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Dindar Zebari: The UN Investigative Team for Accountability of Daesh Crimes must regard the Kurdistan Regional Government as vital partner in the process of documentation and accountability of ISIL atrocities

Following the formation of the UN Investigative Team for the Accountability of ISIL (UNITAD), the team has submitted its report on July 15, 2019 to UN Security Council on the subject of the joint effort of the National Team for uncovering mass graves, which is comprised of Federal Government's Martyrs' institute and the Representatives of KRG's Anfal and Martyrs Ministry. The corpses that were found were for Kurdish nationals who are from Garmian area dates back to the late 1980s Anfal campaign.

Dr. Dindar Zebari, the KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy, said in a statement, "KRG has played an essential role in providing information to UNITAD and supporting investigative team to document and register ISIS crimes against Yezidi Kurds and other ethnicities in the region. Nonetheless, UN is required to consider KRG as a major partner in this process."

Moreover, KRG Coordinator shed light on the atrocities committed against inhabitants of Kurdistan region and other disputed areas and said, "The KR citizens with all of its religious and national components are the victims of Anfal and forced disappearance two of the most vicious crimes committed against humanity. Faili Kurds, 8000 Barzanis, 182,000 people in Garmian and Badinan, were fallen prey to these atrocities. The crimes against local inhabitants variably persisted in post-Baath Iraq and most recently through ISIS raids and kidnapping of thousands of Yezidi Kurds. On the other hand KRG has launched an exhuming campaign through which another mass grave was found in Samawa in recent days. The campaign was arranged by coordination between the Federal Government's Martyrs Agency, the KRG Representative of Anfal and Martyrs Ministry, and International Commission for Missing Persons (ICMP).

In relation to further documentation and to provide evidence KRG has put outstanding efforts in this respect; It formed a classified committee supervised by the Presidency of Council of Ministers on November 25, 2014, to collect data on the kidnapped Yezidi Kurds and to pursue their fate; the intention was to liberate and accommodate the victims. Furthermore, a committee is established to find evidence on ISIS crimes, in addition to another one to document those crimes; especially those regarding Yezidi women and

children. These committees have made remarkable progress so far, such as registering 4206 cases concerning ISIS crimes against Yezidis in courts - 1778 of which are prepared to be presented before the judge, 1191 of them were related to women, and 2428 cases still in process.

Concerning Barzanis' genocide on July 31, 1983, and the return of corpses to their homeland, the Coordinator of International Advocacy remarked, "Thanks to KRG's persistent efforts, several mass graves were found in Busaya and Samawa- a 46,000 square km region- that contain Barzani corpses. The largest Kurdish mass graves are located within this region. Up to day, 696 corpses were returned. This has been done in two phases: In 2005, 603 bodies, and in 2014, 93 bodies were returned. Still, 7,000 corpses remain to be returned to Kurdistan. And in regard to Yezidi mass graves - an atrocity committed by ISIS terrorists - 80 mass graves and dozens of individual graves, were found to this point, some of which are not uncovered. Despite these mass graves, 68 Yezidi shrines and worshiping sites have been devastated.

KRG's International Advocacy Coordinator stressed on the significance of safeguard of these mass graves and said, "In Iraq, the Law No. 5 of 2006 - which is known as the Law of Uncovering and Protection of Mass Graves in Iraq is active. Accordingly those mass graves are divided into two categories: One category contains 300 mass graves in which roughly 2800 corpses were restored, conducted under the rule of Baath regime; and the second category refers to tens of mass graves found after ISIS aggressions. So far, with contributions from the Representative of KRG's Anfal and Martyrs Ministry and UN teams, dozens of graves have been uncovered. The exhuming process is on the basis of UNSC Decree No.2379 of 2017, which is headed and launched by Karim Khan, the Special Advisor of UNITAD. Its goal is to document ISIS terrorist's crimes. Dindar Zebari said that "KRG should have a remarkable role in this team; as the overwhelming majority of ISIS victims were KR and disputed areas inhabitants, especially in Nineveh Plain, Shingal, and Kirkuk. People from every religious and ethnic component in these places; have encountered the severest type of genocide".

In his final remarks, Zebari said," A committee is formed in Kurdistan Region to compensate those who have been victimized between the years 1961 and 2003. The regional committee relies on global measures which are dedicated to resolve cases, such as killing, injuring, displacement, disappearance, contraband weapons, genocide, and eradication of cities and villages, and contraband weapons. Also, we are appealing the Federal Government to compensate the families of Anfal and the victims, on the basis of Section 2 from Article No. 132 of Iraq's permanent constitution.