



Assyria Council of Europe

7th June 2011

Press Release

ASSYRIANS LEFT OUT WHEN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DELEGATION VISITS IRAQ

Four members from the Delegation for Relations with Iraq of the European Parliament, led by Mr Struan Stevenson, visited Iraq between 26 - 29 April 2011. The delegation had a series of meetings in Baghdad and Erbil, where they met several representatives of the Kurdish Regional Government.

The needs and concerns of the Assyrians were not on the agenda of the delegation. Although the Assyria Council of Europe (ACE) had continually informed the EU delegation on the ongoing persecution of Assyrians and had asked the delegation to visit the Iraqi Assyrians, the delegation preferred to only have a meeting with Bishop Bashar Warda from the Assyrian Chaldean Church. Bishop Warda stressed that in regard to the enormous wave of refugees to the north of Iraq the Assyrian Christians are in need of support for their schools, hospitals and sanitation. Bishop Warda is not a political representative of the entire Assyrian Christian community as he only represents the Catholic Church.

ACE is disappointed that the EU delegation had no meeting with Assyrian representatives neither in Baghdad nor in Erbil. The five Assyrian members in the Iraqi parliament, elected by the Assyrian people in Iraq have not been taken seriously. If the EU is to help the minorities in Iraq they should start with talking to their elected representatives and not religious figures.

The Assyria Council of Europe (ACE) is a Brussels based non-profit organisation advocating rights of minorities in Iraq since 2007. ● **Homepage:** www.assyriacouncil.eu ● **Email:** info@assyriacouncil.eu