



# Cultural Rights in Iraq

RASHID International



# 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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Research Assessment & Safeguarding of the Heritage of Iraq in Danger

## Contact

Web: [www.rashid-international.org](http://www.rashid-international.org)

E-Mail: [s.fobbe@rashid-international.org](mailto:s.fobbe@rashid-international.org)