

Resolution adopted at the EPP Congress, St. Julian's (Malta), 29 – 30 March 2017

In Response to Genocide: Relief and Autonomy for Victims in Northern Iraq

- Whereas in Iraq, the number of Christians has dwindled from 1,400,000 before 2003 to less than 250,000 today; and whereas in Syria, Christians made up 8-10% of the population in 2010, today less than half of these are estimated to remain in the country;
- Whereas on 4 February 2016, the European Parliament “[stressed] that the so-called ‘ISIS/Daesh’ is committing genocide against Christians and Yazidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities, who do not agree with the so-called ‘ISIS/Daesh’ interpretation of Islam”; and whereas genocide designations have been made by the Council of Europe, the White House and the US State Department, the US Congress, the British House of Commons, the Canadian government and the Canadian Parliament, the French National Assembly, the Lithuanian Parliament and the Australian House of Representatives;
- Whereas on 27 October 2016, the European Parliament stated that “maximum autonomy and security protection for the communities of the Nineveh Plain, Tal Afar and Sinjar within the framework of the federal Republic of Iraq would restore and preserve the fundamental human rights, including property rights, of the indigenous peoples of that region”;
- Whereas the Mosul offensive is expected to end within the first eight months of 2017; and whereas the lack of political preparations for this offensive risks leading to new conflicts, thus preventing the rehabilitation and repatriation of areas — the Nineveh Plain (Christians, Shabaks), Sinjar (Yazidis), Tal Afar (Turkmen) — previously under ISIS/Daesh occupation;
- Whereas the Nineveh Plain is currently divided by Kurdish and Iraqi troops, a situation which, if it becomes permanent, could end all hopes for autonomy for Christians (Chaldeans/Syriacs/Assyrians); and whereas policing and military protection without strong local inclusion would make repatriation efforts very difficult, as internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees, ever since troops left Nineveh unprotected upon the arrival of ISIS/Daesh, no longer trust the authorities in Baghdad and Erbil;
- Whereas the absence of a genocide designation by the United Nations Security Council means that there is currently no systematic gathering of evidence, which ultimately risks leading to impunity for ISIS/Daesh perpetrators;

- Whereas the UNHCR has planned not to set up an office in the Nineveh Plain, indicating that Chaldean/Syriac/Assyrian areas will not be prioritised;

The European People's Party:

- Urges EU Member States to work towards a binding resolution by the United Nations Security Council to create a legal framework — either by the creation of both a mechanism to collect and secure evidence as well as an ad-hoc tribunal, or else by referral to the International Criminal Court — to prosecute members of ISIS/Daesh for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide against Christians, Yazidis and other religious and ethnic minorities;
- Calls on the EU and its Member States to provide assistance, including financial assistance, to support entities which are conducting criminal investigations, developing investigative and judicial capacities, collecting evidence and preserving the chain of evidence for prosecution in domestic courts, hybrid courts and internationalised domestic courts, and which are enabling capacity-building with respect to individuals who are suspected to have committed genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes in Iraq or Syria;
- Calls on the EU and its Member States to ensure that the assistance provided by the United Nations to address humanitarian, stabilisation and recovery needs does not exclude individuals or groups which have been victims of crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide;
- Calls on the EU and its Member States to work towards preserving IDPs' and refugees' right to return to Nineveh Plain, Tal Afar and Sinjar, and to any of their property which has been taken by ISIS/Daesh;
- Calls on the EU and its Member States to support autonomy, as granted by article 125 of the Iraqi Constitution, for ethno-religious minorities in the Nineveh Plain, Tal Afar and Sinjar.