

PRESS RELEASE

Strengthening Survivor-Led Advocacy: Yazda Announces the Establishment of the Survivors Rise Network

Date: 10 September 2026

Iraq: Yazda announces today the establishment of the Survivors Rise Network (SRN), an advocacy platform bringing together survivors from diverse communities. The SRN aims to strengthen collective action, foster mutual support, and promote the meaningful participation of survivors of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in decision-making processes.

Guided by the Network's vision, values, and priorities, members will lead joint advocacy efforts and engage with government institutions, civil society organizations, diplomatic missions, and international partners to build collaboration and advance long-term change.

Since 2014, Yazda has worked alongside survivors of ISIL atrocities to advance justice, foster accountability, and promote survivors' rights in Iraq. This work has included support for individual advocates, the establishment of the Yazidi Survivors Network (YSN) in 2019, and the launch of the Know Your Rights (KYR) Programme in 2024, equipping survivors with the knowledge, skills, and platforms to influence policy and champion their rights.

Building on this foundation, the SRN was shaped through consultation and co-creation with KYR graduates and survivor advocates. By placing lived experience at its core, the Network seeks to translate survivors' perspectives into coordinated action and leadership while remaining responsive to their evolving needs and constraints.

Members of the Survivors Rise Network commented:

"We are not merely survivors of the past—we are leaders shaping the future. Through the Survivors Rise Network, we come together from different communities, united by a shared commitment to justice, dignity, and the restoration of our rights. By standing together and leading our own advocacy, we transform our lived experiences into collective strength, ensuring that survivors are not only heard but are at the center of the decisions that shape our future."

Yazda will support the SRN in its activities, championing this model and helping ensure that members are meaningfully positioned at the center of leadership, decision-making, and advocacy.

Natia Navrouzov, Executive Director at Yazda, commented:

"Working with and for survivors has been at the heart of Yazda's mission since our founding. Over the past twelve years, we have supported individual survivor advocates and helped create spaces where survivors can organize, lead, and shape the policies that affect their lives. The Survivors Rise Network represents the culmination of that journey and of a year of consultations with survivors themselves. It transforms the lessons we have learned into a sustainable, survivor-

led platform for collective advocacy. We call on governments, donors, civil society, and international partners to engage with the Network, amplify survivors' voices, and invest in their long-term leadership and advocacy."

The SRN was established with the support of the SPACE Programme, funded by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and implemented by GIZ. Yazda and SRN members extend their sincere gratitude for this valuable partnership and continued commitment to advancing survivor-led initiatives in Iraq.

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For media inquiries, please contact:

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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.

About the Survivors Rise Network:

The Survivors Rise Network (SRN) is an inclusive, survivor-led platform that brings together trained survivor advocates from different communities to strengthen collective advocacy, promote collaboration and meaningful survivor participation, and engage with institutions and partners to advance the rights of survivors of ISIL atrocities.

By working collectively, the Network seeks to strengthen survivor leadership and contribute to more inclusive and survivor-centred policies and decision-making processes. Guided by the principles of survivor leadership, inclusion, dignity, respect, a survivor-centred approach, and Do No Harm, the Network advocates for truth, justice, reparations, accountability, and guarantees of non-repetition.

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