



PRESS RELEASE

Yazda formalizes partnership with the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic (IIMP)

Geneva/Sinjar, 18 August 2026 – Yazda and the Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic (IIMP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) formalizing their cooperation to strengthen the sharing of information and documentation to clarify the fate of all missing persons and support their families.

Established by the United Nations General Assembly through resolution 77/301 in June 2023, following sustained advocacy by Syrian families of the missing and civil society, the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic (IIMP) is mandated to clarify the fate and whereabouts of all missing persons in Syria and to provide adequate support to victims, survivors and the families of those who are missing. The Institution works in close cooperation and complementarity with relevant actors, placing families at the centre of its efforts and supporting a coordinated, inclusive and humanitarian approach to addressing the issue of missing persons.

Yazda is a global Yazidi-led, survivor-centered organization dedicated to protecting the rights of the Yazidi community and supporting survivors of atrocities committed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Established in 2014, Yazda works across justice and accountability, advocacy, humanitarian assistance, and community recovery, including supporting the documentation and prosecution of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes committed against Yazidis. Yazda also supports the families of missing Yazidis by advancing efforts to determine the fate of those who remain unaccounted for following the genocide. Through the identification of victims from mass graves, the collection of DNA reference samples, and advocacy for families' right to know what happened to their loved ones, Yazda helps provide long-awaited answers to families while supporting justice and preserving the historical record.

As many Yazidis remain missing, Yazda's long-standing experience documenting cases of missing persons, combined with IIMP's mandate and expertise in data management will support families' right to know the truth about their loved ones' fate through a victim and survivor centred approach. This partnership aims to ensure that information and documentation on missing persons are responsibly preserved, protected, and can support future justice processes while safeguarding the rights and well-being of survivors and their families.

Natia Navrouzov, Yazda Executive Director, stated: "Since 2014, Yazda has supported efforts to identify, protect, and document mass grave sites, facilitating cooperation among national authorities, forensic experts, and international mechanisms on exhumations and investigations in line with international standards. By partnering with the IIMP, we will amplify truth-seeking efforts and work jointly to promote the rights and dignity of victims, survivors, and their families."



Karla Quintana, the Head of the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic (IIMP) , stated: "Families have spent years searching for answers about the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones. Partnerships such as this one are essential because they help ensure that valuable information is preserved, handled responsibly and can contribute to a coordinated search effort. We welcome Yazda's commitment and look forward to working together in support of victims, survivors and families."

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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. Over the past 8 years, Yazda has grown to employ around 80 staff on average, 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 IIMP:

The Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic (IIMP) is a humanitarian and independent UN entity, established by the UN General Assembly on 29 June 2023 in response to urgent calls for action from family members of Syria's thousands of missing persons to determine their fate and whereabouts. It has a unique and unprecedented mandate, as it is the first UN body focused on missing persons in a specific context. Its mission is to clarify the fate and whereabouts of all missing persons in Syria, and to provide adequate support to the families of those missing. The Institution's work is built on a victim-centred approach, the full and meaningful



participation of families and survivors, non-duplication and cooperation with existing actors, and gender sensitivity and inclusivity across all areas of its work.