

9.11 Nadia Murad Challenges Sex Slavery in the 21st Century

Source: <https://freedomfund.org/blog/5380/>, accessed December 15, 2018

Background: Nadia Murad Basee Taha was born in Kocho, Sinjar, Iraq in 1993. She is a member of a small non-Muslim ethnic minority known as the Yazidi. *Yazidism*, is a monotheistic religion that has roots in early Mesopotamian civilizations. In 2014, Nadia Murad was kidnapped by the Islamic State and held captive for three months before she escaped. While captive she was used as a sex slave. After her escape she eventually settled in Germany as a refugee where she founded Nadia's Initiative to help women and children victimized by genocide and human trafficking. In 2018, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.

Instructions: In 2015 Nadia Murad spoke to the United Nations Security Council on the problems of human trafficking and sexual enslavement. Below are excerpts from her speech.



Questions

1. Who is Nadia Murad?
2. What is sexual slavery?
3. Why does Nadia Murad open her speech by saying she speaks with “great sadness”?
4. What happened to women who refused to convert to Islam or who were deemed undesirable?
5. Nadia Murad calls the treatment of the Yazidi genocide. Do you agree? Explain.

Nadia Murad Basee Taha’s Statement to the United Nations Security Council (2015)

A. It is with great sadness, gratitude and hope that I stand before you today as one of the few survivors of one of the world’s oldest ethnic and religious group now threatened by extinction. I am here today to speak on the way the so-called Islamic State trafficked us, transformed the Yazidi women into Sex slaves, and the way IS committed a genocide against my people. I am here to tell what has happened to me and my community that lost hope is headed to the unknown, I am here also to speak on behalf of those who remain in captivity. I am here to speak about a global terrorist organization that came to end our existence, culture and freedom, to speak about the nightmare that change life for a community overnight.

B. Before August 3, 2014, I was living with my family in Kocho village with my single mother and brothers and sisters, our village was beautiful, we were living in peace. But on August 3rd, the militants of the Islamic State, attacked our areas and we found ourselves faced with a brutal genocide. These large groups of armed men of various nationalities in uniforms with weapons, had decided that the Yazidis were infidels and had to be eradicated. The Islamic State didn’t come to kill the women and girls, but to use us as spoils of war, as objects to be sold with little or to be gifted for free. Their cruelty was not merely opportunistic. The IS soldiers came with a pre-established policy to commit such crimes.

C. Islamic State had one intention, the destroy the Yazidi identity by force, rape, recruitment of children, and destruction of holy sites they captured, especially against the Yazidi woman where the used rape as a mean of destruction for Yazidi women and girls and ensuring these women will never return to a normal life. I was taken with some other 150 girls to Mosul, in a building in Mosul, there were thousands of Yazidi women of children and who previously captured by ISIL to be offered as gifts.

D. After three months of abduction, finally I was able to escape. Now I live in Germany. Thanks to Germany who accepted to treat me. But it was not only me who suffered, it was a collective suffering, The Islamic State gave us two choices, convert or die, for those who accepted to convert fearing their lives, their men were killed, women were enslaved and children were recruited. To date, 16 mass graves have been found, including a mass grave of 80 women who they didn’t desire, therefore decided to kill.