



PRESS RELEASE

UPDATE: Munich Court delivers Verdict against Asia R.A. and Twana H.S. for Genocide, Crimes Against Humanity, and War Crimes Against Two Yazidi Girls

Date: Monday, 13 July 2026

Munich, Germany: Today, The Higher Regional Court of Munich has delivered its verdict in the trial against Asia R.A. and Twana H.S., an Iraqi-Kurdish couple accused of being members of the so-called Islamic State (ISIL) and participating in the enslavement, torture, sexual abuse, and rape of two Yazidi girls. The Court found the defendants guilty of committing, between 2015 and 2017 in Mosul, Iraq, and Deir ez-Zor, Syria, genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against two Yazidi children. Twana H.S. was convicted of sexually abusing the children, while Asia R.A. was found guilty of aiding and abetting in the abuse.

Furthermore, Asia R.A. and Twana H.S. were convicted of the underlying act of forcibly transferring children, marking the first successful prosecution and conviction for this offense in Germany. The case also resulted in Germany's first conviction for the crime of forced religious conversion.

Because Asia R.A. was a minor when the crimes were committed, she received a juvenile sentence of nine and a half years in prison. Twana H.S. was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The couple was arrested in Germany in April 2024 following allegations relating to international crimes committed against two Yazidi girls. According to the indictment, the survivors were five and twelve years old when they were purchased in 2015 from a slave market in Mosul and in 2017 from a military base in Syria, respectively. The oldest survivor was freed in 2018 and testified during the trial, which [began](#) in May 2025, while the younger child remains missing and is believed to still be in captivity in Syria.

This historic first-instance verdict marks a significant milestone in the pursuit of justice and accountability in Germany's tenth trial concerning crimes committed by ISIL, contributing to a growing body of case law addressing atrocities committed by ISIL against Yazidis. Asia R.A. and Twana H.S. were prosecuted under the universal jurisdiction principle which allows national courts to try international crimes committed abroad.

During the verdict reading, **Presiding Judge Philipp Stoll quoted from the Yazidi witness' testimony the Yazidi:** "We Yazidi women were the slaves – even dogs were valued more highly than us."

After the proceedings, the lawyer of one of the survivors, Natalie von Wistinghausen stated: "Our client is relieved that the trial is over and that the accused have been convicted to long prison sentences, even though no punishment can heal the deep wounds that she will carry all her life. She hopes that other girls who have endured similar atrocities will one day see accountability for the crimes committed against them. She also welcomed the Presiding Judge's recognition of the courage of the Yazidi survivors and his hope that their testimony will contribute to restoring the Yazidi people's confidence and hope."

Natia Navrouzov, Executive Director at Yazda, commented: "This landmark verdict in Germany's tenth trial concerning ISIL crimes marks another significant step toward justice for the Yazidi community. It reflects Germany's continued leadership in using universal jurisdiction to hold perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes accountable. While no verdict can

erase the suffering of survivors, today's judgment reinforces that these crimes will not go unpunished and that the pursuit of justice must continue.” A representative of Yazda, Riyadh Adi, Yazda Consultant Investigations and Case-Building, attended the hearing to keep the Yazidi community informed of the proceedings. Having supported this case for a long time, today he reaffirmed Yazda's commitment to pursuing accountability and justice for the Yazidi community and all victims of ISIL.

-END-

For media inquiries, please contact:

info@yazda.org

About Yazda:

Yazda is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that was established in 2014 in response to the genocide committed by the self-declared Islamic State (ISIS) against the Yazidis and other minorities in Iraq. Yazda manages a portfolio of humanitarian, justice, advocacy, and development-related projects, all of which are community and survivor-centered in terms of design and implementation. Since its inception, Yazda has been working with local and international partners to provide humanitarian, accountability, and advocacy services to vulnerable minority groups in Iraq in their post-genocide recovery. The organization has been operating in Iraq since October 2014 and has main offices in Duhok in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and a branch office in Sinjar in Nineveh Province. Yazda is registered as a non-profit organization in the United States, the United Kingdom, Iraq, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Since its creation, Yazda has received support from numerous donors, both institutional and individual, and has reached tens of thousands of direct and indirect beneficiaries through its programs and initiatives.