International Yazidi Women Conference:

“GENOCIDAL ATTACKS AGAINST YAZIDI WOMEN AND THE MEANS OF RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLE”

11. & 12. March 2017 Bielefeld - Germany

Dear Friends,

Two years ago on August 3th 2014, DAIS attacked for the 73 times the Yezidi community in Sengal, this last massacre is named the 73 Ferman women massacre. DAIS planned the attacks systematically to capture the Yazidi women; to use as sex-slaves, sell on sex markets or simply to kill. The 73 Ferman massacre against women taken place in Sinjar and the threats to women’s rights and the lives of women in the world, in the 21th century shows us the need and importance to take on the problem.

The massacre 73 Ferman did not end the threat of violence against the Yazidis in Sengal. There is a major danger for cultural genocide for the Yezidi people. After the 73th massacre the Yezidi community discovered the hard way that the only way to protect their existence and freedom is to have their autonomy, self-governing and self-defence. In the past two and half years they organized and created collectives to protect them self’s against all attacks. As ISIS main subject of attack were women, it is even more important for the Yezidi women to have a pioneer roll in the struggle and reconstruction. We believe that the 73 Ferman women massacre and the situation developed after the massacre is not adequately addressed. This is why we want to explore more and especially from the perspective of the women. Because of this need we want to invite you to the international conference called; **GENOCIDAL ATTACKS AGAINST YAZIDI WOMEN & THE MEANS OF RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLE**

The international conference will be held on 11 and 12 March 2017 in Bielefeld, Germany. We would be delighted to have you present at this conference. We will send the conference program with this invitation.Please confirm your participation by sending e-mail to ceni_frauen@gmx.de

Respectfully Yours,

Yazidis Women's Council e.V. Cenî - Kurdish Women's Office for Peace

International Yazidi Women's Conference:

"GENOCIDAL ATTACKS AGAINST YAZIDI WOMEN AND THE MEANS OF RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLE"

March 11th & 12th, 2017 Bielefeld - Germany

Organisers: Umbrella organization of the Yazidis Women's Council e.V. Cenî - Kurdish Women's Office for Peace & Platform for Struggle for Women held in Captivity

Why an international conference?

Two and a half years have passed since the attack of the Islamic State (IS) on the Kurdish religious community of the Yazidis on Shengal/Sinjar on Augist 3, 2014. Within weeks, thousands of Yazidis were murdered in the most cruel manner in the region around Shengal in august 2014, individually as well as collectively. More than 5.000 people, the majority being women and girls, have been kidnapped, raped, used as slaves or sold on slave markets. In order to avoid these atrocities, hundreds of women chose suicide. More than 50.000 Yazidis fled as a result of these attacks to the bordering mountains, where many of them, especially children and elderly people, died due to exhaustion and the lack of water and food. In total, hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee. Many Yazidis still live in refugee camps in the region, while others gave up the hope of survival in the Middle East and left their homes to seek asylum in Europe.

The IS attack on Shengal, which is a millennia old settlement site for Yazidis, is not only a humanitarian catastrophe. It was an attack on the Yazidis as a religious community, with the aim of eliminating them. As a means to achieve this, the attack systematically targeted especially women in the most brutal forms. This genocidal attack is considered by the Yazidis as the 74th massacre. In its form, it is also a feminicide.

The threat of genocide still persists for the Yazidis in Shengal. Alongside the physical genocide, the danger of a cultural genocide is increasing more and more. Furthermore, with the 74th massacre, the Yazidis had to realize that they can protect their existence and freedom only through willpower, self-determination and self-defence. In this context, many important steps have been taken in the last two and a half years within the Yazidi community in Shengal for the strengthening and organization of their collective will and the protection of the Yazidi existence. Women, who were treated as mere slaves by IS, are now leading this liberation process actively.

We believe that the conditions that have led to August 3, 2014, as well as the genocide itself have not yet adequately been illuminated. Due to the parallels of genocide and feminicide in the case of Shengal, we believe that it is necessary to consider this 74th massacre on the Yazidis in the first quarter of the 21st century from a women's perspective. We consider the specific focus on feminicide as unavoidable. From this need, we, as the Association of the Yazidi Women's Council – SMJÊ, organize an international conference for Shengal with the title: "***GENOCIDAL ATTACKS AGAINST YAZIDI WOMEN ANDTHE MEANS OF RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLE***".

Who is addressed by the conference?

The conference addresses representatives of international organisations and institutions and private persons who hold political and social influence to facilitate the recognition of the attacks on the Yazidis as genocide and feminicide. It also addresses jurists, sociologists, therapists and all those who work on the consequences of genocide and/or feminicide either as professionals or as activists. We especially welcome representatives from women's and human rights organizations as well as political decision-makers from parliaments or commissions of the United Nations. We anticipate 200-250 participants.

What is the purpose of the conference?

The conference aims to constitute a platform for women from the Kurdish and Yazidi community, to express their perspectives on the attacks on Shengal, the situation and needs on the ground, and ways to move on. Together with representatives of women's and human rights organizations, they shall be able to come up with self-determined analyses and discuss ways of support and resistance against the genocide and feminicide. One focus of the conference will be to:

a) Discuss the classification of the attacks on Shengal as genocide or feminicide from the perspective of international law and to work out necessary steps to initiate lawful prosecution of those responsible for these ccrimes.

b) Develop international and local projects to handle social and individual consequences of feminicide on the ground and in the diaspora and to create the necessary conditions to achieve this.

Supporters:

Frauenbegegnungsstätte UTAMARA e.V.

Femmes Solidaires

Frauen für Frieden e.V.

Feministische Partei-Die Frauen

Frauenverband Courage e.V.

Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung e.V.

Peace in Kurdistan Campaign – Women's Alliance, UK

International Representation of the Kurdish Women's Movement

JXK-Studierende Frauen aus Kurdistan

For further queries, please contact:

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GENOCIDAL ATTACKS AGAINST YAZIDI WOMEN &

THE MEANS OF RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLE

March 11th & 12th, 2017 – Bielefeld, Germany

PROGRAM

DAY 1 (11.03.2017)

09:00 – 09.30 Registration

09:30 – 09:40 Opening and Welcoming Remarks

Songül Talay, Representative of the Association of the Yazidi Women's Council

Barbara Cardenas, Representative of Women for Peace, Germany

09:40 – 10:00 Film screening

10:00 – 10:20 Opening Speech

Patricia Sellers, Special Legal Advisor to the United Nations High Commissioner Member of Human Rights

10:20 – 10:40 Coffee Break

10:40 – 12:30 Panel I: Dr. Muriel Gonzales Athenas, lecturer at the University of Bochum

THE PARALLELS BETWEEN GENOCIDE AND FEMINICIDE

10:40 – 11:00 Genocides against Armenians, Assyrians, Jews and Kurds in the Middle East from a female perspective

Dr. Anush Hovhannisyan, senior researcher In the Oriental Studies Institute, Armenia

11:00 – 11:20 Historical examples of genocide and feminicide on women in Kurdistan

Choman Hardi, researcher in Sulaimaniyah/Northern Iraq

11:20 – 11:40 Does the feminicide within patriarchal systems constitute a genocide?

FEMME SOLIDAIRES, Representative of the Women's Solidarity Group in France

11:40 – 12:30 Discussion

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch Break

13:30 –15:20 Panel II: Ferda Berse, Representative of JXK- Studying Women from Kurdistan

GENOCIDE AGAINST YAZIDIS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SINJAR/SHINGAL

13:30 – 13:45 Victims of 73 massacres: The Yazidi people - cultural, historical, demographical, social and religious dimensions

Aysel Avesta, Journalist

13:45 – 14:00 Why Shingal? Geostrategic, historical and political context to the IS genocide

Rosa Burc, Research assistant at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelm University, Bonn

14:00 – 14:15 The 74th genocide: What happened in Shingal?

Daye Behar, Representative of the Yazidi Free Women's Movement in Shengal/Northern Iraq, TAJÊ

14:15 – 14:30 Flight and displacement as a component of genocidal politics

Ayse Gökkan, Platform fort he liberation of women affected by violence

14:30 – 14:45 Social, political and humanitarian re-organization in Shingal after the genocide

Koli Jaafar, Chairwoman of the Yazidi Federation in Afrin/Northern Syria

14:45 – 15:20 Discussion

15:20 – 15:40 Coffee Break

15:40 – 17:30 Panel III: Leyla Boran, Jurist

FEMINICIDE AS PART OF THE GENOCIDE IN SHINGAL

15:40 – 16:00 The social role and status of Yazidi women before the genocide

Nergiz Emer Salih, Yazidi refugee in Germany

16:00 – 16:20 The misogyny of the Islamic State

Houzan Muhammed

16:20 – 16:40 The struggle to survive in IS captivity: Personal stories

Lamiya Aji Bashar

16:40 – 17:10 Discussion

18:00 Dinner

DAY 2 (12.03.2017)

09:00 – 10:50 Panel IV: Felicitas Treue, Psychotherapist

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF GENOCIDE AND WAYS TO OVERCOME TRAUMA

09:00 – 09:20 Trauma and the consequences of the IS attacks on the collective psyche of the Yazidis

Ulrike Held, Diploma Psychotherapist and Member of the Women's Association Courage

09:20 – 09:40 Ways to overcome trauma: Organising, building awareness and strengthening willpower

Zuhra Shengali, Representative of the Yazidi Free Women's Movement in Shengal/Northern Iraq, TAJÊ

09:40 – 10:00 Film screening: Experiences of women in Shengal in the struggle for survival and against genocide

10:00 – 10:20 Yazidi women's self-defence forces YJŞ and their influence on social transformation

Zeynep Cudi

10:20 – 10:50 Discussion

10:50 – 11:05 Coffee Break

11:05 – 12.10 Panel V:

PROSECUTION OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE

11:05 – 11:25 How could the genocide happen and who carries which responsibility?

11:25 – 11:45 The role of international law for the recognition on the genocide on the Yazidis and the prosecution of those who are responsible

Sasreta Ashraph, Member of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

11:45 – 12:10 Discussion

12:10 – 13:10 Lunch Break

13:10 – 15:00 Panel VI: Dr. Dersim Dagdeviren, Chairwoman of Kurd-Akad

HOW CAN THE YAZIDI COMMUNITY OVERCOME THE THREAT OF GENOCIDE?

13:10 – 13:30 How can the Yazidi community protect and keep alive its national and religious identity?

Daye Behar, Representative of the Yazidi Free Women's Movement in Shengal/Northern Iraq, TAJÊ

13:30 – 13:50 Reasons for the displacement of Yazidis from the ancient religious centre of Shengal and pre-conditions for the return

Daye Zahra, Representative of the Yazidi Free Women's Movement in Shengal/Northern Iraq, TAJÊ

13:50 – 14:10 Autonomous status for Shengal: Demand for Autonomy

Feleknas Uca, HDP parliamentarian in Amed/Northern Kurdistan (Turkey)

14:10 – 14:30 Destruction of cultural heritage and collective protection: What we do together to protect and further the shared values of humanity?

Meike Nack, Europe Representative of the Free Women's Foundation in Rojava/Northern Syria (WJAR)

14:30 – 15:00 Discussion

15:00 – 15:30 Decisions

15:30 – 16:00 Working Groups

a) Project Group

b) Legal Group

16:00 Resolution and Closing

Conference Language: German, Kurdish, English