



## Call for an International Day of Action against Femicide

***Let's make August 3rd the International Day of Struggle against Femicide through our joint organization!***

*On August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017 is the third anniversary of the genocidal attack by the so-called Islamic State (IS) on Êzidi (Yazidi) Kurds in the Northern Iraqi city of Sinjar. Starting on August 3, 2014 the attacks and massacres caused a humanitarian catastrophe but importantly had the genocidal objective of eradicating the whole Êzidi community. Women were systematically targeted within this genocide and therefore it also constitutes a femicide.*

On August 3, 2014 the world became witness to a genocidal attack by IS, having the ultimate goal of eliminating one of the oldest religious communities in the world, the Êzidis. Rendered helpless and defenceless when the peshmerga troops of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) withdrew from their positions in Sinjar without prior warning, the Êzidi community suffered systematic massacre, rape, torture, displacement, enslavement of girls and women and forced recruitment of boys as child soldiers.

Unofficial reports show that over 5 thousand women and children were kidnapped and sold on slave markets in the course of the assault. The women and girls were not only sold in Northern Iraq and Syria but also in countries like Saudi Arabia, where they continue to be held and exploited as sex slaves.

The United Nations has officially called the IS-attack on the Êzidi a genocide. For the Êzidi religious community this genocide is only one of 74 genocides throughout their history. With this genocide in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, they have to face the bitter reality that their existence, their belief and their freedom can only be secured through self-determination, self-organization and self-protection. Women in particular hold the vital role in this process of self-organization in response to genocide and femicide. They have thrown off their victimhood and will now determine and take control of their fate organized as the Free Yazidi Women's Movement (TAJÊ) in Sinjar and in Europe.

The Êzidi religious community faces a massive challenge in maintaining this level of organisation as countless Êzidi women, girls and boys remain captives of IS. In this context the femicide against the Yazidi women also continues. The International Êzidi Women's Conference stated on March 11 & 12, 2017 in Bielefeld/Germany that in order to liberate the Êzidi women an effective struggle on the international level is needed and declared August 3<sup>rd</sup> as the International Day of Action against Femicide.

Femicide affects us all. The systematic killing of women because of their gender constitutes a global phenomenon and includes physical, mental, economic and structural violence against women. Gender-specific violence threatens the lives of billions of women across the world while the perpetrators remain unchallenged and unpunished, just as is the case with the ISIS femicide. The reason for that is that unlike genocide, femicide isn't treated as a distinct category in national and international law. Yet, genocide often happens by way of femicide, just like it did in the case of Sinjar.

That's why we call on the women of the world to declare August 3rd as the International Day of Action against Femicide and to raise awareness at the international level of the kidnapped, enslaved and murdered women of Sinjar. The Kurdish Women's Movement will initiate various protests on this day and will raise their voice for the freedom of the Êzidi Women.

Join us and contact us to plan activities together and to publicise them. Organize your own activities in cities and countries. Record your activities and send us your photos and videos so we can share them on social media and thereby show Êzidi women that women all over the world are standing with them.

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***Free Êzidi Women's Movement (TAJÊ)***