

Press Release

Announcement of Peaceful Coexistence Pact of Honor for the Tribes in Al- Ayadiyah Sub-District

Al-Ayadiyah, Iraq, August 10, 2018 – On August 9, tribal and community leaders, representatives of the Permanent Higher Committee for Coexistence and Social Peace at the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, and the local government in Nineveh Governorate and in Tal Afar District signed an agreement covering peaceful coexistence among Ayadiyah citizens, between surrounding communities, and with the local and central government in Al-Ayadiyah. The agreement allows for the facilitation of return processes for internally displaced persons (IDPs) to the town, which number around 40,000 persons inside Ayadiyah Center and its surrounding villages.

The agreement, signed by more than 90 tribal and community leaders from Ayadiyah, is the result of an initiative led and implemented by Sanad for Peacebuilding (Sanad), a non-governmental, non-profit organization promoting peace and non-violence, and Iraq’s National Reconciliation Committee, acting under the Permanent Higher Committee of Peaceful Co-Existence and Social Peace. The initiative, supported by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), involved facilitated dialogues and consultations with tribal leaders and local government officials from Ayadiyah to have a better understanding of the main challenges and opportunities to achieving peaceful coexistence, support for the rule of law, and stability after liberating the region from the Islamic State.

“This agreement is a very important development to the area as it is enforcing the mutual trust between the population of Ayadiyah who are still displaced in KRI, Mosel and Turkey. This agreement is a message to all of Ayadiyah’s population that there is still hope in the return to their town,” said Nasha’at Sadiq Mohammed, Chair of Ayadiyah Local Council.

Among other things, the agreement commits tribes to the state’s justice and security process instead of tribal justice, which has at times triggered vengeful acts. The main points of the agreement include:

- Commits tribal authorities to the state and rule of law, disavowing violence to seek justice;
- Commits tribal authorities to cooperate with security agencies in the pursuit of ISIS members and suspects;
- Commits tribal authorities to move beyond parochial identities by giving priority to national identity.

The agreement also aims to allay sectarian and extremist narratives and mandates a tribal and local peace committee to follow-up on the implementation of the above points.

Al-Ayadiyah has suffered under the Islamic State since mid-2014 and previously struggled with terrorism and divide-and-rule tactics by Al Qaeda and other actors since 2005. The principles, mechanisms, and recommendations announced today, have brought together the differing tribes, with full support of the government, in order to establish peace and implement fair and comprehensive justice in the region. Please see the annex for the signed agreement that includes the principles, mechanisms, and the recommendations.

“We believe that the dialogue sessions we had under Sanad’s program encourages the social acceptance and restoration of social ties. In my opinion, these dialogue sessions are the right tool to bring such

results and I would recommend including more community leaders to further strengthen the community agreements,” Ahmed Mahmoud Al Thahir, Mayor of Ayadiyah sub-district.

As a reflection of inclusivity and unanimity, the conference was attended by:

- Dr. Fa’al Al Maliki, representing the Higher Committee of Peaceful Coexistence and Social Peace;
- Ahmed Ja’afar, The Mayor of Ayadiyah;
- Nasha’at Sadiq Mohammed, the Chair of Ayadiyah sub-district council;
- Sheikh Khalil Aliyawi, representing Grand Ayatullah Al Sistani Office at Al Hussein Atabah
- The Police Commander of Tal Afar;
- The head of National Security Advisory in Ayadiyah;
- Mohammed Jawad Abdulkadir, the supervisor of 14 PMF factions in western-Nineveh and a representative of Ayatullah Al Hakim;
- More than 150 tribal and community leaders and youth.

Background:

Al-Ayadiyah, located 11 km north of Tal Afar, has a population of 16,000 with the majority from a Sunni Turkmen background and a minority from a Shia Turkmen background. Surrounding Ayadiyah, 53 villages with a total population of 55,000 consist of Arab, Turkmen, and Kurdish components which represent Nineveh’s diverse religious composition of Shiites, Sunnis, Christians and Yezidis.

After Mosul was recaptured, Iraqi forces began operations to liberate Ayadiyah from the Islamic State in August 2017. Iraqi forces faced an unexpectedly tough battle which lasted for 10 days and led to considerable destruction of the area's infrastructure. During the Iraqi Parliament's 13th session, held in March 2018, Ayadiyah was declared a disaster area due to large scale damage of homes and infrastructure. The liberation of the area, however, has increased stability and led to an acceleration of returns by Internally Displaced Persons.

About Sanad for Peacebuilding:

Sanad for Peacebuilding is a non-government organization, established in 2013 with support from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP).

Sanad works to build and strengthen peace, democracy and human rights in Iraq by providing support and technical expertise to civil society networks. Sanad is particularly supporting the Network of Iraqi Facilitators (NIF), and the Alliance of Iraqi Minorities (AIM).

These networks were developed by USIP and have primarily transitioned to be supported by Sanad. Sanad is governed by an independent board of directors, comprised of eight members with professional backgrounds in peacebuilding, civil society, rule of law, human rights, media, academia, and government. They also reflect the diversity of the Iraqi communities. For further information on Sanad please visit www.sanad-iq.org

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ)

صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ

A Pact of Honor for the Tribes in Al- Ayadiyah Sub-District

We, the undersigned elders, tribal and community leaders of Al-Ayadiyah, the representatives of Higher Committee for Coexistence and Social Peace at the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, the local government in Nineveh Governorate and in Tal Afar District, have found ways to consolidate stability and social peace in Al-Ayadiyah. A series of dialogues and meetings involving a wide range of tribal leaders, elders, government representatives and security officials were held in order to reach a common ground and to identify agreement on principles and mechanisms that will help promote confidence and stability in the region.

We herein announce the agreed principles, mechanisms and recommendations that guarantee the desired stability in Al-Ayadiyah, which has suffered from the criminal activities carried out by ISIS on large parts of our province in the middle of 2014 and previously by Al Qaeda and its agents since 2005. Our region witnessed the most heinous crimes against unarmed civilians, organized by the terrorist groups, who stood against their thoughts and behaviors, trying to sabotage the relations and bonds between Al-Ayadiyah people and those around them who have lived in peace and security for decades.

With the defeat of this criminal organization by the Iraqi army, the federal police, the Peshmerga, Hashid and volunteers from the tribes who were determined to get rid of the effects of that dark period and restore life to Al- Ayadiyah again, we as the elders, tribal and community leaders agree on the following articles to be the general and comprehensive framework of peaceful coexistence in Al-Ayadiyah sub-district. With the endless support of Higher Committee for Coexistence and Social Peace/General Secretariat of the Council

of Ministers, and with the support of Sanad for Peacebuilding organization and its supporting international organization, which are highly appreciated, we sign our commitment to the following:

First: To disavow ISIS and all criminal terrorist organizations and their members and affiliates who committed murder, displacement, kidnapping, incitement and threats and the looting of money from citizens and all crimes against the law.

Second: To keep the state's laws as priority and recognize that the laws of the state are above the tribal laws and to reject any individual or collective action to take revenge without reference to the judicial authority and the tribal laws adopted by the tribes in the area in accordance to the rule of law.

Third: Solidarity with families of victims of terrorism and those affected by the crimes of terrorist organizations and to call for their rights and to reveal the fate of prisoners and abductees.

Fourth: To support and strengthen the rule of law and enable the judicial authorities to achieve justice and practice punishment on criminals belonging to terrorist organizations. To reveal criminals, and should any unrevealing occur, to ensure that they shall shoulder the legal consequences and tribal norms followed in those areas in accordance with the rule of law.

Fifth: The Local Peace Committee in Tal Afar and the local community activist committees to adopt a solution to the problems behind wisdom and dialogue between individuals and groups for the post-ISIS era.

Sixth: The head of each tribe and sub-tribe shall provide information about ISIS affiliates, all those who cooperate with them and suspicious persons to the security authorities. Agreed regulations shall be considered on eliminating extreme Takfiri ideology and punishing the perpetrators.

Seventh: Priority shall be given to national identity over other identities, emphasize coexistence and social peace, renounce all forms of violence and extremism, support and strengthen state institutions, commitment to moderate discourse and acceptance of the other.

Eighth: To prevent the return of any person who has been implicated in terrorist acts and his family members of the first degree, unless declaring their innocence before the courts provided that they are not supporters of terrorist organizations.

Ninth: To address the malicious and false allegations or those who use the security institutions to practice revenge against innocent people by accusing them of ISIS affiliation without the provision of evidence. They shall be held accountable by the security and tribal rule, and their names shall be published publicly.

Tenth: To renounce the extremist religious, political and media discourse that engenders violence; counter seditious media, rumors and subversive propaganda; monitor the performance of mosque preachers and Imams; emphasize moderate discourse; establish a committee of moderate and well-known clerics, local administrations and tribal sheikhs to select mosque preachers and abandon extremists in coordination with the security institutions - with the need to rehabilitate those who stood against extremism and provide them with educational and guidance courses to counter the response to suspicions and extremist thought.

Eleventh: Work shall be done between the sons of Al-Ayadiyah and the sons of their surrounding tribes under the articles of this document taking into consideration their observations for their development.

May Allah help us to serve our beloved country and our regions and pray to Allah to bless the souls of our martyrs, and the shame and humiliation to all those who supported terrorism and extremism in Iraq and the entire world.

Therefore, we as sheikhs and elders of the region agree to sign below:

