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Written statement* submitted by the Jammu and Kashmir Council for Human Rights, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Abuses committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups*

To take action of a comprehensive conflict prevention in Iraq today after Iraq war of 2003 the world leaders have to move beyond the conventional concerns about the costs to be borne and high risks embedded and the poor approach that the interests at stake are very low.

To overcome this difficulty it is important that any comprehensive action has a 'Legitimate authority'. We are faced with a situation in Iraq in August 2014, where the wisdom expressed on the eve of the 2003 Iraq War by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams and the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Gormac Murphy-O'Connor assumes an added importance. They had pressed that 'it is vital...that all sides in this crisis engage through the United Nations – fully and urgently – in a process... that could and should render the trauma and tragedy of war unnecessary.'

The Church of Scotland's Committee on Church and Nation followed suit: 'War must have the backing of the international community through the United Nations and only be undertaken when there is a direct threat to a member state or in self-defence. The war was not undertaken through a specific mandate of the United Nations Security Council.'

There is no dispute about the fact that transgression of the law weakens its authority and it is equally true that this authority is also weakened by a chronic failure to enforce the law. Approval of UN amounts to a legitimate authority and common good of all and not for the sake of some selfish, private national interest. As a first choice the purpose of a collective action should not be to facilitate the choice of war, but to make that choice both difficult and rarely used.

Going into Iraq to find Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) on a discriminatory and disproportionate evidence has not only disturbed the community cohesion maintained for centuries according to local traditions but it has thrown up a sharp Sunni-Shia divide and has created a nourishing habitat for monstrous groups like ISIS and others to persecute other non-Muslim communities. On 12 September 2002 President Bush, in his speech to the United Nations, outlined three justifications for using force against Iraq, that is, to pre-empt possible use of weapons of mass destruction, the frequent, flagrant and continuing violation of international law, and the on-going violation of fundamental human rights. A heavy emphasis on a wild goose chase has failed to connect itself with any rewarding consequence.

Rampage of ISIS against hundreds of thousands of Yazidis and Kurdish fled hometowns fearing they would be executed by ISIS terrorists is a product of the flawed wisdom used to unearth WMD in Iraq. The new situation has put at risk the elementary principles of human living and interaction among communities. ISIS is not only a threat to Yazidis but a threat to social order of Iraq and beyond. It is not only half a million Yazidis, a minority religious sect, displaced after IS, or ISIS, militants overran their ancestral home of Sinjar and executed people for being devil worshippers - or instead forcing them to convert to Islam but the approach is against the UN Principle of "equality of people".

United Nations human rights chief Navi Pillay has condemned the 'appalling, widespread' crimes being committed by Islamic State forces in Iraq, including mass executions of prisoners and 'ethnic and religious cleansing'. Generations of families are taking shelter in unfinished buildings and refugee camps - but many can't be helped. Many believe they will never be able to return to their homes, but it is not clear where else they can go. The persecution of entire communities and systematic violations by the al-Qaeda offshoot, documented by U.N. human rights investigators, would amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes under international law. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has rightly stated that, 'Grave, horrific human rights violations are being committed daily by ISIL and associated armed groups.' Navi Pillay has cited targeted killings, forced conversions, abductions, slavery, sex crimes, forced recruitment and destruction of places of worship. 'They are systematically targeting men, women and children based on their ethnic, religious or sectarian affiliation and are ruthlessly carrying out widespread ethnic and religious cleansing in the areas under their control.' Christians, Yazidis and Turkmen were among the minorities targeted by the Sunni militant group, which has forced people to convert to their strict form of Sharia law."

It is high time that an international movement of Interfaith is brought into play and in particular Muslim countries open up to accommodate Yazidis fleeing persecution. Muslim scholars and Muslims in all disciplines of life around

the globe need to intervene and defend the social order of Iraq in accordance with the teachings of Holy Quran. According to Quran ISIS and ISIL are at war against the basic teachings of Holy Quran.

Surat Al Baqarah verse 256 commands that, "There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing."

On the question of a video released by Islamic State insurgents showing one of its fighters beheading the U.S. journalist James Foley, kidnapped in Syria in 2012, the world in general and the Muslims in particular should be on the front foot in condemning the barbaric act. Muslim should take a special interest to condemn it as a violation of Islamic teachings.

Holy Quran in Surat Al-Maeda verse 32 reminds, "For that cause We decreed for the Children of Israel that whosoever killeth a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whoso saveth the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind. Our messengers came unto them of old with clear proofs (of Allah's Sovereignty), but afterwards lo! many of them became prodigals in the earth."

If we want to save Yazidis in Cotcho village in southern Sinjar, Basra, Diyala, Shia Turkmen in Salahuddin province besieged by ISIL forces since mid-June amid we need to sensitise a strong interfaith movement across the globe. Muslim countries shall have to take the lead. It is time that Jews, Christians and Muslims not only revisit the case of their common ancestry but to reach out to other religions, like Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism etc and non-religious opinions. One cannot be a true Muslim unless he subscribes his faith in all Scriptures and Prophets.

A true Christian or a true Jew has to understand Islam to understand his faith. And all faiths have to reach out to people of no faith. Holy Quran in Surah 29 Al-Ankabut verse 46 requires a Muslim as follows: "And argue not with the people of the Scriptures (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better (with good words and in good manner, inviting them to Islamic Monotheism with His Verses), except with such of them as do wrong; and say (to them): "We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you; our Allah (God) and your Allah (God) is One (i.e. Allah) and to Him we have submitted (as Muslims)".

The credentials of one faith cannot be incremented by allowing a possibility of hate for the other. The litmus test should be that – an individual is a decent human person, is able to discharge the trust of elementary justice reposed in him, is able to make an informed and a mature judgement for himself and for others. Human Rights Council by virtue of its mandate and composition is the most suitable body that could ensure that there is a fair and regular examination of the conditions under which the voices of the most oppressed, struggling and victimized sections of human society are heard.

Human Rights Council could endeavour to make itself into a platform for a universal (global) distributive justice. The statist's restrictive distributive justice approach has to be encouraged to develop into a cosmopolitan system of distributive justice. Global justice has to focus on protecting basic human rights and securing fair terms of international co-operation. There is a compelling need to help some states and groups meet their citizens' basic rights which place duties of justice on the shoulders of other communities.

A global distributive justice provides an account of people's basic human rights and assesses just when the need to meet these rights can impose duties of justice on distant others. It entails that we have an obligation to make the terms of international co-operation broadly fair. We need to create a system which serves a rights based and co-operation based twin purposes. Interfaith movement and NGOs should be facilitated by the Human Rights Council to play this important role to defeat emerging forces like ISIS and ISIL.

* MWA-Muslim Women's Aid (UK), a non-governmental organisation without consultative status, also shares the views expressed in this statement.