



European Parliament

Members of the European Parliament



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## Sakharov nominees: “The EU can do more than a prize: it must recognise our genocide”

**Strasbourg, Monday 12 December**

- **The two human rights prize laureates ask the EU to recognise and stop ISIS’s ongoing genocide of the Yazidi**
- **104 Members of the European Parliament ask the EU High Representative to recognise the genocide and protect survivors**

Tomorrow the European Parliament will award its annual Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Nadia Murad and Lamya Haji Bashar.

The two Yazidi women were captured by ISIS in their home area of Sinjar, Iraq, in 2014. They escaped after several months of enslavement and now live in Germany.

**Nadia Murad and Lamya Haji Bashar** said: “We are grateful and honoured to receive the Sakharov Prize, but the EU can and must do more. **The EU must call this what it is: a genocide of our people.**”

“The EU must call for its prosecution and international accountability for ISIS, for example before the International Criminal Court, Tribunal, or a special court.”

“We ask that the EU and all those concerned with the fate of Syria and Iraq establish a safe zone to protect the Yazidis, Christians and other vulnerable minorities in Sinjar and the Nineveh Plain.”

“If the world can’t protect the Yazidis in our homeland, we ask Europe to give us a safe new home.”

The United States recognised the ongoing genocide of the Yazidi by ISIS in March this year, and the United Nations in June. The EU has not yet formally acknowledged this genocide; the European Parliament is the only EU institution to have done so in February 2016, asking EU member states to take action.

104 Members of the European Parliament wrote to the High Representative of the EU, Federica Mogherini, to recognise the genocide targeting women and girls, and call for its prosecution.

The letter's co-authors, **Lars Adaktusson** (Sweden, EPP), **Beatriz Becerra** (Spain, ALDE), **Sylvie Guillaume** (France, S&D), **Heidi Hautala** (Finland, Greens/EFA), **Virginie Rozière** (France, S&D), and **Marietje Schaake** and **Sophie in 't Veld** (Netherlands, ALDE) added: "Together with 98 other colleagues, we ask the EU High Representative and Member States to officially recognise and call for the prosecution of this ongoing genocide."

"The European Parliament recognised this genocide and called for a safe return zone in February. We hope Nadia and Lamya will receive more attention with this prize."

Nadia Murad is UN Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Human Trafficking Survivors, and laureate of the Council of Europe Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2016. She addressed the UN Security Council in December 2015, asking world leaders to stop ISIS.

## Press contacts

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- To reach the Members of the European Parliament cited, please contact their office directly. Numbers are available on the European Parliament's [website](#).

## Links and further context

- [Letter: 104 MEPs ask the EU High Representative to recognise ISIS genocide](#) (April 2016)
- [European Parliament recognises ISIS genocide against Yazidis, Christians and other religious minorities](#) (February 2016)
- [U.S. Secretary of State recognises ISIS genocide against Yazidis, Christians and Muslims](#) (March 2016)
- [United Nations recognise ISIS genocide against Yazidis](#) (June 2016)
- The [Global Justice Center](#) is a New York-based organisation advocating for women's rights in international law since 2005, and accredited to the UN.