



Cultural Rights in Iraq

RASHID International



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Research Assessment & Safeguarding of the Heritage of Iraq in Danger

About us

- **Mission:** Protect and safeguard cultural heritage of Iraq
- **International non-profit organization**
 - Non-profit and charitable status in Germany
 - ECOSOC Consultative Status since 2019
- **Publications**
 - Five reports in response to calls from UN
 - Written submission to UPR of Iraq
 - 117-page report on Yazidi genocide
 - Peer-reviewed paper in International Journal of Heritage Studies

Outline of Statement

- **State of UPR regarding Iraq**
 - Cultural Rights neglected
 - Not mentioned in Recommendations or Working Group report
- **Outline of Statement**
 - 1) The Protection of Cultural Heritage in Armed Conflict
 - 2) The Illicit Trafficking of Antiquities
 - 3) Uncontrolled Development
 - 4) The Situation of the Yazidi Minority

1. Heritage in Armed Conflict

- **Problem**
 - Security situation unstable, renewed conflict possible
- **Recommendations**
 - a) Accede to the **Second Protocol** to the **1954 Hague Convention** for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict by the year 2020
 - b) Nominate cultural property for inscription on the **List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection**
 - c) World Heritage sites are automatically eligible and should be nominated immediately
 - d) Iraq should create a **National Blue Shield Committee**

2. Illicit Trafficking of Antiquities

- **Problems**
 - Illicit trade in antiquities fuels terrorism and organized crime
 - Death penalty for certain antiquities-related crimes
- **Recommendations**
 - a) Law No. 55 of 2002 should be amended and the **death penalty removed** as soon as possible
 - b) Iraq should create **digital inventories for all museums**, as well as **geo-referenced maps of archaeological sites** and make these available to Europol and Interpol
 - c) Iraq should accede to the **1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects**
 - d) Iraq should **re-establish the system of site guards** that effectively protected archaeological sites until 2003; the international community should provide financial assistance as Iraq is facing a budget crisis

3. Uncontrolled Development

- **Problems**
 - Tendering procedures are non-transparent
 - Lack of quality standards, certifications and oversight
- **Recommendations**
 - a) Define and enforce **certification and quality standards** for building contractors
 - b) Ensure that **non-commercial interests**, such as the preservation of cultural heritage, are given **sufficient weight during planning and construction processes**
 - c) Ensure that even **greater care** is taken during the **planning and construction of dams**

4. Situation of Yazidi Minority

- **Problems**
 - Consequences of ISIS' genocide against the Yazidis threaten the long-term survival of the community in Iraq
 - Cultural heritage destruction was a significant facet of the genocide
- **Recommendations**
 - a) Iraq should make every effort to include and maintain **Lalish Temple** and the surrounding landscape on the **World Heritage List** to ensure that the heart of Yazidism survives
 - b) Iraq should **guarantee** that **Yazidis remain the sole guardians of Lalish Temple** and the holy lands surrounding it and register the lands in their name

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