



April is Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month

In 2015, the House of Commons recognized April as Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month in Canada. For the past four years, Project Abraham has been part of a coalition that includes the Armenian National Committee of Canada, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Humura Association, Romanipe, and the Rohingya Human Rights Network to honour the memory of victims of genocide and reaffirm our commitment to combat hatred in all its forms.

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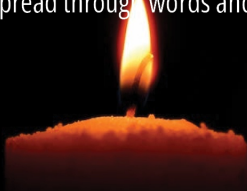
The Armenian National Committee of Canada (ANCC), the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), the Humura Association, Romanipe, Project Abraham, and the Rohingya Human Rights Network unite to honour the memory of victims of genocide and reaffirm our commitment to combat hatred in all its forms.

Genocide is a result of a series of steps that begin with hateful speech, prejudice, discrimination, racism, and dehumanization. Such sentiments spread through words and lead to unspeakable acts of evil.

Genocide is not a relic. It happens today, and it does not happen in isolation but as the culmination of a longstanding, deliberate processes of dehumanization, marginalization, and exclusion that can – and must – be prevented.

We see, repeated today, the same hateful rhetoric that led to the genocides of the past. We see the crimes of the past repeated today. To end current genocides and prevent future such atrocities, we must learn the lessons of the past and come together in the fight against all perpetrators of genocide.

We call on our Government to take action to ensure justice for the victims of genocide and to continue to work with our communities to ensure that Never Again truly means Never. Again.



Steps toward Justice for Yezidis



Justice for the crimes that ISIS members committed against the Yezidis has yet to be achieved but recent cases indicate that they will eventually be held accountable. According to Project Abraham Board member, Emmanuel Didier, "Over the last four months, a huge increase in criminal cases against ISIS people shows that there have been legal ramifications for their actions." In partnership with the Yazidi Legal Network, Emmanuel has spent the past five years constructing a bibliography and database on Yezidis that includes detailed documentation of the legal grounds for both civil action and criminal prosecution.

The International Criminal Court's prosecution of Al Hassan Ag Abdoul Aziz, a former member of Ansar Eddine/Al Queda, for crimes against humanity may provide a useful legal precedent for Yezidi-related cases. As the de facto chief of the Islamic police, Al Hassan is accused of committing crimes against the civilian population of Timbuktu, Mali in 2012-13 that were comparable to the atrocities perpetrated by ISIS against the Yezidis. Closing statements in the case are scheduled for May.

Legal cases against ISIS members are also being heard in national courts. Under the right of universal jurisdiction, individual countries have the authority to investigate and prosecute crimes committed in foreign territories, regardless of the nationality of the suspect or victim. In 2021, Germany became the first country to convict an Iraqi ISIS member for war crimes committed in Iraq.

An increasing number of countries, including Germany, the U.S., U.K., Sweden, and the Netherlands, have prosecuted citizens who left their homes to join ISIS. Last October, two Canadian women were arrested and charged with terrorism-related offences after being repatriated from a detention camp in Syria. These cases show that despite the significant evidentiary and other legal challenges involved in prosecuting ISIS members, progress toward justice for Yezidis is being made.

Project Abraham provides settlement services, education, counselling, and other support services for immigrants and refugees in need.

Meet the (Newsletter) Team at Project Abraham

The monthly newsletter is written and formatted by volunteers, Nancy Reason and Charles Greene, and edited by Gary Rose and Debbie Rose.

Nancy Reason is a retired lawyer and continuing professional development program manager who lives with her husband, Liam Lacey, and their dog, Django, in Victoria, B.C. Nancy and Liam have two daughters and three grandchildren. Nancy is a volunteer member of the Business Support Team of the Canadian Red Cross (Victoria) and serves on the Craigdarroch Castle Society's Board of Directors. She enjoys talking to Project Abraham staff, volunteers, and clients and helping to spread the word about how our education programs and other initiatives are helping children and adults in our community.



Charles Greene worked for The Toronto Sun in the areas of technology, software and user support. He was also responsible for the newspaper's digital photo archive. Prior to that, he was an electrician troubleshooting and maintaining industrial robotics and CNC machining centers. In addition to his work for Project Abraham, Charles also volunteers by putting out his Synagogue's weekly bulletin. Pre-Covid, he was a volunteer photography teacher. "What I like about photography," he says, "is that you can make it as technical as you want, or you can just get out there and shoot." Charles is proud to be part of the team at Project Abraham: "I'm emotionally invested. It's important to share the Yezidi story through the newsletter."