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A US Government Action Plan to Promote Iraq's Assyrian Christian and Other Minority Returns by Ending International Aid Discrimination

Since ISIS invaded Iraq in 2014, Assyrian Christian and other minorities have been excluded from the US Government's \$1.1 billion humanitarian aid programs despite their designation by the Department of State as victims of genocide. The United Nations also excludes them from its aid programs. Unless these practices are immediately reversed these ancient communities will become extinct.

Last week, we submitted an eight-point Action Plan to senior advisers to President Donald J. Trump. Since President Trump has publicly shown sympathy to the plight of our Assyrian people and with the liberation of the Nineveh Plain by Iraqi Government-backed Assyrian forces we have a new, if not final, chance to support the return of our people to their ancient homeland with the material means to rebuild their towns and their lives.

Our Action Plan calls on the new Administration to take the following policy steps:

- Direct the US Ambassador in Iraq to ensure that all US government agencies operating in Iraq extend US aid to all of Iraq's ethno-minorities;
- Leverage US funding for UN programs to ensure that aid is extended to all ethno-minorities or cut off future donations;
- Co-fund with Germany the unfunded \$85 million UN special program targeting Nineveh Plain. Germany Co-chairs the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL's Working Group on Stabilization;
- Include the Nineveh Plain Protection Units (NPU) in the US Government's Iraq Train & Equip program to ensure security for sustainable returns;
- Provide more funding to clear mines and remove other ordinances in the Nineveh Plain;
- Hold US Government contractors accountable for aid and hiring discrimination against Assyrian Christians through oversight by the US Government's Inspector General;
- Ensure multilateral institutions receiving US funding, such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, practice aid equality in Iraq or cut off US funding;

- Instruct the State Department's next Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom to report on religious-based aid discrimination and submit recommendations to end it.

President Trump has made it clear that his Administration will take strong action to stop ISIS's genocidal campaign against the Assyrian, Yazidi, Turkmen, and other minorities in Iraq. Our Action Plan provides the President with specific policy prescriptions to turn that pledge into immediate action on the ground.