

Vian Dakhil's Plea to the Iraqi Parliament¹

August 5, 2014

This source documents Yazidi Member of Parliament Vian Dakhil's impassioned plea to the Iraqi Parliament to intervene against the Islamic State's genocide of the Yazidi people. The genocide began two days earlier on August 3, 2014. Dakhil is frequently interrupted by the Speaker of the Parliament and some of her colleagues to maintain decorum, but she refuses to be silent. She describes how the Islamic State has murdered and enslaved her people, forcing tens of thousands of families to flee their homes and be stranded without food or water. Dakhil's plea was televised and caught the attention of the international community. It helped sway U.S. President Barack Obama to intervene against the Islamic State on August 7, sending food, water, and humanitarian aid to Yazidis in Iraq.

Vian Dakhil: There are Yezidis² who now are living in Sinjar Mountain.³ Mr. Speaker, we are being slaughtered under the banner of "there is no god but Allah." Mr. Speaker, until now 500 Yezidi men have been slaughtered.

Speaker: Madam M.P., please abide by the statement that was agreed upon.

Vian Dakhil: Mr. Speaker, our women are being taken as slaves and sold in the slave market.

[Iraqi M.P.s shout at Dakhil from the floor]

Vian Dakhil: Please, brothers. There is now a campaign of genocide being waged on the Yezidi constituent.

[The Speaker interrupts Dakhil again, telling her to abide by the statement]

Vian Dakhil: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am abiding [by the statement]. Please, Mr. Speaker, my people are being slaughtered just as all Iraqis were slaughtered. The Shias, the Sunnis, the Christians, the Turkmen, and the Shabak were slaughtered.⁴ And today, the Yezidis are being slaughtered. Brothers, away from all political disputes, we want humanitarian solidarity. I speak here in the name of humanity. Save us! Save us! For 48 hours, 30,000 families have been besieged in Sinjar

¹ This source is excerpted from Amy L. Beam, *The Last Yazidi Genocide* (AAJ, 2018), 1-2.

² "Yezidi" is an alternate spelling of "Yazidi" that is closer to the word's pronunciation in Northern Kurdish: Êzidî.

³ "Sinjar Mountain" refers to refers to the highest point of the Sinjar Mountains, which border the town of the same name. The mountains are religiously significant to Yazidis, and they have served as a refuge for Yazidis fleeing persecution in the past.

⁴ Here, Dakhil is most likely referring to the massacres of Iraqi Christians, Turkmen, and Shabak minorities, as well as of members of the country's Sunni and Shia Muslim majority, at the hands of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Hussein ruled Iraq from 1979 until 2003, when he was deposed during the U.S. invasion.

Mountain without water and food. They are dying. Seventy babies have died so far from thirst and suffocation. Fifty old people have died from the deteriorating conditions. Our women are taken as slaves and sold in the slave market.

Mr. Speaker, we demand that the Iraqi Parliament intervene immediately to stop this massacre. There have been 72 genocide campaigns on the Yezidis, and now it is being repeated in the 21st century. We are being slaughtered. We are being exterminated. An entire religion is being exterminated from the face of the Earth. Brothers, I appeal to you in the name of humanity to save us! Mr. Speaker, I want... [breaks into sobs and faints].