



Assyrian American National Federation

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Assyrian American National Federation Supports Restoring Federal Authority in the Nineveh Plain

The Assyrian American National Federation (AANF) supports the Iraqi Central Government's campaign to restore federal authority in the Nineveh Plain region of Iraq. Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi has made a clear intent to return the control of the region to 2003 borders in accordance with the Iraqi Constitution. The campaign, despite misleading statements by Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) officials and Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP)-affiliated media outlets, is welcomed by the people of the Nineveh Plain, who long for the opportunity to rebuild their lives free of repression.

We recommend that the United States support the withdrawal of Peshmerga troops from the remaining towns in the Nineveh Plain, which includes Alqosh and Teleskof; any partition of the Nineveh Plain undermines the will of its people. Currently, the Peshmerga's unconstitutional presence in these towns severely compromises the safety of these residents and we fear further delays might result in residents fleeing the area.

Following Peshmerga withdrawal from these areas, we hope that non-local Popular Mobilization Unit (PMU) forces will be transitioned out of the Nineveh Plain, and that security will immediately be handed over to the Nineveh Plain Protection Units (NPU), supported by Iraqi Army and police in the interim.

We hope that the Nineveh Plain will not be treated as a bargaining chip to reduce tensions between the Iraqi Government and the KRG at the expense of the minorities in the area. We reject the disputed status of these territories, as well as any referendum held in the Nineveh Plain until the population is fully resettled and have their rights to property, free assembly, and speech restored. Devastated areas must be restored and residents must have access to the full spectrum of state-provided services present elsewhere in the country. All suggestions pertaining to any kind of referendum to resolve the issue of the so-called disputed territories before all of this work is premature and undermines the interests of these minority groups.

In the meantime, we ask the United States to recognize and support the Iraqi Council of Ministers January 2014 decision which authorized the creation of a Nineveh Plain Governorate administered by the Central Government in Baghdad. By restoring the federal authority in the Nineveh Plain will be a first step in uniting the country and a move in the right direction.

We look forward to working with our partners in both the United States and Iraq to support the people of the Nineveh Plain in developing sustainable, functional, and democratic forms of local administration and security, within the framework of the united, federal, Iraqi state.

Sincerely,

Martin Youmaran

President, Assyrian American National Federation