



JUSTICE FOR IRAQI KURDS

It's time to recognise the truth

Norwegian Government recognises Saddam Hussein's genocide - Justice4Genocide calls on the British Government to do the same

22 November 2012: The Norwegian Foreign Minister, Espen Barth Eide, in a recent parliamentary debate recognised the judgement of the Iraqi High Court that Saddam Hussein's Anfal campaign, including the chemical weapons attack on Halabja, constituted genocide. The debate was attended by Sabah Ahmed Mohammed, the Minister of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs from the Kurdistan Regional Government, as well as over one hundred people from the Norwegian Kurdish community.

Akhtar Chaudhry, the Deputy Speaker of the Norwegian Parliament who initiated the debate, earlier this year visited Halabja and the memorial to the 5,000 Kurdish men, women and children, who were gassed to death in the chemical weapons attack of March 16 1988. Mr Chaudhry acknowledged the painful past of the Kurds and highlighted the importance of learning the lessons of Halabja to ensure that chemical weapons are not used again, either in Kurdistan or worldwide.

The Justice4Genocide campaign now calls on the British Government to recognize this targeted act of mass murder as genocide. Today, Justice4Genocide asks the public to sign its [petition](#) and urge the British Government to recognize the genocide. Recognition is the first step in achieving justice for the survivors and victims of the genocide.

Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman, Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the UK, said, "It is time for the British Government to follow the example of its Norwegian counterpart and recognize the atrocities which befell the Kurdish people in Iraq. Kurdish families continue to suffer the effects of the chemical attacks and there are still cases of babies being born with deformities as a result. The companies which sold these weapons are still operating and need to be brought to justice."

Ms Rahman added, "By signing this petition, British citizens will be giving their support to the Kurdish men, women and children who were killed in Saddam Hussein's genocide. Please sign the petition today and help us achieve justice for the Iraqi Kurds."

Notes to Editors:

For further information, please contact KRG@luther.co.uk or call 0207 618 9193.

More information about the campaign is here: <http://www.justice4genocide.com/>

Some key facts about the genocide

- The genocide of Kurdish people in Iraq began in the 1960s and continued until the late 1980s.
- In 2006, the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) estimated there being 270 mass graves in Iraq containing between 10 and 10,000 bodies in each grave.

- An estimated 180,000 Kurdish people were killed between 1987 and 1988 alone during Saddam Hussein's genocidal campaign called Anfal. The true scale of the killing from the 1960s to 1990 is not yet known.
- In the 1980s, the Kurdish population was also attacked with chemical weapons. During the most vicious assault, Saddam Hussein dropped bombs containing chemical weapons on the Kurdish city of Halabja gassing as many as 5,000 men, women and children to death indiscriminately and leaving tens of thousands of people injured. They died slowly, in unimaginable pain from chemical burns. Of those who survived, many still live with painful injuries and many children are born with birth defects.
- In 1983, 8,000 men and boys of 'battle age' from the Kurdish Barzani tribe were rounded up on trucks and vanished. The bodies are now being discovered in mass graves. From then on, men and boys as young as 13 were targeted , driven far away from their homes in trucks and executed en masse. Many victims were tied together, made to stand on the lip of pre-dug graves and shot in the back so they would fall forward into them. Others were made to lie down in pairs, sardine-style, next to mounds of fresh corpses before being killed. Some, who didn't die from gun shots were then buried alive.
- Of the total Kurdish victims, an estimated 70% were men, according to Human Rights Watch
- 90% of Kurdish villages and more than 20 small towns and cities were completely destroyed during the campaign to wipe out the Kurdish population in Iraq.
- In 1993, US-based Human Rights Watch launched an extensive investigation into the attack on the Kurds by Saddam Hussein's regime and concluded that it was genocide.
- In 2005, the court in the Hague established that the chemical bombing in Kurdistan constituted genocide in a landmark case in 2005 - the Frans Van Anraat Trial. During the Appeal, it was later referred to as 'war crimes'.
- The Iraqi High Tribunal found Sultan Hashim Ahmad, Hussein Rashid al-Tikriti, and Ali Hassan al-Majid (known as Chemical Ali) guilty of genocide in 2007.
- The research institute Swiss Peace recognized the genocide in 2008.
- In 2008 the Iraqi Presidential Council approved Resolution 26 ratifying a parliamentary resolution condemning the crimes of Saddam Hussein's regime against the Kurds as acts of genocide. This resolution affirmed the previous parliamentary resolution that declared all acts committed against the Kurds in Iraqi-Kurdistan by the former regime were to be considered genocide.
- In March 2010, the Iraqi Supreme Court ruled that the 1988 attacks on the Kurdish population were indeed genocide.