



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOGNIZES ISIS ATROCITIES AS GENOCIDE AND URGES STATES TO ACT

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[Strasbourg, France] – In an historic resolution, the European Parliament yesterday recognized ISIS’ ongoing atrocities against religious minorities as genocide. The resolution is the [first time](#) the Parliament called on parties, including EU Member States, to fulfill their duties under the UN Genocide Convention during an ongoing conflict.

“The Genocide Convention requires all states to do everything possible to suppress an ongoing genocide. That is why states have been reluctant to even use the word genocide,” said Global Justice Center President, Janet Benshoof. “This resolution is a huge first step to getting the international community to stop wringing their hands over ISIS’ genocidal crimes and take action to prosecute perpetrators and obtain justice for victims.”

The resolution condemned ISIS’ attempts to exterminate any religious and ethnic minorities from areas under its control as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. The adoption followed a debate on January 20th on religious minorities targeted by ISIS in which the EU’s Foreign Affairs Chief, Frederica Mogherini, also recognized ISIS’ killing of Muslims and called on the EU and the Middle East to work together to guarantee justice and accountability.

The strongly worded resolution called on the UN Security Council to recognize the genocide and called for a referral to the International Criminal Court (ICC). In December 2015, the Global Justice Center sent a [letter](#) to the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC urging them to investigate the genocide against the Yazidis and to specifically examine crimes committed against women and girls including abductions, rape, sexual slavery, and forced marriage as genocidal crimes.

“Women and children have equally strong protections under the Genocide Convention that are often forgotten,” says Benshoof. “By not invoking and acting under these obligations, the international community denies women and girls their rights and protections under international law. Thousands of Yazidi women and girls are still currently being held captive by ISIS. This resolution must serve as a trigger for Member States to act on their moral and legal obligation to rescue them.”

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The Global Justice Center (GJC) was founded in 2005 and works for peace, justice, and security by enforcing international laws that protect human rights and promote gender equality.