

Rt Hon David Cameron MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA
21st December 2015

Dear Prime Minister,

Genocide perpetrated by Daesh/ISIS against minorities

We write to ask you to meet a delegation of Members from both Houses and all parties to discuss our profound concern at what is now clearly best described as “genocide” being perpetrated by Daesh against minority communities including Iraqi and Syrian Christians, Yazidis and other vulnerable groups.

There is now clear evidence that this genocide includes assassinations of Church leaders; mass murders; torture, kidnapping for ransom in the Christian communities of Iraq and Syria; sexual enslavement and systematic rape of Christian girls and women; forcible conversions to Islam; destruction of churches, monasteries, cemeteries, and Christian artifacts; and theft of lands and wealth from Christian clergy and laity alike. ISIS has made its own public statements taking “credit” for mass murder of Christians, and expressing its intent to eliminate Christian communities from its “Islamic State”.

As you know, “genocide” is defined by the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide which makes it quite clear that genocide is not simply the random killing of individuals, but is rather a systematic killing or seriously harming of people because they are part of a recognisable group. That group may be “national, ethnic, racial or religious” and the treaty identifies “acts committed with intent to destroy [that group] in whole or in part.”

There is no doubt in our minds that the targeting of Christians and other religious minorities by Daesh falls within that definition. We hope that by meeting with us we will have the opportunity to convince you to use all the influence of Her Majesty’s Government at the United Nations to obtain an agreement that the word “genocide” should be used.

This is not simply a matter of semantics. There would be two main benefits from the acceptance by the U.N. that genocide is being perpetrated. First, it would send a very clear message to those organizing and undertaking this slaughter that at some point in the future they will be held accountable by the international community for their actions; they will be caught, tried and punished. Second, it would encourage the 127 nations that are signatories to the Convention to face up to their duty to take the necessary action to “prevent and punish” the perpetrators of these evil acts. We do hope that you will give this request for an urgent meeting your most careful and sympathetic consideration.

We look forward to hearing from you.
Yours ever,

Rob Ffello MP
Convenor
Catholic Legislators’ Network

Lord Alton of Liverpool
Vice Chair
All-Party Parliamentary Group on Freedom of Religion or belief

And the following signatories:

Richard Arkless MP
Lord Avebury
Lord Brennan QC
Baroness Brinton
Alan Brown MP
David Burrowes MP
Sir William Cash MP
Maria Caulfield MP
The Bishop of Chester
Rosie Cooper MP
Lord Cotter
Baroness Cox
Mary Creagh MP
Alex Cunningham MP
Rt Rev Lord Eames
Lord Edmiston
Lord Evans of Weardale KCB DL
Lord German OBE
Stephen Gethins MP
Mary Glindon MP
Mary Goudie MP
Lord Gordon
Field Marshal Lord Guthrie
Meg Hillier MP
Simon Hoare MP
Kate Hoey MP
Prof. Baroness Hollins
Philip Hollobone MP
Sir Gerald Howarth MP
Baroness Hooper
George Howarth MP
Mike Kane MP
Seema Kennedy MP
Lord Kilclooney
Jeremy Lefroy MP
Sir Edward Leigh MP
Rt Hon Peter Lilley MP
Rt Hon Lord Luce GCVO DL
Gordon Marsden MP
Baroness Masham
Lord McColl of Dulwich
Rt Hon Lord McFall of Alcluith
Conor McGinn MP
John McNally MP
Mark Menzies MP
Baroness O'Loan
Lord O'Shaughnessy
Mark Pritchard MP
The Bishop of Saint Albans

Lord Shinkwin
Gavin Shuker MP
Lord Singh of Wimbledon
Gary Streeter MP
Gisela Stuart MP
Derek Thomas MP
Michael Tomlinson MP
Tom Tugendhat MP
Andrew Turner MP
Derek Twigg MP
Lord Willis
Sammy Wilson MP
The Bishop of Worcester