



Assyria Council of Europe

20th December 2009

Press Release

CONTINUED ATTACKS ON ASSYRIANS IN MOSUL

Brussels – On 15th December, two Assyrian churches of the Syriac Orthodox rite, and a church school were attacked in a series of terrorist bombings in Mosul, after several bombs went off in Baghdad, according to news sources. Five people were killed in the attacks in Mosul, including a newborn infant, and another 40 wounded. The U.S. Military issued a statement saying they have detained several al-Qaeda members responsible for the attacks.

Attacks against the Assyrian Christian population in Iraq have been consistent since 2004. Nearly 50 churches have been attacked since, leaving hundreds of thousands of Assyrians internally displaced, or living as refugees in neighboring countries. In September and October of 2008, prior to Iraqi provincial elections, a wave of attacks displaced the Christian population from Mosul, causing them to flee to the Nineveh Plains region, Dohuk, or other areas in the northern region of Iraq. Nearly 40 [members](#) of the British Parliament released a statement urging the British Government to look into allegations that the Kurdish Regional Government militia groups were responsible for those attacks. The Assyria Council of Europe (ACE) strongly condemns such heinous acts against defenseless populations, and strongly urges the Iraqi Government guarantee that investigations into the attacks against Christians are followed through and that security is increased in civilian areas. ACE also urges that, in accordance with Iraq Constitutional law, locally administered security forces replace the Kurdish militias currently patrolling the

Christian areas in the disputed territory of the Nineveh Plains, so they may work in concert with Iraq Security Forces. The Kurdish politicians have been blocking such a local police force since 2006, ensuring their control of the area, and it is the strong belief of the Assyria Council of Europe that until security is transferred to the hands of the local people and the national security forces, the Assyrian population will be victims of targeted violence by terrorist groups and controlled violence by Kurdish militias which have political and economic interests in the disputed territories.

ACE appeals to the European Parliament to pressure the Iraqi Government to fulfill their duty to protect the Assyrian population from further aggression and forced displacement, and to strongly encourage the formation of a police force from the local Assyrian community.

The Assyria Council of Europe (ACE) is a Brussels based non profit advocating rights of minorities in Iraq since 2007.

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