

Resolution to Protect Indigenous Assyrians in Iraq

WHEREAS, the indigenous Assyrian community, with profound cultural significance in Iraq, maintains a unique identity dating back thousands of years while engaging in the country's social, political, and economic development; and

WHEREAS, during the US invasion in 2003, Iraq had approximately 1.5 million Assyrians, while the current population has dwindled to less than 300,000 and since the inception of the conflict and subsequent rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the early 2010s, Assyrian communities in Iraq have faced severe persecution, targeted violence, displacement, destruction of their cultural heritage sites, land confiscation and most recently the current Iraqi President has stripped Patriarch Cardinal Sako of his right to control the Chaldean Catholic church's assets in Iraq; and

WHEREAS, ISIS atrocities were so grave that in 2016, United States Secretary of State John Kerry recognized ISIS actions as genocide against Assyrians, Yazidis, and Shiite Muslims, while the international community, including the United States, bears a moral responsibility to protect vulnerable communities and promote human rights worldwide;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Clara County Democratic Party calls on Congress, the President, and our international partners to provide security and humanitarian aid to Assyrians in both administrative regions of Iraq, the government in Baghdad and the regional government in Erbil, including by appointing Assyrian community leaders and established Assyrian humanitarian organizations within Iraq to administer all awarded humanitarian funds while requiring regular reports from the U.S. Department of State and the Assyrian administrators; and ensure steps are taken to preserve Assyrian cultural heritage, promote peaceful coexistence among different ethnic and religious groups in Iraq, and ensure the property rights and human rights of all persons and institutions in Iraq are respected; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Santa Clara County Democratic Party calls on Congress to encourage dialogue to build a more inclusive society in Iraq, including by calling on the Iraqi Government to guarantee the property rights of the Assyrian, Chaldean, and Syriac churches and insisting that the Iraqi Government must honorably invite back the Chaldean Patriarch to Baghdad to restore his control of church properties and endowment, while advocating for the protection of the Assyrian property rights which are currently located mainly in the Nahla Valley and the "disputed" region of the Nineveh Plain.

Co-sponsors

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo
Assyrian Democrats of the Bay Area
Bay Area Iranian American Democrats
Jewish Democratic Club of Silicon Valley
Sousan Manteghi-Safakish
Mona Malik
Tony Khoshaba
Supervisor Otto Lee

Supporting organizations and Individuals

Assyrian Global Network
Mothers Against Murder (MAM), a 501(c) (3) CA
Corporation dedicated to violence prevention and
protection of victims' rights
Assyrian American Association of San Jose

Adopted by the Santa Clara County Democratic Central Committee on September 7, 2023