



Human Rights Now

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Agenda Item 3: Item 3 - Clustered ID with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism and the Special Rapporteur on cultural rights

Gross Violations of International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in Iraq

Speaker: Ms. Vanessa Murphy

This year marks the 13th anniversary of the Iraq war. Human Rights Now expresses grave concern over the ongoing crisis in Iraq. According to the latest UN report, 18,802 people have been killed, 36,245 injured, and 3.2 million displaced between May and October 2015.

The latest UN report found that about 3,500 citizens are currently treated as slaves in ISIL controlled areas. ISIL continuously targets specific ethnic or religious minorities including Yazidis, Christians, Turkmens, and Shiites, and subjects them to brutal violence and execution. On the other hand, the Iraqi government and ISF attack civilians in the name of the “fight against terrorism,” causing a significant number of civilian deaths. In August 2015, a government warplane attacked Fallujah city’s maternity hospital and killed at least 31 people, including 23 women and children. Also, the Iraqi security forces, Kurdish security forces, and their respective affiliated militias have been responsible for looting and destroying property belonging to the Sunni Arab communities, forced evictions, abductions, and extra-judicial killings. Furthermore the air strikes by the US-led Coalition have caused a series of civilian deaths.

Many of these casualties are caused by grave violations of human rights which may constitute crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The prevailing impunity over grave human rights violations since the US-led invasion until now has allowed continuous human rights violations targeted at the civilian population.

The Iraq government must spare no effort to cease all violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law, protect non-combatant citizens, and restore justice and accountability.

In order to end the sectarian conflict, the Iraqi government must address its root causes and end persecution and discrimination against minorities.

The international community must spare no effort to protect civilians and promote national reconciliation and pluralism in Iraq.