again” occurred 14 years later. When President Obama stood before the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in April 2012, he uttered the phrase no fewer than five times before announcing that he would award Jan Karski — who fearlessly infiltrated both the Warsaw ghetto and a concentration camp before reporting the atrocities to the Western Allies — the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Prior to that, his White House issued Presidential Study Directive 10, which states that “preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States.” Now, in 2015, countless political and religious leaders from around the world have acknowledged that the Islamic State is committing an ongoing genocide in Iraq. But the administration seems to be taking great pains to obfuscate and avoid this reality at all costs.

In fact, recent reports indicate that more than 50 intelligence officials have come forward accusing the administration of deliberately misrepresenting intelligence to show that the Islamic State is losing the fight in Iraq and Syria. Not only is this morally and strategically negligent, but it also belies a deadly hypocrisy regarding genocide prevention. If unchanged, this hypocrisy will undoubtedly be complicit in the eventual eradication of Christians, Yazidis, Shia Muslims, Turkmen, Shabak and other minorities from the lands in which they have existed for millennia.

My friend Katrina Lantos-Swett is correct in saying that “the evil of the past is on us.” Thanks to modern technology we don't need a Jan Karski to tell us what is happening. We don't need to wait for the cables or the 6 o'clock news.

All of the evidence of an ongoing genocide is available via a quick Internet search. But where is the outcry? Where is the action? Right now our leaders have the chance to break the cycle of denial and apology. But will they? Or will this country once again break its promise of “never again”? In a time that demands resolute moral courage and leadership, I am reminded of the words of the Lutheran pastor and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer: “Silence in the face of evil is evil itself: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.”

Reprinted from The Washington Examiner



Further Resources:

[Understanding Genocide](#)

by Frank Wolf

[For Christians and Yazidis Fleeing Genocide, the Obama Administration Has No Room at the Inn](#)

by Nina Shea

[Is This the End of Christianity in the Middle East?](#)

by Eliza Griswold

CNN Interview Videos with Christine Amanpour:

[Yezidi Activist](#)

[Yezidi Girl Survivor](#)

If ISIS is Worth Dying For, Is Jesus Worth Living For?

A Call to the Church to be the Church

By **CARMEN FOWLER LABERGE** October 16, 2015

The Scriptures attest to the reality that beneath the altar in heaven there is a choir crying out “How long?” That choir of martyrs is growing every day as ISIS carries out genocide against Christians and any other group that gets in the way of its Caliphate in the Middle East. We hear their cries and we face a paradox.

As Christians, we are promised by Jesus that those who are faithful to Him in the world will be persecuted. Paul, John, Peter and James all tell us to expect and accept persecution when it comes. At the same time, we are called to fight against injustice in all its forms: we are called to protect the innocent, the widow and the orphan, and we are called to provide materially and spiritually for our brothers and sisters in need.

If you are a Christian in the West you live within this paradox. For too many Christians, the paradox has produced a paralysis. So instead of doing something, many do nothing. For those who are doing nothing, my question is this: how do you plan to face those sisters and brothers in Heaven whose persecution you witnessed and whose martyrdom you stood by silently and watched?

The image of Saul of Tarsus standing by, holding the coats of those who persecuted and killed the first generation of Christians in the Middle East should be sufficient witness to us today (Acts 7:58 and 22:20). And yet, here we sit, idly watching as ISIS and others slaughter our siblings.

There is no question that ISIS equals genocide. The question is, what will we do about it?

It will not matter 100 years from now that you owned a second home, walked on idyllic sands, drove the latest roadster, sailed on every sea, climbed the next mountain, or found the semblance of peace that comes with sufficiency in this life. What will matter is what you did for Christ's sake.

You and I are not being asked to sacrifice for Christ to the point of the shedding of blood. But others are.

You may say that you are willing to die for Christ, but a masked jihadist has not knocked at your door with a knife to your child's throat. The question here in the United States today is not “Will you die for Jesus?” The question really is, “Will you simply live for Him, that others may simply live?”

Have you ever wondered why Western youth raised in cultures where the Church has dominated for centuries are willing to leave the positive possible future for certain death with ISIS? I believe it's because the people of the Church have not shown them that living for Jesus is better than dying for anything else.

So, ask yourself, do I love Jesus enough to live for Him – today? What does that look like? How do I live as a demonstration of the Gospel in the fullness of its truth and beauty, moment by moment? How do I stand



up for Jesus by standing up for the persecuted around the world? How do I lift my voice not only in songs of praise, but also with the voices of the martyrs beneath the throne crying out “How long?”

When I face my sisters and brothers who will die today for the name of Jesus, I want to be able to say that I did everything in my power to stand in the way of those who killed them.

In 197 A.D. Tertullian said, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” Notably in that same year, a Church council was held in Edessa, the center of modern day Syria. The region was Christian for centuries before it was conquered by people of Islamic faith. The blood of the martyrs has been soaking the sands of Edessa for 1,800 years.

That brutal truth should produce the affect of grief, not the shoulder-shrugging “That's just how things are over there.” True, we cannot change the past. But this is our watch. This is our time. These are our days.

The martyrs cry out even now, “How long?”

How long will Western Christians stand and watch, holding coats, while innocent Christians, Yazidis, Muslims, and other religious and ethnic minorities are slaughtered?

Now is the time for the Church to be the Church. Now is the time to stand up for Jesus. Some today will die for Him. Will you live for Him?

What you can do right now:

1. **Pray:** Ardently, in confession, unto repentance, pray for clarity toward action.
<http://www.icommittoprayer.com/>
2. **Give:** Support those who are in a position to provide material support today to Christians in the Middle East.
<http://iraqichristianrelief.org/>
<http://www.ltw.org/web/guest/global-impact/help-the-persecuted>
3. **Connect:** Invite a speaker to come to your church or community group to share their perspective and assist you in framing a response.
<http://philosproject.org/action/>
4. **Advocate:** Learn how your voice, amplified through alignment and coordination with others, can be heard in Washington, D.C.
<http://www.21wilberforce.org/>

There is an ever-growing cadre of organizations and individuals seeking to bring positive, prolonged relief, rebuilding and rescue to Christians in the Middle East. We are witnesses of their plight. Let us not stand by and be witnesses to their martyrdom.