

Peaceful Coexistence Principles in Nineveh Post-Liberation

On March 31, 2016, a group comprised of 30 tribal leaders from Nineveh Province, along with a delegation from the National Reconciliation Committee of the Prime Minister's Office (NRC) and the Governor of Nineveh, committed to respecting and upholding a series of principles for peaceful coexistence in the province following its liberation from the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The signed commitment by the tribal leaders is the culmination of an overall process involving dialogues, meetings and interviews with the tribal factions that focused on highlighting the best ways to achieve stability, civil peace and justice in Nineveh during and post-liberation operations against ISIL.

The signed commitment paper includes several recommendations that the tribal leaders and government stakeholders agreed to support in Nineveh, which has tolerated years of instability due to criminal activities undertaken by armed factions and extremist groups since 2003 and until its occupation by ISIL. This occupation currently includes vast areas of the beloved province since mid-2014.

ISIL has committed atrocious crimes against civilians who have opposed them. The crimes have extended to harm various groups in Nineveh that have been living in peace and harmony for hundreds of years, which is clearly an attempt to destroy the bonds and peaceful relations among and between them. Today we, the signatories of this document, are full of hope that as ISIL deteriorates – and it is receiving consecutive defeats due to the efforts of the Iraqi army, Peshmerga forces, and volunteers who are committed to liberate Nineveh from ISIL – life and peace will brought back to Nineveh and its people once again.

In order to reach this agreed upon purpose, we as tribal leaders and representatives of our communities, have agreed, with the help and support of Sanad for Peacebuilding Organization (Sanad) and the NRC, upon the following principles presented below. The efforts of Sanad and the NRC in achieving these principles are greatly appreciated. Thus we, the signatories, have adhered to respect and uphold the content of the following items:

First

The Main Principles and Considered Mechanisms:

1. Declaring to condemn and disavow the ISIL terrorist group and its criminal acts, as well as declaring to disavow everyone who took part in killing, displacing, kidnapping, incitement, and other threatening acts against the law.
2. To stand in solidarity with the families of victims of terrorist actions.
3. Adhering to the law and enabling the local authorities to provide justice and deliver fair punishment to the perpetrators involved with ISIL.
4. To refrain from generalizing ISIL crimes over areas, tribes, and individuals who did not cooperate with ISIL.
5. To fully commit to citizenship principles with regard to the related rights and duties.

6. To commit to Human Rights Principles.
7. Rejecting extremist religious and political speech that generates violence.
8. To reject biased media and subversive propaganda.
9. To consider dialogue and non-violent approaches as a way of resolving issues among individuals and local communities in post liberation period.
10. Enforcing the rule of law and moving away from militarization of the community and widespread arming outside the legal and official frameworks.

Second

Considered mechanisms and recommendations:

1. Our tribes declare they are innocent and did not participate in the atrocious crimes committed by ISIL.
2. Full cooperation with security and legal agencies to achieve justice for innocent people and victims of ISIL, as well as holding accountable those who were involved with ISIL.
3. Supporting the State's authority and justice.
4. To cooperate and have joint action with moderate religious figures and other influential figures, urging them to consider the speeches that would enforce national cohesion and renouncing the differences.
5. Continuous cooperation with civil and military institutions to resolve the factors that led to the appearance of ISIL, as well as preventing ISIL to return back to the liberated areas in the future.
6. To encourage and help judicial authority to hold accountable the parties who contributed in supporting ISIL as well as promoting false ideas during the occupation of the areas by ISIL. Those have contributed in misguiding internal and external public opinion
7. To assert pressure on the federal government to urge the payment of the salaries and financial dues to the official employees surrounded inside the areas controlled by ISIL, and to reimburse the farmers who have financial dues for the years 2014 - 2015.
8. To release a tribal covenant bounding the tribes and the areas to cooperate in revealing ISIL members and to criminalize housing them.
9. To identify a clear and transparent mechanism to avoid repeating mistakes committed through (the confidential informant experience), and to find solutions for spiteful lawsuits issue that is misguiding to justice.
10. To find solutions for the problems facing internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the surrounded people as well as increase the support for them and easing their hardships through the support of international community and local organizations.

11. Demanding to speed counting and damage extent survey procedures and to compensate terrorist victims groups and military operations, in which their dignity and humanity are preserved by all means.
12. To form sub-committees all over districts and rural areas that would assess and record the damages resulted from terrorist acts and military operations through facilitating and easing the procedures through reconsidering the formations of the former committees.
13. To work efficiently on preserving religious, demographic, cultural, national, and sectarian diversity in Nineveh province.
14. To enable and follow up with the implementation of the resolutions approved by the parliamentary committee that is formed to investigate around the circumstances of the fall of Mosul.
15. To form popular councils and committees comprised of tribal leaders and community leaders to monitor and follow up with the implementation of IDPs return procedures, infrastructure reconstruction, and providing compensation in the affected areas.
16. Enabling the official order about accepting volunteers from Nineveh to participate in the liberation operations.
17. The recommendations and mechanisms will be implemented in coordination with the prime minister's office represented by National Reconciliation Implementation and Follow up committee and its local and international partners as well as the local government.
18. To enhance the participation of women in achieving peaceful coexistence according to the resolution of the Security Council 1325 - 2000 related to women participation in peacebuilding during post conflict period.
19. To work and cooperate with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education to include curriculums focusing on peacebuilding and renouncing violence and extremism.