



8 August 2014 - The humanitarian disaster in Iraq is escalating, with civilians being brutally targeted by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is [calling](#) on the international community to support Iraq and to help the Government alleviate the suffering of all those impacted by the spiralling violence.

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been displaced by ISIL's attacks, with minorities like Yazidis and Christians being particularly at risk. As many as 50,000 Yazidis have recently sought refuge on Mount Sinjar, facing starvation and dehydration if they stay in the mountains, and slaughter at the hands of ISIL if they leave. Sinjar itself has been all but emptied of its 300,000 residents since jihadists stormed the city last weekend. Gruesome images of slain people have emerged, with at least 500 Yazidis, [including 40 children](#), having been killed in the past week.

In an impassioned plea for help, a Yazidi politician in Iraq [said](#) : ""We are being slaughtered, our entire religion is being wiped off the face of the earth. I am begging you, in the name of humanity."

The UN Security Council has condemned the attacks by ISIL and expressed its “deep outrage” about the situation: “The members of the Security Council condemn in the strongest terms the systematic persecution of individuals from minority populations and those who refuse the extremist ideology of ISIL and associated armed groups.”

The Security Council members further reiterated that widespread or systematic attacks directed against any civilian populations because of their ethnic background, political grounds, religion or belief may constitute a crime against humanity, for which those responsible must be held accountable.

Echoing the Secretary-General, the Council members called on the international community to support the Government and people of Iraq and to do all it can to help alleviate the suffering of the population affected by the current conflict in Iraq.

The Council has further called on all political entities to overcome divisions and work together “in an inclusive and urgent political process” to strengthen Iraq’s national unity, sovereignty and independence.

UNRIC related articles:

- [UN Report: Litany of human rights violations in Iraq](#)
- [UN leaders condemn ISIL actions in Iraq](#)