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Dr. Dindar Zebari: Kaka'i Civilians are Under a Continuous Pressure by Various Hostile Elements in Disputed Areas

On June 13th 2020 in the night hours, a group of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) elements attacked 3 villagers' houses in Xanaqin, Diala province. The premeditated and recorded crime against the Kaka'i minority consisted of forcing the victims and their families out of their bedrooms and killing cold-bloodedly, without any provocation, innocent civilians from 2 related families. The executions, done by multiple automatic gun shots and with humiliating mocking, were committed in front of the rest of the family members: underage youth, women and elderly persons, who will carry the mental sequelae for the rest of their days; this on top of the grief over the losses and the traumatizing annihilation of community members and parts.

The death toll was of seven persons, one of whom died in an Erbil hospital 40 days afterwards, unsuccessfully ending a painful combat in full consciousness against his injuries. Four other persons were injured and face a long physical and mental rehabilitation, probably far from their communities, due to continuous lack of proper medical care and security conditions.

Dr. Dindar Zebari, KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy, stated in this regard that "the Kaka'i minority, one of the most ancient components in Mesopotamia's diverse ethnic and confessional diverse mosaic, has been under a continuous pressure by various hostile elements in disputed areas. Members of this ethnic group have been facing imminent ethnic cleansing in 3 forms, simultaneously practiced: killing, intimidation and expropriation, intimidation and expulsion."

The KRG Coordinator illustrated that "much of the rural and urban Kaka'i's societal tissues and communities have been severely harmed by becoming internally displaced (IDPs), just a few kilometers from their own, original communities. Their family members remain behind, with no safe access to their property, fields and vital resources and, as seen, are not even safe in their own houses at night."

The defenseless, unarmed Kaka'i civilians, whose case is representative of the dire situation, in which most, if not all, ethnic minorities live in those areas, seem unable to count on the local authorities' assistance nor protection. "Failing to save on due time, to investigate, to cease impunity over crimes, to provide medical care and, last but not least: to process lessons learnt in a preventive measure in order to avoid recurrence, is failing to abide by national and international legal obligations in terms of excluding non-belligerents of the violence cycle, protecting unarmed, defenseless civilians and committing to preserve minorities equal rights and securing Iraq's ethnic diversity,"

Dindar Zebari added.

The situation in these regards, mainly in much of the disputed areas, has already become deplorably irreversible for Kaka'i minority members and other ethnic groups (i.e.: parts of Shingal & Ninewah plains). In adjacent areas, i.e.: Kirkuk and Diala, the tendency is alarmingly developing not far behind. The 3-pillars aggression strategy of anti-minority elements (ISIL and

armed groups) on one hand, and the severe protection deficiency on the other hand, are resulting in irreparable human damage on a national level, of which its collateral influence will be hard to underestimate in generations to come.

In his final remarks, Zebari stated that “the lack of tolerance highlighted by the active aggressors has a disastrous effect over the heritage, the culture, the peace building efforts and the process of social cohesion and healing in Iraq. The Kurdistan Regional Government urges the national authorities to fulfill their obligations, being the sovereign, towards their own civilians, as well as towards the international community.