

## Farhad Oral History Interview Transcript

February 22, 2023

My name is Farhad. I grew up in Sinjar.<sup>1</sup> I have five brothers and one sister.

Before the genocide happened in 2014, life was mostly peaceful and simple for me and the other Yazidis living in my community. However, there was still conflict. When I was growing up, Muslim Arabs and Kurds discriminated against me and the other Yazidi people in my town just because of our identity.

When the Islamic State (IS) invaded Sinjar in 2014, I was living in al-Adnania village. I first heard of IS' invasion on the news and saw them advancing on our village as well. My family and I escaped al-Adnania and went to Mount Sinjar.<sup>2</sup> About 90% of people escaped from our village. There were some who stayed behind to fight IS and buy time for families to escape. Unfortunately, they were all killed. My uncle was unable to escape. He was captured and tortured by IS. The terrorists never announced that they were going to invade Sinjar. They advanced by surprise.

IS committed genocide against the Yazidis because we weren't Muslims. In my opinion, the genocide is still ongoing, because as long as we're living around Muslims, it will always be like that. Yazidis have been persecuted for our religion for as long as Muslims have been around. They have been persecuting and committing atrocities against us just because we aren't Muslims.

Life has been pretty hard for Yazidis in Iraq after the genocide in 2014. Nothing has changed, at least from what I have seen. Our towns, infrastructure, and communities were destroyed in the genocide, and nothing has been rebuilt. Non-Yazidis can help the Yazidi community by getting us out of Iraq since things are still dangerous for us here.

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<sup>1</sup> "Sinjar" refers to the Sinjar District of northern Iraq, which, along with the nearby Sheikhan District, constitutes the historical homeland of the Yazidi people. "Sinjar" also refers to the town of Sinjar, which serves as the district's capital and was largely destroyed during the 2014 genocide.

<sup>2</sup> "Mount Sinjar" 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.