



PRIME MINISTER

**Mr. Herman van Rompuy**  
President of the European Council

Brussels

*Budapest, 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014*

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing this letter to you in connection with the situation in Northern Iraq, which is becoming untenable day by day.

My Government is seriously concerned about the extreme violence that already threatens the mere existence of the Christian community. Reports saying that up to a quarter of Iraq's Christians are fleeing their homes after Islamic militants seized Qaraqosh, the Christian minority's biggest town in the country, are especially worrying. The survival of Christians in Iraq is at stake. We believe that strong political response is needed.

The concerns of the Union as to the situation of the minorities in the Middle East region have been recalled by the European Council. I have raised our joint responsibility to protect the Christian communities already several times, last time during the discussion about the situation in Syria at the European Council. The recent developments in Iraq call for immediate actions by the European Union to prevent the genocide of the Christian minorities in Northern Iraq.

Dear Mr. President, I would like to ask you to put the issue of the situation of the Christian community in Iraq on the agenda of the upcoming European Council at the end of August. I would like to confirm that Hungary supports any solution which guarantees the existence and future of the Christian community in the country.

Please find attached the statement issued by my Government on the situation in Iraq.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Orbán Viktor'.

ORBÁN Viktor

## **The Government of Hungary**

### **Press Statement on the Iraqi situation**

Budapest, 8 August 2014

The Government of Hungary is seriously concerned about and strongly condemns the senseless violence based on radical ideology, which through the military advancement of the so called Islamic State (IS) terrorist organization in Iraq resulted in the deterioration of the security situation and in particular through the increased religious violence threatens the security of the entire Middle Eastern region and the mere existence of the Christian communities. We are particularly concerned about reports that up to a quarter of Iraq's Christians are fleeing after Islamic militants seized Qaraqosh, the Christian minority's biggest town in the country. We find it dramatic that the previously 1.5 million-strong Iraqi Christian community in the last 10 years since the outbreak of the Iraqi crisis has shrunk to 400.000 people, while the present situation threatens the mere existence of this remaining community. Hungary's firm belief is that the international community must do everything to protect them.

We reiterate our firm commitment to Iraq's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and support the efforts of the central government to fight terrorism and restore its constitutional power on the territories occupied by the armed groups of the IS. We support any solution which strengthens the territorial integrity of Iraq and guarantees the existence and future of all ethnic and religious communities in the country, particularly that of the Christian community. The crisis cannot be solved by military means only. The government in Baghdad should make clear distinction between the terrorists and those moderate Sunnis striving for their legitimate rights. The crisis must be solved through established democratic institutions and by bringing on board the Sunni and Kurd communities. We welcome the election of the Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives (Sunni) and of the President of Iraq (Kurd). We hope that by the election of the Prime Minister Iraq will be able to move forward on the road of political stabilization. We acknowledge the role the Kurdish Autonomic Region plays in maintaining security in the North and we do hope that the Kurdish leadership continues to be a stabilizing factor.