

ASSYRIAN UNIVERSAL ALLIANCE AUSTRALIA REGION

Member: Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)

PRESS RELEASE

ASSYRIAN UNIVERSAL ALLIANCE WILL HOLD ITS 26TH WORLD CONGRESS IN SYDNEY – AUSTRALIA

Sydney – 4th March 2009

Preparations are well underway for the twenty-sixth World Congress of the Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA) which will be held in Sydney, Australia from 20 to 24 May, 2009. The AUA Worldwide Congress takes place each year in a different country. Representatives of the Assyrian federations, organisations, political parties, and prominent Assyrians attend the congress.

The organizing committee began preparing for this great event in Australia and is looking forward to hosting Assyrian delegations from various countries of the Middle East, Europe and the United States of America.

This is the third time since the founding of the AUA in 1968 that such a congress is taking place on Australian soil. In November 1978, the eleventh AUA World Congress was the first such gathering that convened in Sydney, and the first in which the AUA leadership was directly attacked. After utterly failing to persuade the AUA leadership to comply with Saddam Hussein's regime's proposal, Iraq's delegation distributed poisoned sweets at the closing ceremony of the congress. At least nine people suffered as a result. The poison was identified by the authorities as mustard gas; a form of chemical weapon used by Saddam in his wars with Iran and Kuwait. Unfortunately, the perpetrators escaped prior to facing charges. Regrettably, no international action was taken at that time to publicise Saddam's use of such harmful poisons.

AUA has held 25 World Congress assemblies in various countries around the globe. It has worked tirelessly to establish contacts with governments in the Middle East, including Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon. This participation became more effective since joining the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) in 1992. The AUA is trying to advance and strengthen the existing relations between Assyrians and the local and national authorities of the countries in which Assyrians reside. The AUA hopes to soon hold its first ever World Congress in Iraq.

The participants in the upcoming congress will discuss the prevailing situation in Iraq, their human rights and political rights. The AUA is mindful of the situation of Assyrians in Iraq where they face persecution, economic and political hardship in their ancestral lands. As a result, the Assyrian population in the homeland has dwindled to less than half its number before the war. The latest example of this is the forced migration of Assyrians from the city of Mosul, in the historical

Assyrian province of Nineveh, after an organized and deliberate killing spree targeted the Assyrian citizens.



The Recent Executive Board members of the Assyrian Universal Alliance

The delegates to the congress will explore solutions to not only stop but reverse this migration which is depleting the Assyrian homeland of its rightful inhabitants. The legitimate demand of Assyrians in Iraq is establishing a geographically viable demarcated region as an Assyrian autonomous region on the historical Assyrian lands in Northern Iraq as part of the modern day Federal Republic of Iraq. This newly created Assyrian region shall be administrated and protected by the Assyrians under the jurisdiction of the central government of Iraq. The establishment of such a region will be most crucial to the security and survival of the Assyrians in Iraq by allowing greater local Assyrian control within the context of their integrated, sovereign Iraqi state. This action will also encourage the Assyrian refugees whether those in the homeland or the Diaspora, or internally displaced to return to Iraq. Furthermore, this autonomous region would allow for Assyrians' political, educational, linguistic, religious and cultural protection. This Assyrian region will be a Middle East success story of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, economic prosperity and an example not only to the region but to the world.

In future reports we will highlight our progress in preparing for this congress and other events which will take place during the presence of Assyrian delegations in the city of Sydney.

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