

# Yazidi supreme spiritual leader abducted to Russia to renounce autonomous Ezidikhan- Yazidi news site

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The Baba Sheikh, Yazidi's supreme spiritual leader, has been taken to Russia against his will and his son threatened in a bid to compel him to renounce the Yazidis' autonomous nation Ezidikhan, Yazidi news site Ezidikhan reported on October 20.

"The Kurdish Regional Government, in an effort to forcibly dominate and take control of Ezidikhan, has threatened the life of the Yazidis' supreme spiritual leader the Baba Shiekh Khurto Hajji Ismail and his son Samir Baba Sheikh. Kurdish security personnel kidnapped both Baba Shiekh and his son Farhad and then transported Baba Shiekh to Russia in an effort to get him to renounce the Ezidikhan government—the very government he proclaimed in the Supreme Spiritual Council Proclamation of July 25, 2017," the website said.

"Such intimidation and forced occupation of Ezidikhan peoples and lands constitute an act of genocide for which the Kurdish Regional Government and the Iraqi government must be held accountable," the website added.

In a historic step for the beleaguered Yazidis in northwestern Iraq, the Supreme Spiritual Council of the Yazidi Nation, led by Baba Sheikh Khurto Hajji Ismail, proclaimed the establishment of The Provisional Government of the Autonomous Nation of Ezidikhan." The proclamation was signed in the Sacred Yazidi village of Lalish, "on the third day of Gelawej, year 6767 by the Yazidi calendar"—that's July 25, 2017, according to the Gregorian calendar.

The provisional government arrives just three years after the Yazidi people faced a horrifying genocidal assault that brought them to the edge of extinction.

In August 2014, the Islamic State (IS) committed "unimaginable horrors" against the Yazidi nation, according to a UN-mandated Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI).

After invading Yazidi towns and villages around Sinjar, near the Syrian border in northwestern Iraq, IS fighters killed 5,000 Yazidi and enslaved more than 4,000 women and children. Tens of thousands more were displaced as a result of the siege.

In order to move the Yazidi toward a secure and prosperous future, the Supreme Spiritual Council acknowledges the need for "resolute action," stating in its proclamation:

"YAZIDI SURVIVORS OF THE DAESH HOLOCAUST ACROSS THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION, AS WELL AS YAZIDIS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, WILL NEVER CEASE TO ASSERT THEIR RIGHT TO A LIFE OF DIGNITY, FREEDOM AND HONEST TOIL IN THEIR NATIONAL HOMELAND. THIS RIGHT IS THE NATURAL RIGHT OF THE YAZIDI PEOPLE TO BE MASTERS OF THEIR OWN FATE, LIKE ALL OTHER NATIONS."

To that end, the Yazidi leaders announced their intention to hold free and open elections "for all adult Yazidis, with women, men and third sex being eligible to vote and seek office... as equals".

They also say that the Autonomous Nation of Ezidikhan will "Actively promote Yazidi immigration and the return of the Yazidi Diaspora"; "Implement a charter and Constitution protecting individual and community freedom, justice and peace as

envisaged in the traditions of Ezidikhan”; “Guarantee to the citizens of Ezidikhan freedom of press, religion, conscience, language, education, legal rights and culture”; “Safeguard any nation that wishes to come under the protection of Ezidikhan in a manner consistent with an agreed bi-lateral treaty”; and “Be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.”

The Supreme Spiritual Council goes on to extend a hand of friendship “to all bordering nations and states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Yazidi Nation. The Autonomous Nation of Ezidikhan is prepared to do its share in a common effort to achieve freedom and stability for the advancement of the entire Middle East.”