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## The Prospect of Return between Conflict and Peace

Field research on conflict and coexistence of Nineveh components after the appearance of ISIS

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### Abstract

With appearance of ISIS (Daish) in Iraq and the region, a number of ethnic and religious problems and conflicts surfaced between the various components of the area and even the historical conflicts resurfaced. After ISIS was forced to retreat from some areas of Nineveh governorate and Zumar, Rabiaa, Wana (Wanke), Sinuni and Shangal (Sinjar), the issue of coexistence and peaceful return of the displaced people became the topic of the day. The objective of this study is to understand the types and causes of conflicts and the available grounds for peaceful coexistence in those areas. The findings of this study show that reconciliation, coexistence and peaceful return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is a sensitive and complicated issue because of: 1. the politicization of inter-groups relations; 2. The demographic changes in the area; 3. The groups have developed victim mentality; 4. Appearance of a security dilemma and the groups are mobilized; 5. Lack of services, inefficiency of institutions and widespread unemployment.

Therefore attempts at peace building face huge challenges. This study presents a number of recommendations to address those challenges and preparing the ground for coexistence. The implementation of these recommendations requires various responsibilities. To establish peace, the Iraqi and Kurdistan Regional governments, international agencies and civil society organizations need to work on various reconciliation and mediation programs such as: 1. Resolving the problems between Baghdad and the Region; 2. Compensating people and indicting perpetrators; 3. Activating security institutions and improving services; 4. Establishing an institution to resolve land disputes; 5. Training and awareness activities to bring the groups closer to one another; 6. Increasing the presence of international organizations.

## Foreword

The objective of this study is to understand the nature and causes of the conflicts between the components of Nineveh governorate. The purpose of this understanding is to find grounds for coexistence. In this study no existing academic theory is used for researching conflict or technics on how to defuse them. The analysis is conducted only through the viewpoint of the local people. In other words we want to know how citizens from Nineveh, officials and activists see their own situation, how the components describe their relations, how they see the possibilities of coexistence. And finally how they view return of the IDPs and to what extent it is possible for the return to be peaceful.

In relation to field works the study focuses on areas liberated from the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The analyses and findings of the study rely on information gathered in Zumar, Wana, Rabiaa and Sinuni. some of the information are gathered in Garmawa camp (with security restrictions) and Shariya camp as a great number of IDPs are still live in those camps in the Kurdistan Region and have not returned to their areas for various reasons. Various methods are used for data collection: interviews with local leaders, officials and activists (see list of names, 30 interviews in total, annex 1), conducting 5 focus groups based on area and group, distribution of questionnaire forms (total 217 forms, see annex 2). Also utilizing the available documents and information and relying on information we heard or saw in the area. The analyses will be shown on the basis of all gathered information (for a sample of the raw materials see annex 3).

Issues we wanted to understand include types and causes of the conflicts, how to address or resolve the conflicts from the viewpoint of the components, what is the role of the actors in normalizing the situation and building peace, and grounds for peaceful return and coexistence. It is obvious that researching such issues under unstable and dangerous security situation is not easy because the area is still considered a war zone despite its liberation from ISIS. We worked hard to gather sufficient information in a short period of time, in the first two months of 2016. The importance of the study is in addition to understanding the conflicts between the components of Nineveh governorate, it provides recommendations and suggestions to solve the problems and secure peaceful return of the IDPs. These recommendations can be used in drafting future plans and policy by civil society organizations and international agencies. Also the findings of this study can be utilized by those who want to establish peace in the area. Finally understanding types of the conflicts and possible resolutions in parts of Nineveh can be a starting point in resolving conflicts and problems in Iraqi and the region,

## Background and Context

In June 2014 Nineveh governorate became the main topic for the international media because it suddenly fell under ISIS control and the Iraqi forces left their bases and weapons. This gave a golden opportunity to this strange organization to impose its ideology and send its terror message to the world. Nineveh was a suitable ground for ISIS because various ethnic and religious groups lived in the area. ISIS was established on a number of extreme religious grounds against the other religions. Thus we witnessed the most barbaric acts committed by ISIS against the other non-Sunni Muslim ethnic and religious groups. Their most bloody campaign was against the Yazidei Kurds, Christians and Shiaa (Shiaa Arab, Turkmen or Kurd (Shabak)). Since ISIS claims to represent Sunni Arabs, their appearance in the area added an ethnic/nationalistic dimension to the conflicts and revitalized the old conflicts.

Even before the ISIS the area had ethnic, religious and political conflicts. At the beginning of the constitution of the Iraqi state in 1921 and later when Mosul Wilayat was annexed to Iraq in 1925 such conflicts existed in the area. However, the nature of the conflicts changed in accordance with the policy of the ruling government. For example, the Baath Regime in the sixties and seventies of the previous Century adapted a wide Arabization policy, therefore the ethnic conflicts is deep rooted in the area.

Before the fall of Saddam in 2003, Mosul was seen as a bastion of the Baathists because majority of the army and security officials were from Mosul. Saddam's two son taking refuge in the city and getting killed there proves the strong relationship between Baath regime and Mosul. The Baath ideology was built on Arab nationalism and Iraq was given a Sunni image. Therefore ethnic and sectarian discrimination was expected from the Baath regime. However, after the fall of the Baath regime, we witnessed discrimination against the Sunni Arab and the regime supporters. This was a reaction to the regime's discrimination against the other ethnic and religious groups.

Neglecting a large component of the area, the Sunni Arab and particularly the former regime supporters, provided justifications to those who looked for an opportunity to reclaim power. It seems that ISIS is well investing this point. Thus it is not strange to see that most of the interviewees think that most of the former regime supporters have joined ISIS.

After the ISIS takeover of Mosul city and Nineveh governorate waves of displacement to the other parts of Iraq began. A sizeable majority of the displaced persons took refuge in Kurdistan Region. After the liberation of some parts of Nineveh by the Kurdish forces, such as Zumar, Rabiaa, Wana and Sinuni in the north west of Mosul, a reverse wave of displacement to Mosul started, particularly among the Sunni Arabs.

Now the issue of coexistence and peaceful return of the IDPs is a very sensitive and hot issue, particularly when the areas are slowly liberated from ISIS and there are talks of Mosul liberation. A process of wide political, social and educational reconciliation is needed to heal the wounds of the area and to avoid retaliation attempts. There is also need to prepare the grounds for peaceful coexistence. Thus the responsibilities of the local and international actors must be outlined for peace building. However, to view reconciliation objectively and realistically we need to understand the conflicts and learn what sort of reconciliation is possible from the perspectives of the components of the area.

## Nineveh Components, Complex Mosaic

Nineveh is one of the largest Iraqi governorates with a population of two and half million before the ISIS takeover. Various ethnic and religious groups live in Nineveh, sometimes called the mini Iraq because it reflects the Iraqi ethnic and religious mix; Arabs, Kurds, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Turkmen, Shabak, Muslims, Yazideis, Christians, Kakaie and Mandaean. The ethnic/religious identities diverge and intersect in complicated ways, for example there are Shiaa and Sunni Arabs, Sunni, Yazidei and Kakaie Kurds, Shiaa and Sunni Turkmen, Christian Chaldeans and Assyrians. Sometimes understanding this complexity gets harder when tribal identities enter the equation because tribal relationship dominates. For example understanding the identity of Shabaks is not easy, because religiously they are Shiaa and they consider themselves ethnic Kurds, while some of them consider themselves Turkmen or Arab. In Zumar any reference to Kurds is also a reference to Gargari, which is a Kurdish tribe. In Rabiaa instead of Arabs people mention the Arab tribe of Shamar. Another complexity of this mosaic is in the intersection of cultural symbols. For example Sunni, Yazidei and Shabak kurds wear traditional Arabic clothes. In these areas you see people speak Kurdish in Arabic clothes. The mosaic gets much more complicated when political identities come into play.

The components of Nineveh are distributed differently on the districts and sub-districts. The Arabs, making the majority of Nineveh governorate, live mainly in Mosul city, its surroundings and south of the governorate. The Kurds are the majority in north of Mosul and north of the governorate. The Christians are concentrated in Mosul plain, the Turkmen in Talaafar district and Yazidies on both banks of the Tigris River and Shingal and fourteen communities around it. Of course all the components live in the Mosul city with various percentages. The distribution of the components in the liberated areas is as follow: Wana (Kurds and Arabs) Zumar (Kurds and Arabs) Rabiaa (Arabs and Kurds) Sinuni (Yazidei Kurds and Aabs).

## Type and Parties of the Conflicts

If we look at the demographic, ethnic, religious and tribal distribution of the Nineveh components, we can better understand the types of conflicts because most of the conflicts are along the identity lines as we have discussed. However, none of the conflicts are without political charge. In other words all the conflicts that the people of the area are struggling with are part of a larger conflict, which is a political conflict between the Kurds on the one side and the Arab parties on the other side. The Arabs are sometimes represented by the Central Government and other times by Sunni or Shiaa Arabs. Therefore the parties of the conflicts are Sunni Kurds and Yazidies on the one side and Sunni and Shiaa Arabs on the other side. This does not mean that there are no conflicts between Yazidie and Muslim Kurds or between Sunni and Shia Arabs, but in this context the Kurd-Arab conflict is dominating and in various times these actors had the monopoly of power and politics. Below we present an outline of the conflicts that are talked about by the citizens from the area. In general these types of conflicts exist in Nineveh and in whole Iraq. These conflicts in different parts appear in various degrees, for example religious conflict in Shangal/Sinuni and Nineveh Plain is strong, obviously because of the existence of various religions in these areas. We should not forget that the conflicts do intersect, which makes them seem complicated and their solutions impossible:

1. Conflicts on the basis of ethnicity have historical roots in the area. Being Kurd or Arab are such identities that decide individuals' fate beyond their desires. Just because of one's identity one can benefit or lose in any given incident. Some people have fallen victims just because they were Kurds or Arabs. Mosul is nearing to be empty of Kurds and in Wana only 50 Arab families remain, these are just few examples.
2. Religion is another basis of conflicts, which is similar and intersects with ethnicity. However, majority of Kurds and Arabs of the area are Sunni, religion is the least subject of conflicts between them. While Christians and Yazidies are living examples of religious groups who have been facing oppression because of their different identities and religions. A question poses itself here, why the Sunni ISIS did not commit the same brutality against the Christians as it did against the Yazidies? The explanation that in Islam the Christians, unlike the Yazidies, are considered the religion of a holy book is not the right explanation. Probably the reason is that Yazidies are considered ethnic Kurds and the Sunni Arabs are in a historical conflict with the Kurds. This topic requires more contemplation and research.
3. It is clear that tribal relation is dominating in the area. In most places instead of ethnic/religious identity, tribal identity is used. Ethnic/religious identities are melted down to tribal identity. In Rabiaa instead of Kurds and Arabs we hear talks about Gargar

and Shamar. Even those groups that have religious identities, for example Yazidies and Shabaks, are viewed as tribes. For a long time historical feuds and conflicts existed among the tribes of the area over land and social issues. After ISIS these problems have been intensifying and given a political and ethnic outlook. For example, Arab tribes in Wana sided with ISIS because some of them lived on Kurdish tribes' lands. The same thing happened in Zumar and the other areas.

4. As mentioned before, land disputes are closely related to ethnic and tribal conflicts. But after ISIS two types of land disputes appeared: 1. Lands confiscated during the Arabization processes from non-Arabs and given to Arabs, now they are under Kurdish control because Arabs left those areas. 2. The second type is related to siding with ISIS, Arabs who left their villages and sided with ISIS their lands are now under the Kurdish control. Land disputes are common in the area and are politically related to borders between Kurds and Arabs. In general, lands and properties of Kurds who left ISIS controlled areas are now under Arabs control, while land and properties of Arabs who left Kurdish controlled areas are under Kurds control.
5. Job market is important in ethnic relations because it is the place of human gathering and meeting and it is tied to livelihood. During the Baath regime it was difficult for non-Arabs to get public sector employment and they faced constraints in the private sector. Even to this day it is rare to see non-Arabs, especially Kurds, in the institutions. After ISIS invasion and the liberation of the areas, many Arab employees have left the areas and they are replaced by voluntary Kurdish workers. In Wana out of 100 teachers 73 left to ISIS controlled Mosul and 70 voluntary Kurdish teachers are doing their works. This is common phenomenon in most of the places. Lately the Iraqi government employs more Arabs and the Kurds talk about discrimination. The Arabs in Zumar complain that the Kurdish authorities are not allowing them to open their shops while they allow the Kurds. Job market conflicts are deepening because in the last year no service projects are implemented and the institutions lack necessary budget. The market is slowing down and any available job vacancy is filled through ethnic relations.
6. The issue of IDPs is a sensitive issue of the conflicts in the area. Displacement is widespread in the area, majority of the Kurds from the ISIS controlled areas are displaced to Kurdistan Region and majority of Arabs from Kurds controlled areas are displaced to Mosul and the other areas controlled by ISIS. However, some of the displaced Arabs live in camps in the Kurdistan Region. According to primary information Arabs in the Kurdistan camps are not able to return to their areas controlled by the Kurds. Arabs from Wana are talking about such restrictions. According to information from Arabs in Zumar, some Arabs are stuck on Iraq-Syria border and are not allowed to enter Kurdistan Region. Some other IDPs, particularly the Yazidies, due to the security situation, the destruction

of their villages and towns or lack of services are not able to return. We can see that the issue of IDPs return has taken social, economic and political dimensions. Thus peace building requires a strong will and international intervention.

## Demographic change

Throughout the history this area was subject to many large demographic changes. Here we don't talk about how these components came to the area; we only highlight some demographic changes that have impact on ethnic/religious relations. We don't talk about natural migration to the area, but the waves of migration caused by politics or war as of the second half of the previous century. Kurds talk about majority Kurdish population before the Arabization processes increased the number of Arabs. These Arabization processes continued until the fall of Baath regime. In some places population rate of Arabs reached %80.

After the fall of Baath, the situation reversed. In Zumar and Wana population rates of Kurds and Arabs draw to equal. In general the Kurds' numbers in most areas are increasing. After the ISIS takeover and the following liberation by the Kurdish forces, Arab populations witnessed a substantial decrease. No Arabs are left in Shangal and Sinuni, only %10 in Wana, and %25 in Zumar. Rabiaa also witnessed a decrease in number of Arabs though they are still in the majority as they always have been.

These demographic changes in addition to the changes they cause to the political equations, they pose threats to the minorities and create conflicts among the components. Land disputes, for example, resurface with every incident. Now after ISIS, land is the central issue of the conflicts in the area. Lands given to Arabs during the Arabization processes, as well as lands of those Arabs who have joined ISIS, are now controlled by the Kurds.

## Arabization History, Collective Memory

ISIS is not directly related to Baath, though it has invested widely on the former supporters of the Baath. However, their opponents connect them because the Baath regime used to represent Sunni Arab interests and ISIS does the same despite their foreign supporters.

The Kurds desire to use the presence of ISIS to erase the effects of damages caused by the Baath regime. Kurdish conflict with ISIS is connected to the historical Kurd-Arab conflict. For example, the Kurds attempt to erase the effects of Arabization, which went on for a century. Also the Kurds want to resolve the issues of disputed areas while the legal attempts failed to solve it according to Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution. A Kurdish official stated: "the area was Arabized by the Baath and the Iraqi governments brought Arabs and relocated them on lands

owned by Kurds, they brought Arab employees and built tens of towns for the Arabs to serve as security belt on the border and outside the Kurdish towns. Even Mosul Dam was constructed within the Arabization process as the Iraqi government wanted to cut off the Kurds on the east bank from the Kurds on west bank of the Tigris River." The Arabs who were brought to the area in the Arabization process were called "friends of Saddam" they were given Kurdish lands as incentives. If a Kurd was not their supporter they would not employ him.

Another method of Arabization was the registration of non-Arabs as Arabs. If non-Arabs objected to the policy, their life would become bitter. Education in Kurdish and the Kurdish holidays were forbidden. The Arabization processes were so intensive that most of the Kurds and non-Arabs of the area wear traditional Arab clothes and speak Arabic. There are many other types of identity based discriminations and oppressions that are part of the collective memory of the people of the area and ISIS revived them. Thus ISIS is seen as the heir of the Baath and the Sunni Arabs are seen as ISIS.

In the conflicts and relations there are naming and prejudices. Now Sunni Arabs are seen as ISIS by the other groups though there are a number of Kurds and Turkmen in the ranks of ISIS. There is a sort of classification, the Arabs who went to Mosul are seen as ISIS supporters and those who are in the Kurdistan camps are viewed with suspicions and those who are in the liberated areas are seen as either supporters of the Kurds or viewed with suspicions. An Arab citizen from Rabiaa said "not all Arabs are ISIS. My son was killed by ISIS. If I can I will kill them all."

## The prospects of coexistence and peaceful return of IDPs?

Despite conflicts and ethnicity based discrimination the people who live together in the liberated areas are not in much conflict particularly after most Arabs left the area to join ISIS or escaped out of fear or due to threats. Although the Arabs are still making the majority in Rabiaa, no Arabs are left in Sinuni, only %10 in Wana and %25 in Zumar, while the Arab made half of the population before the ISIS appeared.

The findings of this research indicate that the Arabs who remain in the liberated areas are not in the position or do not desire to confront the Kurds, therefore they are adapting to life with the majority and domination of the Kurds. Some of the remaining Arabs are supporters of the ruling Kurdish political parties, particularly the KDP. Still heads of the administrative units are Arabs, except Sinuni. Under the current political equation and population size the remaining Arabs are not able to compete with the Kurd, thus adapting to the new situation and declare their opposition to ISIS unlike the Arabs who left for Mosul and joined ISIS.

Both Kurds and Arabs see threats in IDPs return, thinking that return of the Arabs may cause violent conflicts, whether returning from the camps in Kurdistan or from Mosul and other ISIS controlled areas. Some groups, especially the Yazidie Kurds in Shangal/Sinuni, are not willing to allow the return of the Sunni Arabs or Turkmen under any circumstances; saying that they have killed and abducted thousands of Yezidies and "we can't watch the butchers of our loved ones walk freely every day without getting punishment."

The Kurdish officials in Zumar, Wana, Sinuni and Rabiaa express their concerns over the return of the Arabs, especially those who are suspected to support ISIS. So far tight security measures are applied to the Arabs, for example the Arabs who reside in the camps are not allowed to go back to their original areas without security permission. The Arabs who remain in the liberated areas are not able to visit other places without security clearances. An IDP Arab said "I am ready to go back to my village but I am not allowed and my home is destroyed". The Kurdish officials talk about some security procedures and state that "the areas are still considered war zones and there are fear of bombings and information leaking". In addition the Kurds may not desire the return of the Arabs not because of security alone but also for political reasons. They want to avoid the recreation of majority Arab and erase the effects of the Arabization processes.

Therefore the issue of return of the Arabs is a sensitive political and social subject and it will not be easy without ground preparation and stabilization of the situation. Politically it needs mediation and socially the victims need psychological support. For this purpose indictment process, compensation, awareness raising and rehabilitation programs are needed before the return of the IDPs.

ISIS stayed a short time in Wana (20 days), Zumar (3 months), Rabiaa (near 3 months) and Sinuni (near 4 months) but left deep political and social conflicts, their solutions may need years of work. The effects of ISIS only in Sinuni were 1240 persons killed, 2800 houses destroyed and 180.000 displaced persons at the time, but now only 4.200 families have returned to Sinuni. The Yazidie Kurds from the area talk about mass killings committed by ISIS against the Yazidies. In Rabiaa 400 houses, in Zumar 500 houses and in Wana tens of houses were destroyed in addition to many people killed or went missing and properties looted. Almost half of the villages were destroyed.

It may be easy to estimate the number of victims but not easy to estimate the psychological status of the victims. These are not only figures and statistics but there are deep hidden conflicts behind these figures. Thousands retaliation desires are hidden behind these figures. During the liberation of the areas we witnessed the people whose houses were destroyed and their properties looted, they in turn confiscated other people's houses. A citizen from Zumar said "ISIS killed 61 members of our tribe". A Yazidie Kurd said "4 thousand women and children are abducted by ISIS and treated as slaves". There are hundreds of similar depressing stories that haunt the memory and subconscious of the people of the area. Eliminating this specter requires time and determination.

## Findings and Recommendations

With the appearance of ISIS (Daish) in Iraq and the region, a number of ethnic and religious problems and conflicts surfaced between the various components of the area and even the historical conflicts resurfaced. After ISIS was forced to retreat from some areas of Nineveh governorate and Zumar, Rabiaa, Wana (Wanke), Sinuni and Shangal, the issue of coexistence and peaceful return of the displaced people became the topic of the day.

The findings of this study, with a focus on the above mentioned liberated areas, show that reconciliation, coexistence and peaceful return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is a sensitive and complicated issue because of the following reasons:

1. The politicization of ethnic relations. The components of the area are a complicated mosaic, the ethnic, religious and tribal identities intersect while these identities are given political dimensions and becoming parts of the power equation, for example the Kurd-Arab conflicts, independence issue and military and administrative control of the area. The conflicts are becoming part of the issue of disputed areas related to Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution.
2. The huge demographic changes took place in the area. In some places ethnic or religious groups are extinct or very few of them remain. In Mosul and Nineveh Plain very few Kurds and Christians remain, Shiaa Arabs and Shabaks are displaced and Yazidies are uprooted from their areas, only few of them have returned to Sinuni. Nearly %80 of the Sunni Arabs of Wana, Zumar and Sinuni left their areas. In ethnic relation the unordinary increase in rate of one group disrupt the harmony of the relationship and is viewed as a threat.
3. The groups have developed victim mentality. Some groups have endured great human and material losses. The Yazidies did not only lose their properties but also their women and children were abducted. The estimates talk about 6 thousand Yazidie victims between dead, missing or abducted persons. Shangal was fully destroyed as the result of the fighting. Most the Arab villages in the liberated areas in Zumar, Wana, Sinuni and Shangal are destroyed. All the groups, to various degrees, have fallen victim to the war and conflicts.
4. Creation of a sort of security dilemma because of the fighting and violence. Also the institutions have shown their inability to control the security situation and protect life and property. In such circumstances borders thicken between groups because individuals feel insecure in the society and retreat to their own groups for protection. Thus in the absence of security and judicial agencies groups get mobilized and armed to protect themselves.

In such situations arms race begin among the groups. Now there are no groups that are not armed in the area. In addition to the Peshmarga forces fighting ISIS, there are Anti-ISIS Sunni Arab armed groups, Yazidie and Christian forces as well as other forces from outside.

5. In addition to the lack of services and inefficiency of institutions the area faces a widespread unemployment. For a while no service or commercial projects have been implemented in the area because of the deteriorating security situation and lack of budget. The government also does not provide any job opportunities resulting in many of the youth to join the armed groups to secure their livelihood.

In spite of the conflicts there are hopes for peace building. To change the directions of the conflicts towards coexistence and tolerance, attempts should be united. Social and political peace building in Nineveh will lead to stability in the region. To this end stakeholders need to work on the following suggestions and recommendations resulted from this field research and represent people's perspectives:

1. A program for slowing down victim mentality. To build peace and prepare the grounds for the return of the IDPs procedures are needed to defuse thoughts of retaliation. At this stage the first step should start with rebuilding towns and villages as well as the institutions. The international community can play the leading role in the rebuilding process. Another step is to compensate the people who have suffered damages and losses. This could contribute to the healing of the wounds. In this regard the central government should play the main and central role. Overcoming victim mentality without indictment process is impossible. Indictment process of the perpetrators should start in Iraq in coordination with the Kurdistan Region and with the assistance of international court.
2. Resolving the issues between the Region and Baghdad. Resolving the conflicts and peaceful return of the IDPs are taking political dimensions, therefore it requires international mediation from UN, EU and US because the issue of return of the IDPs is related to the Baghdad-Erbil disputes, particularly over the disputed areas, that cover most of Nineveh governorate. The prerequisite for peace building in the disputed areas under Article 140 of the constitution is a political solution. The return of IDPs will have impact on power equation in favor of one party or the other.
3. Eliminating legal discrimination and adopting true representation. Meaningful participation in the political process is another condition for decreasing conflicts. The components must participate in running their country and their own areas, thus true political participation at local and national levels can make them part of the political process. Therefore all the legal discriminations against any group, particularly the Sunni Arabs who are connected to the Baath and now ISIS, must be eliminated. For example

the Debaathification Law presents obstacles for many Sunni to participate in the political process.

4. Activating the institutions. For example, the security and judicial institutions must have the ability to play their roles so that the citizens can trust them and not take the law into their own hands or mobilize against one another. To this end administrative and legal reform as well as capacity building is needed. The Iraqi and Kurdistan Regional governments must make the necessary financial and human resources available to the local authorities so that they can fulfill their obligations and be trusted by all the components. The international organization and civil society in cooperation with the relevant institutions can contribute to the administrative and legal reform as well as training of their staff.
5. Awareness and training program. Special programs to build capacity of the staff, especially police, security personnel and judiciary on peace building and coexistence and how to treat people equally and justly in a multicultural setting.
6. An agency for resolving land disputes. After the fall of Saddam a commission was established and charged with land dispute in Iraq. However, the commission was not able to carry out its duties because of its inefficiency and lack of independence. Thus to solve the land disputes the commission needs to be activated or a new agency established between Erbil and Baghdad and work under the UN observation to resolve the disputes within a specific time frame.
7. Social peace program. In addition to political and economic there must be ground preparation for social peace and coexistence. Peace is a process built on both macro and micro levels. Such a program includes various projects and activities, for example meetings and joint cultural activities for representatives of the different groups or any other activities that bring the groups closer to one another and avoid violence. In addition a national congress for dialogue among religions and nations serve as a ground for understanding one another and respecting the differences.
8. The readiness of international organizations should be increased. The availability of a small number of international organizations in the area is probably due to security as the area is still at war. However, their presence could be increased through coordination with and utilization of the local organizations. The international organization can provide awareness and contribute to peace building they also can serve as third parties and neutral observers that can contribute to preventing crimes to be committed by the groups against one another.