



Federal Government
Commissioner for Freedom
of Religion or Belief

Roundtable – 10 years on from the genocide – the future of Yazidis in Shingal

The BMZ recently hosted an event at which the Federal Government Commissioner for Freedom of Religion or Belief chaired a dialogue on the future of Yazidis in Iraq, particularly in the district of Shingal.

More than ten years after the genocide of this religious community began, it is time for a substantial improvement of their situation. That means families who fled from the camps in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq being able to return home to Shingal and have a life there. It means the district of Shingal at last becoming self-administering and the security forces posted there being able to uphold law and order. And it means the genocide being further investigated and addressed, more and continued compensation being awarded to the surviving women and further efforts being made to prevent hate speech and violence towards Yazidis.

An intensive and constructive discussion took place between representatives of the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government, representatives of Yazidi civil society and the diaspora in Germany about the challenges involved in creating a secure future that offers people a decent life. A greater understanding emerged of the complex situation of the Yazidi community in Iraq, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and, in particular, in Shingal. For humanitarian reasons alone, there is now an urgent need to step up work on rebuilding the foundations of life in Shingal. As already announced, the German government will be providing another 15 million euros. All efforts will be based on agreement between central Iraq and the KRI.

Commissioner Frank Schwabe is focusing on the following three specific issues, which also emerged as an outcome of the dialogue event:

1. Combating hate speech against Yazidis and other religious minorities
2. Further investigating and addressing the genocide against the Yazidis (transitional justice)
3. Discussing concrete plans for reconstruction and the establishment of local government in Shingal

One key aim is finding a solution for the surviving Yazidi women and their children and ensuring they receive appropriate medical and psychotherapeutic treatment. It is also important that everything possible is done to find those women and children who are still missing.

The German government has a continued strong interest in achieving substantial and concrete improvements in the situation of Yazidis in Iraq and in the KRI.

As the government's Commissioner for Freedom of Religion or Belief, Frank Schwabe has offered all those taking part in the round table a continuation of this dialogue and looks forward to working together in future in a spirit of trust and dependability. He is also available to other members of the German Bundestag and the many representatives of the Yazidi community in Germany for further dialogue.

Trust and dependability are vital to jointly achieving this goal.

Together, every possible effort should be made to ensure that spirit is upheld.