



ADF INTERNATIONAL

**31st Session of the Human Rights Council
General Debate Item 4**

Mr. President,

ADF International is concerned in relation to the fate of Christians, Arameans, Yazidis and other ethnic and religious groups persecuted by the Islamic State (ISIS/Daesh).

It is possible to change the situation. Some changes have been made, many more are needed. If we recognize and declare the atrocities committed by ISIS as a genocide, it will get better. It will be hard and will require efforts, but it is definitely possible to improve the situation.

The House of Representatives in the United States voted yesterday, less than 15 hours ago, to approve a resolution declaring as “genocide” the atrocities committed by the Islamic State against Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East. The voting result is clear, 393 in favour – 0 against.

The representative Mr. Jeff Fortenberry, who sponsored the resolution, stated: “It is my sincere hope that this trans-partisan resolution will further compel the State Department to join the building international consensus in calling the horrific ISIS violence against Christians, Yazidis and others by its proper name: genocide.”

A wide range of prominent international figures, including religious and political leaders from different religions and political ideas, have recognized that the situation amounts to genocide. More recognition and action are needed.

ADF International is concerned that at this moment ISIS/Daesh is committing the most atrocious of crimes against humanity and war crimes against religious minorities, amounting to genocide. Religious minorities have been targeted specifically on the grounds of their actual or perceived religion by ISIS/Daesh with intent to destroy the groups, in whole or in part. Those ethnic and religious groups have been victims of mass murder, torture, kidnapping for ransom, sexual enslavement and systematic rape of girls and women.

Unfortunately, up to now, no adequate steps have been taken to stop the atrocities from continuing.

Une alliance consacrée à la défense juridique de la liberté

Vienna | Brussels | Geneva | New York | Washington D.C. | Mexico City

Chemin du Petit Saconnex 28

1209 Geneva, Switzerland

Phone: +41 22 716 5900 | Fax: +41 22 716 5901

ADFinternational.org

The persecution of Christians in Syria by ISIS/Daesh is extreme. As a result, the population of Christians dropped from 1.25 million in 2011 to as few as 500,000 today.¹ Some are killed; many others are forced to flee.

ADF International calls upon the international community to recognize the ongoing genocide of ethnic and religious minorities by ISIS/Daesh, and urges the relevant UN entities to refer the situation to the International Criminal Court.

Thank you, Mr. President.

¹ Aid to the Church in Need, Clare Creegan, Christianity is on course to disappear from parts of the Middle East, available at: <http://www.acnuk.org/news.php/599/christianity-is-on-course-to-disappear-from-parts-of-the-middle-east>