

ASSYRIAN AID SOCIETY-IRAQ



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الجمعية الآشورية الخيرية - العراق

“Organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council since 2011”

Activities Annual Report 2013

Prepared By: Christina K. Patto
Eramia S. Eskrya

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President's Column

The year 2013 witnessed many historical and distinctive stations and difficult at the same time, where the performance of our Society was great, active and influential despite the challenges that have emerged since the end of 2012, mainly that the Ministry of Education of Kurdistan Region did not pay for the transportation expenses of the Assyrian Education Students.

By the aid of our supporter, the Assyrian Education Process continued and we were able to cover the transportation and lecturers' costs, printing the curriculum, distributing stationary to the students and supplying the schools with its necessary needs to ensure the continuation of the Process.



Here we must pay tribute to our supporters, specially the Assyrian Aid Society of America by covering a large proportion of the Assyrian Education deficit through several payments, as well as the support the Assyrian Aid Society of Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Our Society was able to organize several relief programs for our People coming as refugees from Syria, by the support of AASA, AAS-Au, AAS-Ca, AAS Germany and AAS Sweden, as well as the other Societies and Organizations, as: SALT Foundation from Holland, the Evangelical Lutheran Churches from Germany and the Assyrian National Council of Illinois.

Another important station and great success achieved by our Society last year was our participant at the United Nation NY 12th Session Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as second participation in these Forums, which is very important for the existence of our People in the Middle East as one of the ancient people in the region and the world.

While being in the United States in May and June 2013, I attended one of the finest programs organized by the Assyrian Aid Society of America, which is the (Mesopotamian Night), which is considered one of the most successful programs held by our People through our Society in Diaspora, which preserves our heritage and documented it from one side, and provides a substantial support to our People in the Homeland from the other side. We are proud of those who are working hard for the success of this achievement; they are actually heroes and deserve appreciation and respect for their work.

Also, one of the most important events in this year was the visit of Mr. Ashur Yoseph, AASA President, which had a big impact in strengthening the relation between our Societies. He was able to hold many meetings and tours in various areas of our People.

In conclusion, we would like to thank our supporters, who had a big role in assisting our Society implementing its different programs and activities, and also the support of the other Societies, which enhances the existence of our People in their Historical Land.

Departments of the Assyrian Aid Society in Iraq:

- The President: Ashur Sargon Eskrya
- Secretary (Vise President): Christina Khoshaba Patto
- Administration & Finance: Evet Nivademos Esho
- Aid & Humanitarian Affairs/Dormitories: Patros Esho Giwarges.
- Assyrian Education: Napoleon Yousif Youkhana.
- Pharmacies: Shmaeil Hedo Dawood.
- Construction & Projects: Younan Lazar Mirkhaeil
- Media: Eramia Sargon Eskrya
- Legal Affairs : Malko Khoshaba Odisho



Relief & Humanitarian Affairs Dept:

Relief Programs:

In 2013 the AASI has implemented the following Relief Programs:

1. Relief Program for (65) families in Zakho area (Levo, Sharanish, Fesh khabour, Derabon and Bersive, By the support of Solidarity Group of Turabdin and Northern Iraq from Germany, in Feb. 2013.
2. Relief Program for (28) families in Duhok and Nineveh Plain (Ein sifni and Alqush), By the support of Assyrian Aid Society of Australia, in Feb. 2013.
3. Sending the first shipment of Medicine to the Assyrian Families in Syria\ Hasaka, by a direct support from our Society, in Feb. 2013.
4. Relief Program for (49) families in Duhok & Zakho, By the support of Assyrian National Council of Illinois from USA, which included distributing financial aids to them, in Apr. 2013.
5. Sending the second shipment of Medicine to the Assyrian Families in Syria\ Hasaka, by a direct support from our Society, in Apr. 2013.
6. Relief Program for (80) returning families from Syria in Duhok, Nineveh Plain, Erbil and Zakho, By the support of Mr. Sargon Sliwo, Minister of Environment , in May 2013.
7. Relief Program for (276) returning persons from Syria in Duhok, Nineveh Plain, Erbil and Zakho, By the support of SALT Foundation from Holland, in Jul. 2013.
8. Relief Program for (61) returning families from Syria in Nineveh Plain (Ein sifni and Alqush), By the support of Evangelical Churches of Württemberg from Germany, in Aug. 2013.
9. Relief Program for (93) returning families from Syria in Duhok, Nineveh Plain, Erbil and Zakho, By the support of SALT Foundation from Holland, in Aug. 2013.
10. Relief Program for (93) returning families from Syria in Duhok, Nineveh Plain, Erbil and Zakho, By the support of SALT Foundation from Holland, in Sep. 2013.
11. Relief program for (11) families in Barwari Bala area (Sardashti village), by a direct support from our Society, in Sep. 2013.
12. Relief program for (40) returning families from Syria in Duhok and Nineveh Plain, by the support of the Assyrian Aid Society of Canada, in Dec. 2013.

It's worth mentioning that our Society will continue implementing these programs for 2014 to help needy families and refugees.



Aids:

AASI has been able to help many families by:

- Offering financial aid to (175) of low income families.
- Buying expensive medication for some patients.
- Sending some patients outside the Homeland for treatment, by the support of the Assyrian Medical Society in America.
- Sending reports for some cases to the Assyrian Medical Society of America for the consultation.



Medical and Therapeutic Aid:

Assyrian Aid Society of Iraq Pharmacies continue to offer their medical services to the people living in Nineveh Plain and Sarsink, at very low prices, and sometimes free of charge especially to needy people.

These pharmacies are located in:

- Sarsink
- Alqush
- Tellisquf
- Batnaye
- Karemles



Civil Society Organizations:

Assyrian Women Union:

Supporting the Assyrian Women Union in Duhok, Erbil and Nineveh Plain as follows:

- Continue supporting the Day Care Centers in Erbil and Duhok.
- Contributing in the Charity Market of the Union in Duhok.
- Supporting the Assyrian Women Union in distributing Christmas gifts for the children in the Villages of Duhok Governorate.
- Supplying Dameil Day Care in Erbil with a generator.



Chaldoassyrian Youths and Students Union:

Supporting the Chaldoassyrian Youth and Student Unions in Duhok, Erbil and Nineveh Plain as follows:

- Contributing in supporting the Union's offices.
- Contributing in holding Mezalta Championship.
- Holding the 7th Narsai David Football Championship for the students of the AASI Dormitories, with the participation of (38) Teams.
- Supporting the Union's activities during Kha B'Nisan celebrations.
- Supporting Hamorabi Scout activities.
- Holding Ashur Football Championship in Sarsing village.
- Holding Marathon in Duhok City.
- Holding commencement for the University Students in Duhok City
- Holding Martyr Samir Football Championship in Deralok village
- Holding Ping-pong Championship in Sarsing village.
- Honoring the winning teams in the annual championships.
- Supporting the Union in covering the expenses of their meetings and convention through the year.
- Supporting the Union through holding study courses for the final stages.
- Supporting Lamaso in Alqush by buying them sport needs.
- Supporting some students who participated in English Courses.



Other Civil Society Organizations:

- Supporting Ur Society in Nasiriya.
- Supporting Nineveh Center for Research and Development.
- Supporting Syrian Catholic Church in Nineveh Plain.
- Supporting Mar Afram Church in Bersiveh.
- Supporting Mar Georges Kindergarten in Bersiveh.



Assyrian Education Dept.:

Assyrian Primary Schools in Duhok, Erbil, Nineveh Plain and Kirkuk :

1. AASI bears paying transportation expenses of the lecturers who give lectures outside their living areas in the schools which are outside Duhok Governorate.
2. AASI bears supplying the schools of some of their needs (buying computers, printers and copy machines) and giving petty expenses to the administrations of the schools according to Society's capabilities.
3. AASI bears paying salaries for (8) cleaners in the primary schools for the academic year 2012-2013.
4. AASI bears paying transportation expenses for the teachers in Duhok and Erbil Governorates and surrounded areas.
5. Honoring all the superior pupils in all the Assyrian Primary Schools.
6. AASI bears the expenses of transporting the Assyrian Education curriculums and distributing them to the Assyrian Schools.
7. AASI bears the expenses of copying the Assyrian Education curriculums which are changed by the Ministry of Education.
8. AASI bears paying salaries of the teachers who give lectures in the Assyrian schools and who are not officially employed by the Government.
9. Supporting the schools of Nineveh Plain in buying heating oil and carpet.
10. AASI bears the differences in transportations expenses after paying some of them by the Government.

The Assyrian High Schools in Duhok & Erbil:

1. AASI bears paying transportation expenses of the lecturers who give lectures outside their living areas in the schools which are outside Duhok Governorate.
2. AASI bears supplying the schools of some of their needs (buying computers, printers and copy machines) and giving petty expenses to the administrations of the schools according to Society's capabilities.
3. AASI bears paying salaries for (2) cleaners in the high schools for the academic year 2012-2013.
4. AASI bears paying the transportation expenses for the students of high schools till Ministry of Education pays them.
5. AASI bears paying transportation expenses for the teachers of the high schools in Duhok Governorate and surrounded areas.
6. Honoring all the superior students in all the Assyrian High Schools
7. AASI bears paying lectures fees for the lecturers of the high schools.
8. AASI bears the expenses of transporting the Assyrian Education curriculums and distributing them to the Assyrian Schools.
9. AASI bears the expenses of typesetting the Assyrian Education curriculums which changed yearly by the ministry of Education.
10. AASI bears the expenses of copying the Assyrian Education curriculums till the Ministry of Education pays them.
11. AASI bears paying salaries of the teachers who give lectures in the Assyrian schools and who are not officially employed by the government.



Clarification

Since 1992, the Assyria Education Process began in the schools of Kurdistan Region as a legitimate right by the support of our People in the homeland and the Diaspora, and the ongoing support of the AAS (ASSYRIAN AID SOCIETY), where the Society was and still doing its utmost efforts to ensure the continuation of the Assyrian Education Process, because of its importance in maintaining the mother tongue, as one of the basic rights of our People, in this regard, and with our thanks and appreciation for the efforts and continued support provided by the Kurdistan Regional Government to the Assyrian Education Process, but at the same time we would like to point out on the reluctance and failure of the Ministry of Education of the Regional Government in paying dues and transportation wages for students of academic year 2012-2013, this reflected negatively on our Society's performance due to financial deficient, led to reduce Society's support on some of the important aspects including the support of displaced people, dormitories, lecturers' wages, transportation and other activities that the Society was carried out, and in spite of repeated meetings with administrators involved in this process, till the moment still there is no payment for the transportation wages for the past academic year and the current academic year.

We notified the Venerable Regional's Presidency about the issue and have not received a reply so far, and also the Society's presidency together with the delegation of presidency of Assyrian Aid Society that came from America met the Minister of Education for the solution, again we received no response so far, despite of the passing of more than three months at the starting of the current academic year, as this matter is considered of the utmost importance for an authentic component in the Regional in exercising their natural right of learning and teaching in the mother tongue. as the Assyrian Aid Society-Iraq, we appeal and demand the Regional government to pay transportation wages for the students of the Assyrian Education and including it in the budget of Ministry of Education in 2014 as one of its constant payment to ensure the continuation and succession of the Assyrian Education Process in the Regional, which is a positive example that have been praised by our Society in various local and international forums.

In conclusion, we thank the Society's supporters in the homeland and Diaspora, of institutions our People and our Nation, as well as all the various friendly societies that have supported and continues to support Society's activities and programs of various humanity fields, promising our People in continuing our humanity efforts.

Regards

Assyrian Aid Society / Iraq

Dohuk – Dec 16th 2013

Dormitories and Universities:

- AASI covers the costs of housing (82) students in Duhok, most of them are IDP's especially from Nineveh Plain for the academic year 2012-2013 (till June).
- AASI covers the costs of housing (5) workers in Duhok for the academic year 2012-2013.
- AASI covers the costs of housing of (105) students in dormitories of Erbil, Zakho & Baghdad.
- AASI covers the costs of feeding the students in Baghdad Dormitories.
- AASI pays the expenses of Medication, Comforts and also giving financial aid to some needy students according to their requests.
- AASI covers the expenses of repairing of the Dormitories in Duhok.
- Rehabilitating Baghdad Dorms.
- AASI covers the costs of buying heaters, fuel, Blankets, Freezer, Cooker, electrical Maintenance, repairing of sinks & bathrooms & changing doors.
- Holding a five days Scouting camp for the students of Kirkuk, Nineveh Plain, Erbil & Baghdad.
- Housing some of our People from Syria.



Construction and Projects:

- Supplying College of Education in University of Nineveh Plain with computers and its accessories.
- Rehabilitation a house in Blejane village, within Duhok Governorate.
- Maintenance of Irrigation Chanels in Nahla area, in villages of: Kashkawa, Bilmamand, Hezane, Jole and Khalilane.
- and extending of water networks.
- Supporting Irrigation project for the farmers in Makajiya village.
- Supporting the project of Youth Union in Deralok village.

- **Christmas Gifts Project**

Distributing Christmas gifts for (8,150) kids, funded by the Assyria Foundation in Holland, Mr. Matay Arsan, in coordination with the Assyrian Aid Society, the project was implemented in the following places:

- Nineveh Plain: 5550 Gifts in: (Baghdeda, Bartella, Karemlas, Ba'ashiq, Maghara, Merke, Bahzane, Telkeif, Tellisqof, Batnaye, Baqofa, Alqosh, Sharafiya, Ein Sifni, Pirozawa).
- Mosul: 150 Gifts
- Zakho: 480 Gifts
- Aqra: 300 Gifts
- Erbil: 250 Gifts
- Semel: 320 Gifts
- Dohuk City Center: 400 Gifts
- Dohuk/ Sapna area: 400 Gifts
- Dohuk/ Deralok area: 150 Gifts
- Dohuk/ Barwari Bala area: 150 Gifts





Media:

- Producing many episodes of (Audrana) program about the following villages:
 1. Sarsing
 2. Meroke
 3. Jam Rabatke
 4. Sardashte
 5. Baz
 6. Dehe
 7. Badarosh
 8. Betanore
 9. Bishmiyaye
 10. Alqush
- Producing episodes of (Lishanen) Program.
- Producing a special episode about Assyrian Martyr Day.
- Filming all activities of the Assyrian Aid Society.
- Filming all activities of the Assyrian Women Union.
- Filming all activities of the Chaldoassyrian Youth and Students Union.

Visits & Activities:

- Receiving Dr. Hassan Hussein , representative of (USAID).
- Holding the annual meeting of the Executive Board and AASI representatives in Duhok, Erbil, Nineveh Plain, Kirkuk and Baghdad.
- Participating in the workshops of USAID in Baghdad.
- Receiving a journalist delegation from Scandinavia.
- Holding a seminar and fundraising campaign for the refugees coming from Syria.
- Receiving the President and Members from the Assyrian National Council of Illinois.
- Receiving the President and Members of the Assyrian Popular Council in Hasaka\ Syria
- Receiving Mr. Edmon Kelaita, member of the Assyrian Aid Society of Australia.
- Receiving the Youth delegations from USA and Europe participating in Akito festivals.
- Meeting UNICEF representative in Iraq.
- Receiving a delegation from the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Human Rights Office.
- Visiting Mr. Radwan Jarjis, manger of maintenance department in Duhok University.
- Receiving the director of the Jordan Center for Exploration and Adventure, and a group of young people from different Governorates of Iraq.
- Receiving a delegation from SALT Foundation, included the representatives of the Foundation from Switzerland and France.
- Participating in Cross Feast and Cake Festival of the Assyrian Women Union in Barwari Bala Area.
- Receiving a delegation from SALT Foundation, included the Regional administrator and Mr. Werner Nijman, Iraq representative of the Foundation.
- Receiving Mr. Ashur Yoseph, President of the Assyrian Aid Society of America.
- Meeting with Dr. Esmat Muhammad, Minister of Education in Kurdistan region, by the attendance of Mr. Nazar Hanna, the Director of the Assyrian Education.
- Receiving Mr. Sheba Mando, the President of the Assyrian National Council of Illinois, and Mr. Michael Jajjo, responsible of Illinois Section for the ADM.
- Receiving a delegation from the Evangelical Lutheran Churches from Germany, headed by Father Horst Oberkampf.
- Visiting Mrs. Lena Ezaria, the Member of Kurdistan Region Parliament.





AAS participation at the United Nation NY 12th Session Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues:

Below are the Speeches presented at the UN Headquarter

President of the Permanent Forum for Indigenous People
Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the Permanent Forum for Indigenous People

The events experienced by Iraq in prior periods have undoubtedly affected all Iraqi people, however, our Indigenous People suffered a double impact in losing our existence and deprivation of our rights to keep our language and heritage, as well as losing our lands. Much of the our people suffered and were forcibly evacuated. For example the Assyrians were more than one and a half million in 1990, but today they have dwindled to less than 700,000.

The issues of Indigenous People in various parts of the world are similar, apart from the difference of time and place. However, the challenges that they face today are more severe than ever before, due to several factors. The most pivotal of which being globalization. Although this provides greater communication among indigenous individuals and groups it also eliminates their existence through their eventual assimilation in the dominated societies of their respective countries.

The most severe blow that the Assyrians have suffered is the loss of large parts of their lands during the wars and conflicts that have hit the world, especially the Middle East during the last century. Consequently; the conditions of the Assyrians in Iraq continued to deteriorate since August 1933. They were subjected to a horrific massacre in Sumel, where the Iraqi Government used its army to attack the innocent and unarmed civilians. Thousands of innocent women, children and elders were massacred, and the rest were displaced. A large number of them were forced to leave their lands and villages and settle in Syria where they remain to date. Furthermore more all the successive governments in Iraq have not apologized for this atrocity. Nor have they taken any measures to amend the mistakes of the past. The least that should be done is to re-grant those indigenous Assyrian which were forcibly uprooted and deported, their Iraqi citizenship. Thus we urge the United Nations and its respective bodies to exercise their role and recommend to the government of Iraq, to assist and facilitated the return and re-settlement of those deported Assyrians that are willing to return. They should be re-settled in their respective villages and regions in accordance with the pre-Sumel massacre of 1933 settlement pattern, and to obtain their legal rights as citizens of Iraq.

The continuous confiscation of the lands, destruction of culture and religious heritage of the indigenous Assyrians continued even after the July Revolution of 1958, where the internal conflicts led to the destruction of more than 70% of the Assyrian towns and villages in Northern Iraq. As a result, thousands of people were deported to the cities and lived, scattered and displaced, away from their communities.

The Assyrians losses increased ferociously and intensely after 1968, as more than 120 villages, towns, Churches and Monasteries were destroyed through organized displacement campaigns aimed to change the demography, and to obliterate any trace of Christianity in the region. After 1988, the rest of the Assyrian villages were destroyed within the military campaigns called (Al-Anfal), launched by the Iraqi Government to target the Kurds and the Assyrians. This resulted in thousands of martyrs, wrecked havoc in a wide geographical areas in Northern Iraq.

Since 1991, the Assyrians got representation in the Parliament and the Kurdistan Regional Government and elected their representatives, and in 1993 the process of teaching the Assyrian language was successfully launched.

But the blockade and the continued crises did not allow to reconstruct what those wars left behind, and the systematic demographic changes implemented by the former regime in Iraq. This injustice regarding the Assyrians territories continues to this day.

After 2003, the Assyrians were again one of the most effected in Iraq, because of the growth of sectarian conflicts resulting from the past practices of the Iraqi Government before 2003.

In spite of the efforts made by the Iraqi Government and the new political system to allocate a parliamentary and governmental representation for the Assyrians, but that did not limit the continued migration of thousands of Assyrians, as many predominantly Assyrian/Christian neighborhoods in the capital, have lost their Assyrian/Christian populations.

So, we, as one of the oldest Indigenous People in the world and the Middle East in particular, expect from the international community, international organizations and all those who are concerned for the forum to pay more attention to the Indigenous People in the Middle East, and to urge the governments of their countries to apply the legal texts in conformity with the UN Declaration regarding the Rights of Indigenous People and the solidification of their rights in national constitution of these countries. The most important of these implications is the right to maintain its territories.

Therefore, at this time, we ask the International Community to exert more efforts in maintaining the remaining towns and villages, and to reconstruct the towns and villages that their inhabitants were forced to leave because of conflicts, and to provide the means to return the lands to their owners, as well as to continue supporting teaching the Assyrian language, and to activate legislation and laws that ensure these rights. Providing enough job opportunities without discrimination, and in accordance of one's efficiency and expertise which is one of the most important factors to establish the survival of the Indigenous People in their lands. Accordingly, the role of the UN should emerge to focus its developing activities on different aspects to support the indigenous people's of the Middle East.

Our society had worked since its foundation in 1991 to support the Assyrian Education Process, housing school and university students, accomplishing many projects in various aspects of agriculture, health and relief, and supporting civil society organizations that are concerned with Youth and Women issues during more than 20 years of continuous support to maintain the existence of our people in their native country.

Finally, we promise our people and supporters everywhere to continue implementing of what we had started to achieve our goals, to stay and maintain our language, heritage, existence and indigenous identity.

21 May 2013

12th Session
New York 20-31 May 2013
Item 3C – Culture

Delivered by Mona Malik

Mr. Chair,
Honorable indigenous brothers and sisters and the indigenous people of this land)
Shlama Loukhoon/Good Afternoon!

1. My name is Mona Malik and I am representing the Assyrian Aid Society of Iraq, a humanitarian organization dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Assyrian culture and heritage: Assyrians being one of the indigenous people of Iraq and the Middle East.

Recommendations first:

2. In order to preserve what remains of the Assyrian culture and heritage and to ensure its prosperity, The Assyrian Aid Society of Iraq anticipate that the Central government of Iraq will establish a department for Assyrian culture similar to the model implemented in Northern Iraq (KRG):

a. More specifically, to take necessary steps to further facilitate the documentation of this culture by establishing academic institutions and cultural organizations. These organizations should be dedicated to the preservation of the rich traditions of the Assyrians, the descendants of the cultures inhabiting the land between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, aka, The *Cradle of Civilization*. There needs to be dedicated funding for preserving traditional music, the Aramaic language, artisans native to the different regions and farming. Additionally, regarding language we recommend that serious action is considered to effectively implement the constitutional articles to recognize the Assyrian language as one of the official languages of Iraq.

b. Furthermore, to maintain the rich cultural diversity that has been the pillar of Iraq's vibrant society and we, the Assyrians, are vital to the framework of the country's structure.

It is important to draw attention to the urgent matter of possible extinction of an Oral heritage that has survived over 6000 thousand years. When language is lost, the things that represent a way of being and thinking is lost, that human reality is forever vanished.

This ancient language continues to be spoken by the Assyrians. UNESCO estimates that in Iraq 240,000 people speak the Assyrian language. UNESCO has also officially recognized the Assyrian language as an endangered language.

Meaning if the state of Iraq, and the international community do not take serious and immediate steps, then this ancient language could be lost to oblivion. Because of continuing conflict in the area, Assyrians have been evacuated from entire regions of settled villages. This displacement uprooted the people from their native home causing the possible near extinction of a whole way of cultural expression.

The loss of historical perspective is another urgent concern due to the lack of documentation of oral narrative. One recent incident subsequent to a visit in a small Assyrian village by one of our members revealed details regarding an Assyrian evacuation earlier in the 20th century. During the mass exodus of WWI, thousands of Assyrians died while fleeing from the Middle East toward a safe haven in Russia. The families would quickly bury their dead by placing a large rock-slab, *parsha*, on the dead. The rock-slab had a large cross, scratched on the surface and placed upside down facing the ground so that the pursuers would not be able to trace their trail by the sign of the cross revealing their track. To this day the Assyrians of a small village of Kanda near Tbilisi, Georgia remember their lost loved ones under the inverted rock by toasting their glass and saying in Assyrian “al khouba d’sleewa dmeekha al patou” which means “to the love of the cross laying face down.”

Sitting other repercussions like the possible extinction of artisans native to the area, for example the Baz community, known as master masons and blacksmiths. Now there are no more Baznayee fabricating these products and the vocabulary of that craft has vanished.

Another example are the people of Giramon who are master weavers of traditional clothing like you see here, our Assyrian traditional dress...and yes, some still weave and try to pass their talents to the next generation, but because of the low demand and machine made imports we are witnessing a steady decrease of the craft. Artisans such as weavers, blacksmiths and masons as well as farming and hunting are threatened.

Finally Mr. Chair, like endangered species, languages and even entire cultures can slip silently into extinction. Artifacts may remain: broken shards, tombs, engraved monuments, but the rich patterns of life, the sound of human voices, the hopes and fears that inspired generations fade slowly into anonymous silence.” Lets work together to prevent the possibility of such a tragedy. Thank you.

29th May 2013

12th Session

New York 20-31 May 2013

Item 8

Delivered by Shoushan Tower

Mr. Chair,

Honorable indigenous brothers and sisters and the indigenous people of this land
Shlama Loukhoon/Good Afternoon!

1. My name is Shoushan Tower and I am representing the Assyrian Aid Society of Iraq, a humanitarian organization dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Assyrian culture and heritage.

In reference to Madam Amina Mohammed and the Panelist from Italy regarding empowerment, implementation and “hitting the ground running” when we are considering the 2015 Millennium Development Goals, we are here as the indigenous people of a region that is in desperate need of consideration. We would hope that by the end of this forum, our passion has been communicated and we will be included in the MDG’s agenda. Not just for the sake of the indigenous Assyrians of Iraq but the sake of all the indigenous people of that region.

The Assyrian Aid Society -Iraq has been established since 1991, there has been a need for AAS to continue to respond to crises that surrounded the Northern Iraq region. During these periods AAS had a need to established relief programs and rebuild destroyed villages, as this was the consequence prior to 1991 where most of the destruction of these villages occurred. And since then AAS charitable work has increased dramatically due the destruction of these villages, which extended to include activities by providing funds to:

Assyrian Education including Dormitories and providing transport.

Agriculture – including irrigation systems and reviving destroyed farm land

After 2003 war in Iraq, AAS burden and its responsibilities to the Assyrian communities further intensified mainly to economic hardship especially in Nineveh Plains, Kirkuk and Baghdad. In 2006 AAS provided monetary assistance for relief programs to the internally displaced people who fled from their cities, towns and villages to safer areas within Iraq. AAS relies upon Funds provided to support these activities mainly from AAS in America, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Germany, Sweden & United Kingdom, as well as other Assyrian organizations around the globe including funds from Non-Assyrian organizations.

Assyrian Aid Society has huge burdens with its ongoing struggle in keeping up with all its activities in order to aid the Assyrian communities in Iraq. Therefore, the funding situation doesn't fulfill the necessary day-to-day demands and the survival of the Assyrian communities has become a need far beyond the means of the Assyrian Aid Society. Madam Joan Carling mentioned the disconnect between the global agenda and the actual people on the ground...this applies directly to the indigenous Assyrian.

The reason for requesting the inclusion of Assyrians in the MDG 2015 is to help us preserve and prosper and prevent the extinction by:-

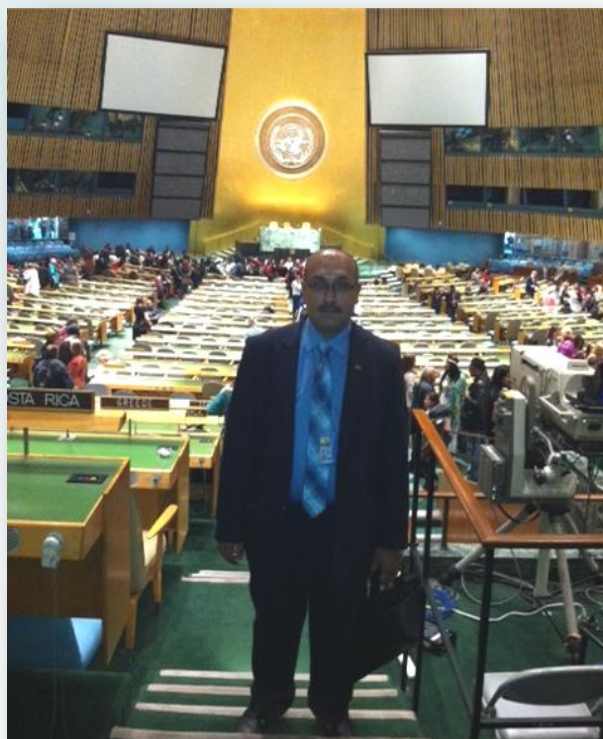
- Supporting the Assyrian Education and transportation needs .
- Preparing to respond to the current crises in Syria, where hundreds of Assyrians are returning to Iraq seeking refuge.
- Rebuild destroyed villages and its roads to enable the return of the original inhabitants.
- Continue to aid farmers, various projects and build irrigation systems.
- Creating job opportunities for internal displaced people, women and recent university graduates.

In conclusion, the ongoing assistance provided by AAS continues to preserve the language and culture of the Assyrian people living in Iraq. In the event we acquire such representation from the United Nations, we will not only be able to improve the lives of Assyrians in Iraq, but this will insure the continuity of this ancient culture. Additionally this will help to reduce migration of Assyrians from their homeland.

Thank you

AAS participation at the United Nation NY 12th Session Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues:

- Meeting Dr. William Eshaya, Deputy Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations.
- Meeting Deputy Permanent Representative of Federal Republic of Russia to the United Nations.
- Meeting Vatican Ambassador to the United Nations.
- Meeting Dr. Beatrice Duncan from the UNICEF.
- Meeting Deputy Permanent Representative of Republic of Turkey to the United Nations.
- Meeting with the representative of the USAID to the United Nations.
- Meeting Mr. Carlo Kanje, the responsible for AUA in the USA.
- Meeting with AASA's President and Board members.
- Participation in Mesopotamian Nights Festivity.
- Meeting the representatives of the Evangelical Churches of San Jose.
- Meeting the members of the Assyrian National Council of Illinois, and participating in the dialogue session held by the Council.
- Meeting His Holiness Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East





The Visit of Mr. Ashur Yoseph, President of the Assyrian Aid Society of America, and his activities:

- Supporting Chaldoassyrian youth and Students Union in Semel to buy a computer.
- Supporting Chaldoassyrian youth and Students Union in Duhok.
- Supporting Urhai Basic school in Sarsing to buy (2) split units.
- Supporting Bahra school in Semel to buy (1) split unit.
- Supporting Ebn Al-ebry school in Bartella to buy a lap tap.
- Supporting Ebn Al-Hunain school in Bartella to buy a computer.
- Supporting Nasebin high school in Duhok to buy a computer.
- Supporting Nohadra primary school in Duhok to buy kitchen needs.
- Supporting Dure school in Barwar.
- Supporting Jam Rabatke school in Nahla to by (2) split units.
- Supporting Hezanke school in Nahla to by (2) split units.
- Supporting AASI in Bartella.
- Helping a number of the Syrian Refugees in Duhok.





The Supporters in 2013:

- Assyrian Aid Society of America.
- Assyrian Aid Society of Australia.
- Assyrian Aid Society of Canada.
- Assyrian Aid Society of Sweden.
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- Assyrian Medical Society-USA.
- Assyrian National Council in Illinois-USA.
- Mr. Younadam Youkhanna-USA.
- Group of Donators.
- Father. Horst Oberkampf, Solidarity Group for TurAbdin & Northern Iraq.
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg -Germany.
- SALT Foundation-Holland.
- Ishtar Society-Sweden.
- Assyrian Union Clubs in Goteborg-Sweden.
- Assyrian Club in Goteborg- Sweden.
- Assyria Organization-Holland.
- Mr. Sargon Lazar Slewo, Minister of Environment.
- Assyrian Students Union – Sweden.
- Assyrian Students Union- Central Europe.



Conclusion:

Through this report, we would like to present our appreciation and thankfulness to all of our supporters: Assyrian Aid Societies worldwide, Assyrian Organizations, the Humanitarian and Friend Organizations and Churches, who tried, and are still trying, to assist our Nation to stand and be powerful through its Education and Culture.

