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ASSYRIAN UNIVERSAL ALLIANCE

MEMBER, UNREPRESENTED NATIONS AND PEOPLES ORGANIZATION (UNPO)

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

Assyrians are indigenous people of Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. As one of the builders of civilization, the Assyrian people have endured a long and challenging history. Due to discrimination, the rise of nationalism, fundamentalism, and ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, the Assyrian population has been forced to migrate from their ancestral homeland. In this report, we aim to highlight the issues facing Assyrians in Iraq and Syria, the ancestral lands of the Assyrian people.

Iraq

- 1- Lack of Constitutional Recognition: Assyrian people are not formally acknowledged as the indigenous people of Iraq within the country's constitution.
- 2- Delay in Establishing the Assyrian Affairs Office: The federal government has postponed the creation of the Assyrian Affairs Office, impacting representation and advocacy for Assyrian people.
- 3- Unfair Election Laws: Due to existing election laws, five designated seats in the Iraqi Parliament and five seats in the Kurdistan Region Iraq Parliament are influenced by votes from non-Assyrian Iraqi political parties. As a result, Assyrian representatives are elected with minimal participation from the indigenous Assyrian population.
- 4- Property and Land Disputes: Assyrian Iraqis are facing significant challenges due to corruption and politically motivated actions, resulting in the loss of property ownership in Iraq. For example, in northern Iraq, dozens of Assyrian land disputes have been neglected.
- 5- Rise of Fundamentalism: A recent attack on the Assyrian New Year Parade in Nohadra/Duhok, Iraq, highlights growing concerns about religious extremism. In Iraq, particularly in the Erbil and Duhok provinces, there is an urgent need to reform the educational system to reduce hostility toward the indigenous Assyrian people. This attack serves as a red alert for the Assyrian community, exposing a security failure by the Kurdistan Region Iraq (KRI).
- 6- Formation of a Unified Administration: Establishing a central administration (Overall Administration, or OA) in the Nineveh Plain—centered in Bakhdedeh or Alqosh—would connect communities both within and outside the Kurdistan Region Iraq (KRI), including Ankawa, Nahla, and Barwari. By structuring administration, education, services, and security under this framework, displaced Assyrians would gain the opportunity to return to their ancestral lands, rebuild their communities, and enhance their own lives and those of others around them.
- 7- Local Security Force: Support the creation of a local security force with the necessary jurisdiction to patrol and protect areas inhabited by Assyrians. A dedicated security presence is essential to ensure the safety and stability of these vulnerable communities.
- 8- Budgetary Support: Advocate for the Iraqi central government to allocate fair and sufficient funding to the Overall Administration (OA). These resources should be distributed equitably among administrative sub-branches to address local needs and promote sustainable development.
- 9- Proper Implementation of Article 125: Ensure the effective enforcement of Article 125 in the Nineveh Plain and surrounding areas. This provision, which guarantees administrative, cultural,



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and political rights for ethnic minorities, must be fully applied to protect the Assyrian community and preserve their heritage.

- 10- Infrastructure Repairs: Roads, buildings, and essential structures in the Nineveh Plain, Ankawa, Nahla, Barwari, Shaqlawa, and surrounding villages have suffered extensive damage due to neglect. Urgent efforts are needed to restore and rebuild these areas to ensure sustainable living conditions for their residents.
- 11- Assyrian Historical sites: Government of Iraq must ensure the preservation and restoration of Assyrian historic sites throughout Iraq.
- 12- Assyrian Martyrs Day: The government of Iraq must recognize Assyrian Martyrs Day on August 7th as a National Day of Remembrance, along with the construction of a monument on the massacre site in Simele.

Syria

- 1- Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Assyrians: Advocate for formal constitutional recognition of the indigenous Assyrians, ensuring their national, political, and cultural rights within Syria's framework of "territorial unity and people."
- 2- Recognition of the Syriac Language: Advocate for the official recognition of Syriac as a Syrian national language, acknowledging its historical significance as an integral part of Syria's linguistic heritage.
- 3- Strengthening Assyrian Representation: Ensure the active participation of Assyrian political forces in the transitional process and the institutions that emerge from it. Genuine representation is crucial to achieving lasting resolutions that secure Assyrian political rights and cultural preservation.
- 4- Abolishing Discriminatory Laws and Restoring Property Rights: Eliminate all discriminatory laws targeting specific groups in Syrian society, including Assyrians. Additionally, ensure the restitution of seized lands and property to affected individuals, accompanied by fair compensation to address past injustices.
- 5- Preserving Assyrian Areas and Villages: Implement measures to protect Assyrian communities and prevent demographic changes, particularly in the Khabur region. Ensuring the return of recently displaced individuals to their original areas is essential for maintaining cultural and historical continuity.
- 6- Adoption of a Decentralized System: Implementing a decentralized system is the ideal approach for governing Syria while preserving its territorial unity. This framework would protect national and cultural diversity, guarantee broad popular participation in governance, ensure equitable distribution of power and resources, and foster balanced and sustainable development across all regions of the country.
- 7- Commitment to Human and Indigenous Rights: Uphold the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related charters on indigenous rights, ensuring protections across political, social, economic, and cultural spheres.
- 8- Commitment to Transitional Justice: Ensure adherence to the principles and measures of transitional justice following the democratic transition process. This approach is essential for achieving national reconciliation, addressing the consequences of war, compensating affected



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individuals, and holding accountable those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

- 9- **Guaranteeing Gender Equality and Youth Empowerment:** Ensure full legal and institutional guarantees of equality between women and men in Syria. This includes securing women's representation and participation in decision-making across all state institutions. Additionally, strengthening the role of youth groups and empowering them to actively engage in public affairs will foster inclusive governance and social progress.
- 10- **Representation and Equal Participation:** The Syrian state must guarantee the fair representation and participation of all components of Syrian society within state institutions. This includes ensuring equal political, economic, social, and cultural opportunities for all citizens, fostering inclusivity and national unity.
- 11- **Repealing Extraordinary Laws and Reversing Demographic Changes:** Abolish all extraordinary laws, court orders, and rulings enacted by the previous regime. Additionally, reject and address demographic changes that occurred during the previous era to ensure the restoration of rightful ownership and community integrity.

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