

Press Release

7th Anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide

August 3rd, 2021

For Immediate Release

Statement by the Armenian General Benevolent Union Germany

Today marks the seventh anniversary of the genocide of the Yazidi people. The Islamic State's massacre of thousands of children, women and men in the Sinjar Mountains, which began on August 3, 2014, initiated the systematic annihilation of Yazidi life in the 21st century. In total, more than ten thousand Yazidis were killed and at least as many were abducted, enslaved and sold. AGBU Germany today commemorates the victims of the 2014 genocide against the Yazidis.

AGBU Germany Vice-President Ohanes Altunkaya participated in the central commemoration ceremony at the Johanneskirche in Düsseldorf at the invitation of the Central Council of the Êzidis in Germany (ZÊD):

"Due to the continuing threat situation and hatred towards the Yazidi as well as Armenian communities, it is important to commemorate such a day and above all to demand justice. To demand that the world community does not close its eyes again to racism and crimes against humanity like genocide and does not only communicate its solidarity to the victims on commemorative speeches but becomes active in the prevention of such crimes. This includes condemning genocides and racist attacks and murders, calling to account those responsible to counter and prevent further crimes against humanity at an early stage."

To this day, Yazidi women and their children are waiting for justice and return to their homeland or a new life in the diaspora. They are forced to live in countries like Germany with their former tormentors, who also immigrated as refugees. AGBU Germany President Georgi Ambarzumjan:

"As a German-Armenian organization, we want to give courage and strength to our Yazidi brothers and sisters to fight for justice and stand ready to support them on this path. A Yazidi prayer says that God should first protect all peoples

before protecting the Yazidis. A people that maintains such a narrative, despite the countless extermination attempts against them, deserve the unconditional protection of all peoples. When the Turkish-Azerbaijani attack on the Armenian Republic of Artsakh began in the fall of 2020, it was also brave Yazidi men who helped their Armenian brothers to defend the people and the land. We Armenians are grateful to them, as we were after the first war in Nagorno-Karabakh, for their efforts and the sacrifice they made for the freedom of the Armenian states."

The Yazidi people remain under threat and deserve international support. We would like to call on everyone to support our partner and human rights activist Düzen Tekkal and her organization "HAWAR.help" and watch her documentary film "JIYAN - The Forgotten Victims of IS". We would also like to express our sympathy to our partner organizations Eziden Weltweit e.V. and Zentralrat der Êziden in Deutschland on today's Commemoration Day and pledge our solidarity and cooperation to them. We would like to draw attention to the genocide survivor Nadia Murad and her organization "Nadia's Initiative", which supports the survivors of the genocide. We should remember the victims and never forget the suffering inflicted on them. Moreover, we should always remember that there are thousands of survivors and captives who need our support here and now. They deserve a safe life in peace.

AGBU Germany headquartered in Berlin is the first German Chapter of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), the world's largest non-profit organization devoted to upholding the Armenian heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs across the globe. Headquartered in New York City, AGBU has an active presence in 31 countries and 74 cities. AGBU Germany was founded in 2020 in the awareness of its responsibility towards the Armenians in Germany, Armenia, Artsakh, and in the Diaspora. Inspired by the unwavering determination of its mother organization AGBU founded in 1906, and in appreciation and recognition of its continuous achievements, the Chapter fits as a German link into the ranks of international AGBU Chapters as well as into the global Armenian nation.

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