

## **Concept Note: Responding to the Needs of Yazidi Women and Girls Captured by Da'esh**

**A Briefing at the United Nations by**

**Yazidi, Iraqi Activists Khaleel Aldakhi and Ameena Saeed Hassan**

More than two years ago, the terrorist group Da'esh launched a genocidal campaign against the Yazidi people and other minorities in northern Iraq. As part of its brutal onslaught, Da'esh abducts Yazidi women and girls and subjects them to rape and sexual slavery.

**Khaleel Aldakhi and Ameena Saeed Hasan**—a married couple living near the Iraq-Syria border—saw the horror and knew they had to help, so they set up a rescue network. They receive furtive calls from enslaved women and make the perilous journey to rescue them. They help survivors recover from trauma and press for international help for the Yazidi people. Khaleel, a lawyer, and Ameena, a former member of parliament, risk their lives to save these women and girls—a project they have made their life's work.

In their briefing Ameena and Khalil will provide an update on the current situation of the Yazidi community in Iraq. They will emphasize a three-part agenda for the international community:

1. **Freeing the abductees.** There are still thousands of Yazidi women and girls being held by Da'esh and presumed to be treated as sex slaves and subject to other abuses. Many of them are thought to be in Mosul, the largest city under Da'esh control. If and when Mosul is liberated, which seems imminent, the Yazidis will be vulnerable to further ill-treatment. What will the international community do to find and protect Yazidi survivors? The same applies to Raqqah, in Syria, the Da'esh capital. If Da'esh is pushed out of Raqqah, what will happen to Yazidi survivors?
2. **Supporting and rehabilitating freed survivors.** Many Yazidi survivors are living in under-resourced IDP camps in Iraqi Kurdistan. Ameena and Khaleel are interested in directing resources to support these survivors.
3. **The Yazidi future.** Thousands are living in camps and they want to go back to their homes in Sinjar province, but it is still not secure. The threat from ISIS remains. What will the international community do to make it possible for Yazidis to go home and rebuild their lives and communities?

The briefing will also feature remarks by the co-hosting governments and from Human Rights First. Khaleel and Ameena will receive the 2016 Human Rights First Award in New York on October 19, 2016.