



ADF INTERNATIONAL

32nd Session of the Human Rights Council
General Debate Item 4

Mr. President,

ADF International wishes to refer to the report of Dr. Chaloka Beyani, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, on his mission to the Syrian Arab Republic, and joins the Special Rapporteur in calling upon the Syrian government to maintain and enhance attention and aid to those displaced or trapped in besieged locations within its territory, as well as upon all other parties to the conflict to fulfil their responsibilities under international humanitarian and human rights law and standards.

ADF International appreciates the Special Rapporteur's acknowledgement of the mass killings of religious minorities by the so-called "Islamic State" (ISIL/Daesh), and particularly welcomes the specific inclusion in paragraph 70 of Christians among targeted religious groups, along with Shiites, Druze, 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.

ADF International calls upon the Human Rights Council to recognise the persecution of Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities as genocide and to condemn it as such. This has already occurred in the European and UK parliaments (the latter of which voted to refer the matter to the Security Council). The US House of Representatives has also declared the atrocities committed by the Islamic State against Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East to be genocide. The House voted as well to begin promoting the establishment of a an ad hoc tribunal similar to courts convened with respect to war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda.

ADF International calls upon the High Commissioner to consider the atrocities committed by ISIS/Daesh against Christians (particularly the native Aramean population of eastern Syria), Yazidis and other religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East and officially recognise 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.

Finally, ADF International calls upon the government of Syria to ensure that it fulfils its obligations to uphold freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, and to aggressively pursue Daesh and other terrorist organisations operating within its territory in order to bring them to justice for their genocidal crimes against Christians and other religious minorities.

Thank you, Mr. President.