



Human Rights Now

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**Agenda item 3: Clustered ID report IGWG on private military and security companies
followed by General debate**

Speaker: Ms. Vi Hong Tran

ISIL's Sexual Violence against Yezidi and Other Women and Girls Must be Ceased Immediately

Thank you Mr./Ms. President,

Human Rights Now is deeply concerned about the grave human rights violations committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). In particular, Yezidi women and girls have been systematically targeted by ISIL and subjected to deprivations of liberty, torture, rape, sexual slavery and killings. Moreover, such sexual violence is used strategically to spread terror among opponents of ISIL's ideology. According to a report by UNAMI/OHCHR, 3,000 to 3,500 people, mostly Yezidi women and children, remain in ISIL captivity.

A Japanese NGO, Japan Iraq Medical Network, in collaboration with Human Rights Now conducted interviews with ten Yezidi women and girls who managed to escape ISIL captivity. According to the interviews, after having been abducted, Yezidis women and girls were repeatedly sold or exchanged among ISIL fighters within ISIL occupied areas, including Sinjar, Tal Afar, and Mosul in Iraq, and Raqqa in Syria. They were forced into marriages, raped or held as sex slaves, beaten and deprived of food and water.

Systematic and widespread human rights violations against Yezidi women, especially inhumane sexual violence including sexual enslavement, may constitute crimes against humanity, and their perpetrators must bear criminal responsibility. Human Rights Now urges the Human Rights Council to establish an independent commission of Inquiry to investigate ISIL's sexual violence. The matter must be referred to the International Criminal Court.

We urge the Iraqi Government to take all effective measures to address the issue, including protecting those who have escaped, restore the rule of law and ensure accountability for all grave human rights violations.

Finally, we urge the international community to provide medical and psychological support, security and shelter for the victims by accepting them as refugees and providing humanitarian treatment.

Thank you for your attention.