



JUSTICE FOR IRAQI KURDS

It's time to recognise the truth

Swedish Parliament recognises Saddam Hussein's genocide - Justice4Genocide calls on Britain to do the same

14 December 2012: The Swedish Parliament has recognized that the atrocities committed by Saddam Hussein against the Iraqi Kurds constituted genocide, demonstrating the country's commitment to safeguarding human rights. The Justice4Genocide campaign in the UK is urging Britain to do the same. Recognition is the first step towards justice for the hundreds of thousands of Kurdish people who were brutally murdered by Saddam Hussein and previous regimes in Iraq.

Swedish recognition was established following a vote organized by the Swedish Foreign Policy Committee on the subject. The proposal to recognize the genocide won unanimous support from the eight political parties which form the Parliament. In response to this success, speaking to a Kurdish news website, Jabbar Amin, a Kurdish MP from the Swedish Green Party, said "This will be an important beginning towards the recognition of Anfal in the world and in Europe."

The Swedish Parliament's decision comes weeks after the Norwegian government said it recognised the judgement of the Iraqi High Court that the Anfal campaign and the chemical attack on Halabja were genocide.

During Saddam Hussein's Anfal campaign an estimated 180,000 Kurdish men, women and children were murdered in a systematic attempt to exterminate the Kurdish population in Iraq. Only after Saddam Hussein was captured in 2003, were the first of hundreds of mass graves discovered, and the true scale of the horror revealed. Nine years later, forensic teams are still excavating the mass graves and identifying the bodies so they can at last be returned home to loved ones for burial.

The Justice4Genocide campaign calls on Britain to recognize this targeted act of mass murder as genocide. Today, Justice4Genocide asks the public to sign the [petition](#) urging the British Government to recognize the genocide. Recognition will not only help achieve justice for the survivors and victims in Iraqi Kurdistan, it also sends out a message against genocide wherever it is committed.

Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman, Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the UK, said, "The Swedish Parliament's recognition follows the Norwegian Government which has also recognized the atrocities against the Kurdish people in Iraq. It is now time for the British Government to do the same and to urge the UN and EU to follow suit. Britain needs to follow its Scandinavian counterparts in condemning the human rights violations that took place under Saddam Hussein's regime. Kurdish families continue to suffer the effects of the chemical attacks and mourn the loss of loved ones who disappeared or suffered horrifically before being killed. The companies that sold these weapons are still operating and need to be brought to justice."

Ms Rahman added, "The people of Britain are compassionate and 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.
- The Norwegian Foreign Minister, Espen Barth Eide, in a recent parliamentary debate recognised that 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.