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International Law Experts Respond to U.S. Recognition of Genocide by Daesh (ISIS)

Washington, DC—US Secretary of State John Kerry [announced](#) that Daesh is committing genocide against ethnic minorities, including Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims. This is the first genocide the US has recognized since Darfur in 2004.

“Daesh captured and enslaved thousands of Yazidi girls – selling them at auction, raping them at will, and destroying the communities in which they had lived for countless generations,” Kerry said. “The full facts must be brought to light by an independent investigation and through formal legal determination made by a competent court or tribunal...the United States will strongly support efforts to collect, document, preserve, and analyze the evidence of atrocities and we will do all we can to see that the perpetrators are held accountable.”

This recognition is an important step for the US to fulfilling its leadership role and duties under the Genocide Convention to make sure that genocide is prevented, suppressed and punished including by rescuing women and girls and supporting prosecutions at the ICC

The Global Justice Center (GJC) has urged the International Criminal Court to investigate Daesh crimes against the Yazidi as genocide, in particular crimes against women that include rape, torture, and forcible marriage, impregnation, abortions. (See recent filing with ICC Prosecutor [here](#).)

Secretary Kerry’s remarks come on the heels of the [historic resolution](#) passed by the European Parliament in February that Daesh is committing genocide against religious minorities. “Global consensus is building to stop the genocide Daesh is committing,” said GJC President Janet Benshoof. “It is now time for the US to turn this rhetoric into action and push for a referral to the International Criminal Court to hold Daesh accountable, and take immediate steps to rescue the thousands of Yazidi women and girls still enduring genocide in captivity.”

“We must do everything we can to ensure these woman and girls obtain the justice they deserve,” Benshoof said.

For more information contact:

Stephanie Olszewski (New York), solszewski@globaljusticecenter.net +1.212.725.6530 ext. 211