



Initiators Organization for Human Rights & Democracy

Iraqi Gypsies Suffer the Government's Systematic Racial Discrimination and Social Exclusion

Gypsies in Iraq is a minority ethnic group. According to some resource, in 2005, they were 50 thousand live in villages or live as separated groups at the Iraqi big cities' borders such as Baghdad, Al diwaniya, Diyala, Mosul, and Mothana. They are suffering from the official government's systematic racial discrimination and exclusion resulted the deprivation of their rights that were secured by the Iraqi constitution, quality principle, Article 14 of the constitution. In addition, this discrimination was the main reason of this ethnic group's poverty, illiteracy; and deprive them from getting any public services, or any public employment.

Iraq considers among the first countries that joined and ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, in 1970. Reviewing the Iraq periodic report, It shows clearly the Iraqi government's ignorance to the issue of Gypsies. In 2014 Iraq report, the discussion committee, in their concluding recommendations, requested Iraq to take active steps to correct the inhuman situation of Iraqi Gypsies such as poverty, illiteracy, bad health services, unemployment, and deprivation of the public services), and to respect the equality before the law principle for all Iraqis that was secured by the Iraqi constitution, which includes this group of Iraqis as long as other Iraqi groups enabling them to enjoy their rights by the Iraqi laws. 2017 Iraq report, Iraq repeated the same ignorance policy of the Iraqi Gypsies issue; this report did not even mentioned the term of "Gypsies"; also, The Iraqi national team who wrote the report did not respond to the concluding recommendations by the convention committee, which make it very criticized position that required questioning.

Iraq should adopt an active and productive role on the national level and as a member of an international convention. Iraq has a national obligation before its international obligation that was secured by the Iraqi constitution article (14)" Iraqis are equal before the law without any discrimination because of gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, believes, thoughts, financial or social status." The translation of this article should be through legislating a law or laws that explain the meaning of the "equality" that was given by the constitution; and state the penalties in case of any violation, which will lead to the correct application.

Iraq did not adopt any legislation that define the racial discrimination, and it did not amend its existing laws and legislations to be in consistent with the international convention. Iraqi active criminal law No 111 of 1969 did not criminalize the discrimination. In fact, there is no national remedies in case of any discrimination which will deprive someone rights that were secured by the law. For example, the Gypsies in Iraq deprived their rights of public employment, public service, housing, education, socially excluded, and all other rights without any existing law that permits such deprivation. Furthermore, Gypsies have no right to obtain the national unified card which was determined by the law as a right to all Iraqis. Alhurra Channel published a documentation about this violation at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7Ss5Wc2xeM>

You can also visit below links for more media reports that document the Iraqi Gypsies suffering in other Iraqi cities such as Diyala, Al Diwaniya, and Mosul:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7Ss5Wc2xeM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NhC9BBvr7g>



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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPHxPbxLH7Y>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmYVE2Tvcl0>

The convention committee encouraged Iraq to fight the inequality and develop the marginalized areas as a step of the strategic plan to eliminate the poverty and illiteracy. Moreover, it recommended Iraq to take active measures to ease the social and economic situations for the Iraqi black and Gypsies in purpose of enhancing their living conditions including their chance to get basic and higher education, health service, housing, employment without aggravation or stereotyping. In addition, Iraq should take additional steps to treat the root causes of marginalization and poverty of the Iraqi black and Gypsies including the indirect discrimination that might face them. Furthermore, Iraq should review its legislation system to be consistent with its international obligations.

IOHRD, recommends Iraqi government to respect its international obligations according to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Also, Iraq should be guided, in planning its strategy, by the convention committee's recommendation No, 27, which draw a clear path to stand against the crime of racial discrimination and end it.

<http://www.iohrd.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Committee-on-the-Elimination-of-Racial-Discrimination-General-Recommendation-27.pdf>