



ADF INTERNATIONAL

31st Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 5 General Debate

Mr. President,

ADF International appreciates the High Commissioner's statement that "there is a need to redouble efforts, nationally and through strengthened international cooperation, to protect the rights of persons belonging to minorities."¹

ADF International is concerned that no adequate efforts have been undertaken to protect persons belonging to religious minorities in the Middle East, especially Christians, Arameans and Yazidis.

Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East continue to be subject to mass killings, torture, kidnapping, sexual enslavement and forced conversion, among others. The atrocities are committed on a mass scale with intent to destroy these minority groups in the Middle East, in whole or in part, in breach of Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

The House of Representatives in the United States voted on Monday 14th to approve two resolutions declaring as "genocide" the atrocities committed by the Islamic State against Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East. The USA House of Representatives voted as well to start promoting the establishment of a war crimes tribunal similar to courts held on the former Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda.

The Council of Europe recently recognized, in an absolute majority, that ISIS "has perpetrated acts of genocide and other serious crimes punishable under international law.".

ADF International calls upon the High Commissioner to consider the atrocities committed by ISIS/Daesh against Christians, Arameans, Yazidis and other religious minorities in the Middle East and officially recognize them as genocide.

ADF International further calls upon the High Commissioner and the international community to take steps to bring the evidence to the attention of the United Nations Security Council and support the referral of the situation in the Middle East (as caused by ISIS/Daesh atrocities) to the International Criminal Court.

Thank you Mr. President.

¹ A/HRC/31/27, Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General, "Rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities".