

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 741

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the rebuilding and resettlement of the Nineveh Plain, which is essential for preserving the homeland and heritage of Christian Assyrians (also known as Chaldean and Syriac), Yezidis and Shabaks.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 16, 2018

Mr. DENHAM (for himself, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. HULTGREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the rebuilding and resettlement of the Nineveh Plain, which is essential for preserving the homeland and heritage of Christian Assyrians (also known as Chaldean and Syriac), Yezidis and Shabaks.

Whereas the Nineveh Plain territorially affirms the indigeneity of the Assyrian people for seven millennia, and is one of a precious few remaining regions of territorial concentration for the Christian Assyrians and as such presents a viable territorial solution to the existential crisis facing the indigenous Assyrians;

Whereas, on October 22 and 23, 2003, through the final declaration of the “Chaldean Syriac Assyrian General Con-

ference”, the Christian Assyrians declared their intention to make the Nineveh Plain a new, separate jurisdiction under Iraq’s burgeoning federal system with the express intent of actualizing their right of “self-administration”;

Whereas the Iraqi Minorities Council brought together independent, elected representatives from the Shabak, Yezidi, Turkmen, and Assyrian peoples in order to combine their efforts and formally call on the “Iraqi government to establish a new administrative unit (a new province) in [the] Nineveh Plain in order to live [in] peace” at least since 2007;

Whereas the United States Congress has at least twice formally legislated support for Iraqis in their efforts to create a province in the Nineveh Plain through appropriations report language in Senate Report 112–85, adopted on September 22, 2011, and Senate Report 113–195, adopted on June 19, 2014;

Whereas the Government of Iraq, through a decision of the Council of Ministers, which is the executive branch of the Government of Iraq, initiated the process of forming a province in the Nineveh Plain (as well as Tel Afar, Fallujah and Tuz Khurmato) at the Council’s Session No. 3 of 1/21/2014;

Whereas the Nineveh Plain province formation process was underway in mid-2014 when ISIL attacked Iraq, seizing Mosul and soon after the Nineveh Plain, thereby derailing the process;

Whereas ISIL committed genocide and crimes against humanity against the peoples of the Nineveh Plain, killing and persecuting thousands and forcing survivors to flee their homeland;

Whereas the Nineveh Plains Protection Unit (NPU) was established in late 2014 in response to the invasion of Mosul and the Nineveh Plain by ISIL;

Whereas the Nineveh Plain Protection Units are part of the Iraqi Security Forces apparatus and are authorized to secure towns and villages in the Nineveh Plain by Nineveh Liberation Operations Command (NLOC);

Whereas the Nineveh Plains Protection Units are the only Assyrian Christian force formally listed as an ally alongside United States and Coalition forces in Operation Conquest, to liberate the Nineveh Plain and Mosul from ISIL;

Whereas ISIL was driven out of Mosul and the Nineveh plains in 2017, ending its territorial control in Iraq; and

Whereas persecuted and displaced peoples are returning to their homeland in order to continue the establishment of a Nineveh Plain province: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should—

3 (1) work with the Iraqi Government, local governments, and the international community to facilitate the safe return of displaced peoples to the Nineveh Plain region;

7 (2) continue to support the establishment of a self-governing province in the Nineveh Plain, in accordance with the Government of Iraq's decision to establish a Nineveh Plain Province through the

1 Council of Ministers Session No. 3 of January 21,
2 2014;

3 (3) prioritize rehabilitation efforts in war-rav-
4 aged areas like the Nineveh Plain;

5 (4) expand partners in development and res-
6 toration to encourage involvement and empowerment
7 of non-sectarian, indigenous, and ethnic organiza-
8 tions from the Assyrian and Yezidi communities to
9 build unity among vulnerable peoples and transcend
10 the vicious cycle of sectarian conflict in Iraq;

11 (5) recognize the importance of the Nineveh
12 Plain Protection Units in maintaining order and fa-
13 cilitating resettlement and reconstruction rehabilita-
14 tion efforts in the Nineveh Plain region; and

15 (6) work vigorously to ensure there is a home
16 and future for vulnerable Iraqi minorities such as
17 Assyrian, Yezidis, Shabaks, and others.

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