



YAZIDI LEGAL NETWORK

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Hand in hand with the
Yazidis in their quest for
accountability, justice
and reparation.

**I KNOW, LIFE MUST
GO ON, BUT IT IS A
PROCESS THAT CAN
ONLY BE DONE IF THE
TRUTH IS TOLD AND
WE HAVE JUSTICE.
BUT WITHOUT
KNOWLEDGE, THERE
CAN BE NO JUSTICE.**

**Yazidi survivor at Bajid Kandela camp,
Kurdistan Region of Iraq**



Photo Credit: Yves Gellie

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records in a business setting. It highlights how proper record-keeping can help in decision-making, legal compliance, and financial management. The text emphasizes that records should be organized, up-to-date, and easily accessible.

Next, the document addresses the challenges of data management in the digital age. It notes that while digital storage offers convenience, it also introduces risks such as data loss, security breaches, and information overload. Solutions like cloud storage, encryption, and regular backups are suggested to mitigate these risks.

The third section focuses on the role of technology in streamlining business processes. It describes how automation and software solutions can reduce manual errors, save time, and improve overall efficiency. Examples of tools used for project management, customer relationship management, and accounting are provided.

Finally, the document concludes by stressing the importance of employee training and awareness. It suggests that investing in education and skill development can lead to a more productive and adaptable workforce. Regular updates on new technologies and best practices are recommended to keep the organization competitive.

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Photo Credit: Yves Gellie



FOREWORD

We are pleased and enthusiastic to share with you the 2023 Annual Report of Yazidi Legal Network.

It is with a profound sense of gratitude that we present our main accomplishments and challenges of the past year. Thanks to the unwavering commitment of donors, ambassadors, advisors, community members, volunteers and partners, we have been able to implement a wide range of projects and push forward in our effort to support the Yazidi achieve justice through a multi-faceted approach.

On behalf of YLN, we extend our deepest appreciation to all those who have contributed to the achievements and activities in this report and have supported the Yazidi community. As we look ahead, we are excited about the opportunities to make a tangible impact and provide meaningful support to the Yazidi community. Your dedication inspires us and we are looking forward to advancing the YLN mission together in the coming year.

**Chair of Yazidi Legal Network Board
Nadia Grant**

OUR STORY



Photo Credit: Yves Gellie



HISTORY

The Yazidi community, an ethno-religious minority, has faced unprecedented challenges, particularly in the wake of the 2014 genocide perpetrated by ISIS.

Yazidi Legal Network emerged as a response to these atrocities, aiming to provide legal aid, advocacy, and support to the Yazidi people in accessing justice and accountability mechanisms in the Netherlands and beyond, with a focus on the prosecution of foreign fighters.

Established in 2019 by The Nuhanovic Foundation, Yazidi Legal Network is a community of Yazidis working with a diverse group of lawyers, law students and human rights activists, all united by their commitment to justice and protection of human rights. Since its creation, Yazidi Legal Network has evolved and grown extensively and as a result, in early 2021 Yazidi Legal Network was formally established as a 'Dutch Stichting' with its headquarters in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.



MISSION

STOP THE GENOCIDE AGAINST THE YAZIDI!

It is the mission of Yazidi Legal Network to help the Yazidi achieve justice in the widest sense possible regarding the genocide that was committed against them at the hands of ISIS in 2014.

The Yazidi Legal Network focuses its justice-seeking efforts within the jurisdiction of the Netherlands. However, we work closely with Yazidi communities and organisations in Germany, France, Iraq and other countries.

Informed by Yazidi perceptions of justice, we aim to achieve justice for and with the Yazidi by focussing on three pillars of justice, namely:

- **Accountability**
- **Recognition**
- **Reparation**

Photo Credit: Yves Gellie

VISION

It is the vision of Yazidi Legal Network to be the bridge between the Yazidi community and justice mechanisms, in order to facilitate access to accountability, recognition and reparation.

Accountability

The current lack of accountability for the genocide and related crimes stems in part from a gap between international justice efforts and documentation efforts in Iraq and Syria. By building a collaborative information-sharing network - ***linking judicial authorities and organisations documenting evidence at the scenes of the crimes in Iraq and Syria and providing them with information from our own databases and research*** - we aim to fill this gap and see enhanced accountability.

Recognition

Through our projects under the pillar of recognition, we provide a safe platform for community members, experts, lawyers, and academics. This enables sharing of information, development of initiatives, the establishment of relationships and the provision of support and direction. Yazidi Legal Network aims to empower and facilitate the Yazidi community to have direct access to a range of actors relevant to their pursuit of justice.

Reparation

By serving as an intermediary between the Yazidi community and actors capable of providing psychosocial support, we close the gap between those two groups, thereby facilitating access to reparations for the Yazidi community.

WHAT WE DO

YLN supports accountability for and awareness of international and transnational crimes against the Yazidi. As a thriving network, our mission is to bring people together to achieve our common goal of justice for the Yazidi community.

We build bridges between the Yazidi community and justice mechanisms, between victims and media, between students and practitioners, between law enforcement and NGOs.

01 Research, Analysis & Case Building

As part of our contribution to the fight against impunity, and in support of the prosecution of the crimes committed against the Yazidi, we conduct research and open source investigations to assist litigation and case building activities.

02 Education, Training & Capacity Building

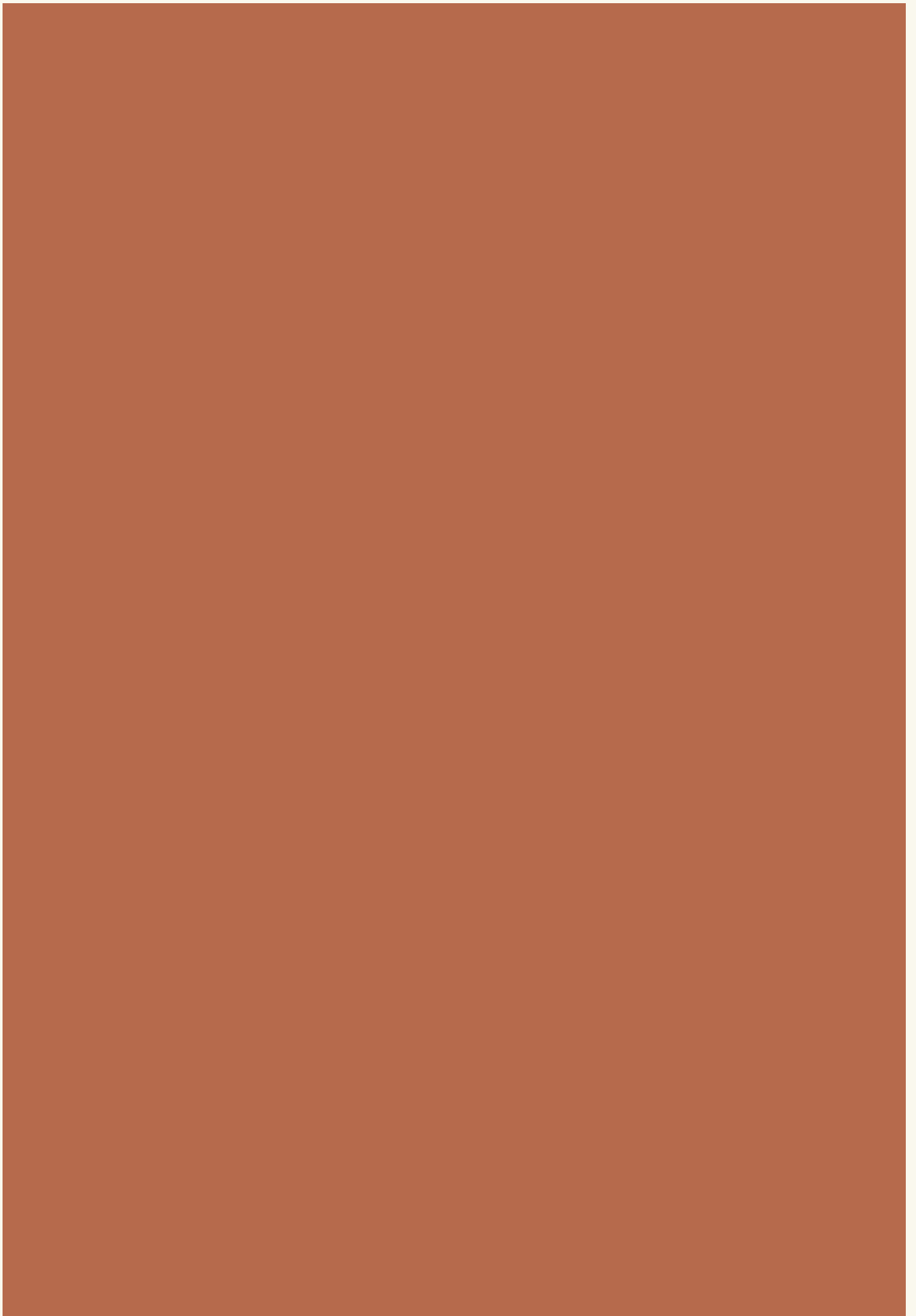
The Network organises training for its members on a range of topics related to investigations of serious violations of human rights, international criminal and humanitarian law and Yazidi culture and history.

03 Outreach, Advocacy & Media Activities

We work to spread awareness and conduct advocacy to champion victims' and survivors' rights, in addition to lobbying governments and policy makers to acknowledge and respond to the atrocities committed against the Yazidi.

04 Survivor Community Support

Survivors of international crimes often have limited access to basic needs and specialist support services to cope with the impact of the violations they suffered. Through our work, we aim to ease access to these services for victims and survivors.



2023

ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS



Artwork by: Hisham

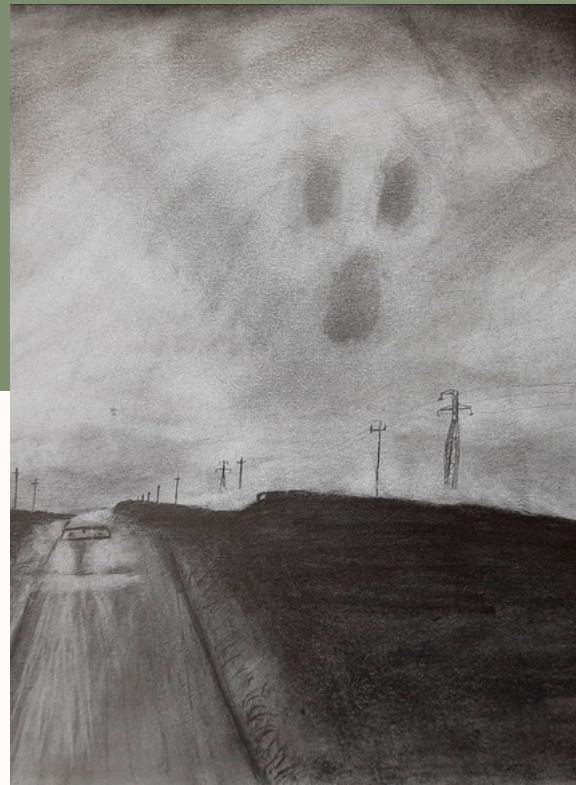
RESEARCH, ANALYSIS & CASE BUILDING

YLN contributes to legal action and case building activities by engaging with the Yazidi community, maintaining a general database containing information on the Yazidi community, and conducting investigations into crimes and alleged individual perpetrators.

General Database

Over the last 32 months, Yazidi Legal Network and its dedicated volunteers have meticulously curated publicly available information concerning the Yazidi community. This comprehensive database aims to serve educators, legal experts, researchers, and the Yazidi themselves, offering invaluable insights into their history, culture, and the tragic events of the Genocide.

Throughout 2023, YLN expanded its volunteer base, providing training to new recruits involved in this ongoing project. Additionally, the organisation embarked on a new venture, exploring the application of Dr. Gregory Stanton's renowned work, "The Ten Stages of Genocide"



Artwork by: Hisham

(Copyright 1996), to create a classification framework for the articles in the General Database. While this work is ongoing, the aim is to enhance categorisation efficiency and accessibility.

Moreover, in 2023, YLN initiated a pioneering project focused on automating aspects of the article classification process within the General Database. YLN's Senior Legal Advisor and Senior Analyst established collaboration with a Canadian law firm experienced in tools that support the analysis of extensive volumes of documentary evidence for significant legal cases.

The firm generously offered training and access to specialised software utilised in managing large-scale legal proceedings. Presently, the Senior Analyst is actively engaged in assessing the potential of this software to expedite the classification process, providing comprehensive ratings to indicate the volume and nature of information contained within each article. The process uses state of the art tools to categorise information in each article. It also provides a fill-in-the-blank form to retrieve articles relevant to the needs of the user searching for specific information. Although at an early stage, this collaboration holds promising prospects for streamlining and enhancing the classification process.

Criminal Database

In addition to the General Database project, YLN has a second team building a database relevant to obtaining access to justice for crimes perpetrated against the Yazidi population, with a focus on German and Dutch perpetrators. Throughout 2023, the Criminal Database underwent expansion, with its contents serving as a fundamental informational resource for legal professionals involved in various legal cases.

Case Building & Legal Action

In February 2023, the first pro forma hearings took place concerning allegations against twelve women, repatriated from a Syrian prison camp by the Dutch Government, occurred. These women faced charges related to terrorist activities associated with their suspected involvement in the Islamic State. Notably, one of the women was accused* of enslaving a Yazidi woman, marking the Netherlands' first trial for a crime committed against the Yazidi community. Throughout the hearings held in Rotterdam, YLN actively monitored the case's progression, providing updates to its network, including Yazidi community members. Additionally, YLN offered legal expertise and shared pertinent information related to the accused woman's case of enslaving a Yazidi individual.

Yazidi Legal Network assisted the Dutch War Crimes Unit in reaching out to the broader community by requesting information on Dutch perpetrators.

**With respect to the Yazidi survivors, the name of the accused is not shared.*

Next Steps

YLN's research, analysis and case building activities contribute to the historical documentation and preservation of Yazidi culture and traditions, in addition to assisting national and international authorities in strengthening litigation and legal action. The ongoing Criminal Database project, dedicated to compiling data on crimes against the Yazidi community, has substantiated multiple legal proceedings by leveraging the stored information within the database.

Through our work in the past year, extending into 2024, YLN remains engaged in various cases potentially falling under Dutch jurisdiction. In 2023, YLN was invited by the Genocide Network at Eurojust to discuss collaborative opportunities between the two organisations and establish grounds for supporting each other in 2024 and beyond.



Photo Credit: Yves Gellie

EDUCATION, TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

Through its education, training and capacity building activities, YLN aims to empower its members to effectively pursue justice for the Yazidi community.

YLN was invited to an Accountability Workshop organised by the United Nations International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM).

During the workshop YLN was represented by our legal advisor, Jela Keyany. The Workshop was envisaged to strengthen accountability efforts and advance the IIIM's Strategic Line of Inquiry for ISIL- related crimes committed in Syria. In the workshop YLN advocated for the voices of the Yazidi community into the further development of the IIIM's ISIS work to ensure inclusive justice. During the workshop, YLN was able to share best practices and methodology, specifically on our databases. The IIIM, as well as other organisations, were very interested in our



Artwork by: Hisham

work and therefore new ideas for collaborations were discussed.

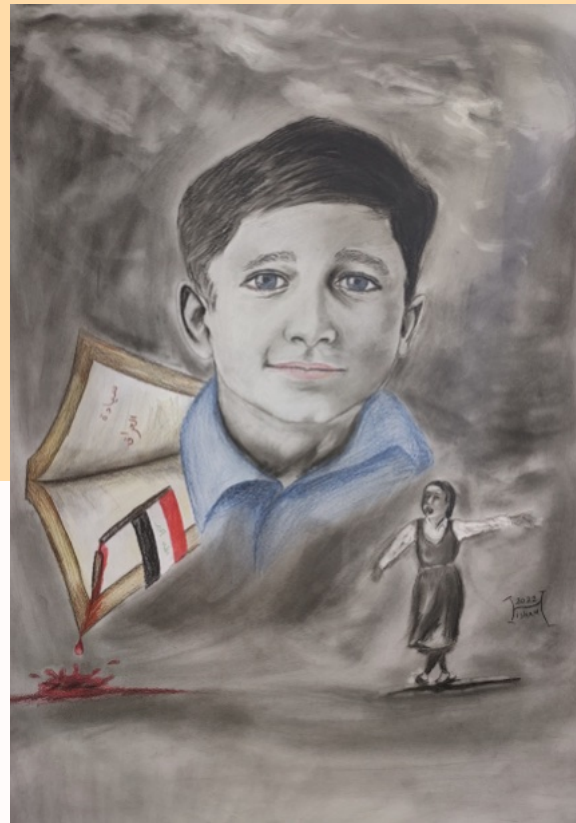
YLN has actively supported the professional growth of its members by sponsoring educational opportunities. In 2023, the organisation financed courses such as 'International Migrations: A Global Issue' offered by Coursera, and 'Forensic Interview Solutions (FIS): PEACE Online Investigative Interviewing'. Volunteers participating in these courses agree to share the knowledge acquired during these courses. This investment in the ongoing development of volunteers' expertise contributes significantly to the expansion of the organisation's collective knowledge base.

OUTREACH, ADVOCACY & MEDIA ACTIVITIES

YLN champions survivors' rights by conducting advocacy, lobbying governments and policy makers, and engaging the general public through awareness-building activities.

Advocacy activities

The Director of YLN Hope Rikkelman, served as a panellist at the International Law Conference on the Status of Women in New York organised by the New York City Bar. At the same event, Rikkelman was awarded with the Humanitarian Award for her work in advancing the rights of women and girls, as well as for her work in the field of international justice. During this conference she had the opportunity to pitch the need for more support for the Yazidi cause, to broaden the network, and to establish new contacts for funding opportunities.



Artwork by: Hisham

YLN attended the 'War Crimes Committee Conference 2023: Pursuing Justice in A World on Fire', organised by the International Bar Association (IBA). At the conference the Yazidi cause was discussed with partners and other contacts. We were able to promote our work specifically and also had the opportunity to support the exhibition Nobody's Listening, by our partner Yazda.

In June, YLN's Director was invited to present at the Rotary Club Hoorn. This presentation was dedicated to articulating the work and mandate of YLN, intricately intertwined

with the crimes endured by the Yazidi community in August 2014, followed by the hardships they have faced in the aftermath.

YLN maintains a close partnership with the Yazidi community, recognizing that effective advocacy for the Yazidi cause is only possible through collaborative engagement, attentive listening, and addressing the community's concerns and needs. Our strong relationship with the Yazidi community is exemplified by the dedicated efforts of Yazidi ambassadors. In reciprocation of their support to the Network, YLN is committed to bolstering their endeavours. These ambassadors serve as vital voices within the Yazidi community, including individuals like Khalid Barkat, actively engaged in raising awareness about the Yazidi plight and the 2014 genocide. [Khalid Barkat's article on BNNVARA](#) is a testament to his advocacy efforts.

YLN attended the ['Awareness raising event for Yazidi families of the missing in Europe'](#) organised by our partners the [International Commission on Missing Persons \(ICMP\)](#) and the [Farida Global Organization](#). This event facilitated discussions on how to report your missing loved ones, the process, and what NGOs like us can do.

[During the two-day event, ICMP presented the Iraqi Guide for Families of the Missing](#), which lays out the rights of families and the key elements of a sustainable and effective process. Participants could also visit ICMP's Human Identification laboratory at its Headquarters in The Hague. Yazidi Legal Network was able to give input on the guide and also agreed to disseminate the guide where needed for the Yazidi Community in the Netherlands.

In the summer of 2023, the Director provided input for an article by Margherita Capacci from [JusticeInfo.net](#). The discussion centred on the landmark trial of the first IS member in the Netherlands, specifically focusing on the crimes perpetrated against the Yazidi community.

On the 3rd of August each year we [commemorate the Yazidi survivors and victims of the genocide](#) perpetrated by ISIS in 2014 and onwards by organising or co-organising an event in the Netherlands for the local community. This year on August 3rd 2023, which marked 9 years of fighting for justice for the Yazidis, we participated and supported the commemoration at Dam Square, Amsterdam.

In September, the Director of YLN was invited as a speaker to the 'Victims of terrorism and their right to access justice: Challenges and solutions' event organised by ICCT. The event, aimed at addressing the critical issue of victims' right to access to justice following terrorist acts, sought to answer key questions surrounding relevant obstacles, including the absence of victims' participation provisions, lack of information, inadequate legal aid and a lack of interpretation services for foreign victims.

In late 2023, YLN launched a campaign aimed at reaching out to the organisation's following, especially the Yazidi community, in order to further understand the Yazidi survivors' perspectives and needs regarding justice, as well as the prerequisites for its realisation. Spanning 16 days, the campaign commenced on November 25th, coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and concluded on December 10th, marking the International Human Rights Day. YLN published an online survey to map out the current needs of those who have fled their home country due to war, conflict or state violence.

Lobbying activities

In April 2023, six courageous Yazidi women, featured in the documentary 'Yazidi Women - Daughters of the Sun' directed by Reber Dosky, presented a letter to the Dutch House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs. In this letter, the women appealed to Dutch policymakers for increased recognition and substantial assistance to aid the ongoing struggles faced by members of the Yazidi community. YLN extended its support to this initiative by supporting the draft of the petition and leveraging its social media platforms to magnify the voices of these resilient women. Additionally, together with our newfound coalition partners in Dutch Coalition for Yazidi Rights (DC4R), YLN was able to successfully lobby the Tweede Kamer (the Dutch Parliament) into adopting a motion which was based on the aforementioned petition that requests the Dutch government to resettle vulnerable Yazidi IDPs to the Netherlands who have been victims of IS. Unfortunately, after adopting the motion the Dutch government fell. Together with our coalition partners, YLN is currently in the process of making sure that the Dutch government will concretely follow up with the motion.

You can read the petition we co-drafted [here](#) where YLN specifically focused on the legal framework in the petition.

The Yazidi Justice Genocide Campaign was initiated in 2020 and throughout the following years a robust research program was developed around the responsibility of social media platforms within the context of the last Yazidi Genocide. The research focuses on the following issues:

1. The responsibility of social media platforms in instances where ISIS would use the platforms to recruit new ISIS members, making it possible to keep the organisation and thus the genocide active, and;
2. The responsibility of social media platforms in instances where ISIS members would use the platforms to buy and sell Yazidis, constituting the aiding and abetting of human trafficking.

The final research report provides an academic, legal as well as factual overview of the above mentioned situations, and includes evidence and victim statements. After discussions with different war crimes units, legal

professionals, law clinics and other experts, YLN and its partner NL Helpt Yazidis were advised to campaign around the research report opposed to making a formal legal complaint.

The campaign focuses around requesting governments to pro-actively investigate the issues mentioned earlier.

The campaign itself was launched in 2021 and remains ongoing through collaborative outreach endeavours by YLN and partnering organisations like Free a Girl. The campaign advocates for an international inquiry and prosecution of global media and technology firms for their alleged complicity in aiding and abetting ISIS's genocide against the Yazidis. For more information please see the campaign [here](#).

Integral to this campaign is an extensive report crafted by an international investigative team, which includes two Dutch attorneys, human rights activists, and numerous law students from various global universities, many of whom have ties to Dutch educational institutions. Oversight of these international investigators was provided by legal experts from North America and Europe.

In September 2023, the Security Council convened to vote on a [draft resolution](#) aimed at renewing the mandate of the [UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL \(UNITAD\)](#) for a final, non-extendable term of one year, extending until 17 September 2024.

As part of the collective effort expressed in an [open letter](#), YLN strongly advocated for the renewal of UNITAD's mandate beyond the end date, outlining a comprehensive strategy intended to facilitate the prosecution of ISIL crimes in Iraq and other relevant jurisdictions. This strategy includes dedicated support for Iraq in adopting a robust legal framework to address core international crimes, as well as the establishment of a survivor-centred mechanism conducive to such prosecutions. Furthermore, YLN emphasised the necessity for UNITAD to continue supporting Iraq in prosecuting ISIL crimes until the country can ensure the implementation of fair trial rights and establish a survivor-centred mechanism within its judicial proceedings.

Media activities

YLN's Director was interviewed for the Wordt Vervolgd report titled '[Does the new Yazidis Surviving Act help persecuted Yazidis?](#)' Wordt Vervolgd is a magazine on human rights run by Amnesty International, the Netherlands. The magazine's broad public reach in the Netherlands made this a great opportunity to share the Yazidi perspective on the Yazidi Survivor Law.

YLN's Director was interviewed in light of her work for the Yazidis and the fact that she received an award for this work. The interview was published in [The Advocatenblad](#), a well-known magazine for lawyers in the Netherlands.

Yazidi Legal Network is dedicated to maintaining an active and impactful presence across various social media platforms including [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [X](#) (previously known as Twitter). In addition to these platforms, YLN recently joined the 'Yezidi' online platform, an initiative led by a member of the Yazidi community. Across these channels, YLN disseminates information, promotes awareness, shares relevant news concerning the Yazidi community and international justice, extends support to partner organisations, and engages with its audience.

These platforms serve as convenient touchpoints for the Yazidi community to connect with YLN, offering easy and accessible avenues for communication and interaction.

On this year's commemoration of the Yazidi genocide, YLN was invited by [NPO1 radio](#) to discuss this day and the role of the organisation in accountability efforts in the Netherlands. Wahhab Hassoo, Director of the organisation NL Helpt Yezidis and Yazidi Dalal Ghanim talked about what justice is for the Yazidis after 9 years and the Director of YLN explained the legal framework of pending accountability efforts. You can listen to the segment [here](#) in Dutch.



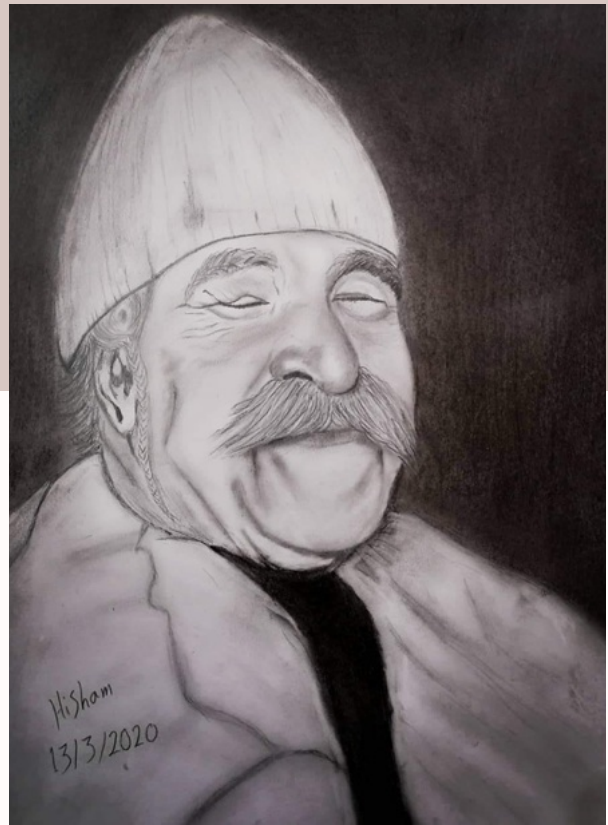
Photo Credit: Yves Gellie

SURVIVOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT

YLN works to connect victims and survivors of international crimes with basic needs and specialist support services, to cope with the impact of the violations they suffered and provide holistic access to justice.

Access to Justice

Over the past three years, YLN's **Access to Justice** project has been diligently committed to enhancing access to justice for Yazidis by meticulously documenting information about diverse justice systems and in particular, practical contacts and information available in countries with Yazidi populations. The project is an initiative that aims to facilitate easier access to justice mechanisms for survivors and witnesses of international crimes in the Netherlands and the rest of the world. Through community outreach and trust building activities, the project intends to respond directly to the needs of affected communities. To address these needs, the project focuses on informing



Artwork by: Hisham

survivor communities of their rights, the available justice mechanisms and procedures, and creating a platform that facilitates collaboration and serves as a referral pathway and pro bono (legal) assistance.

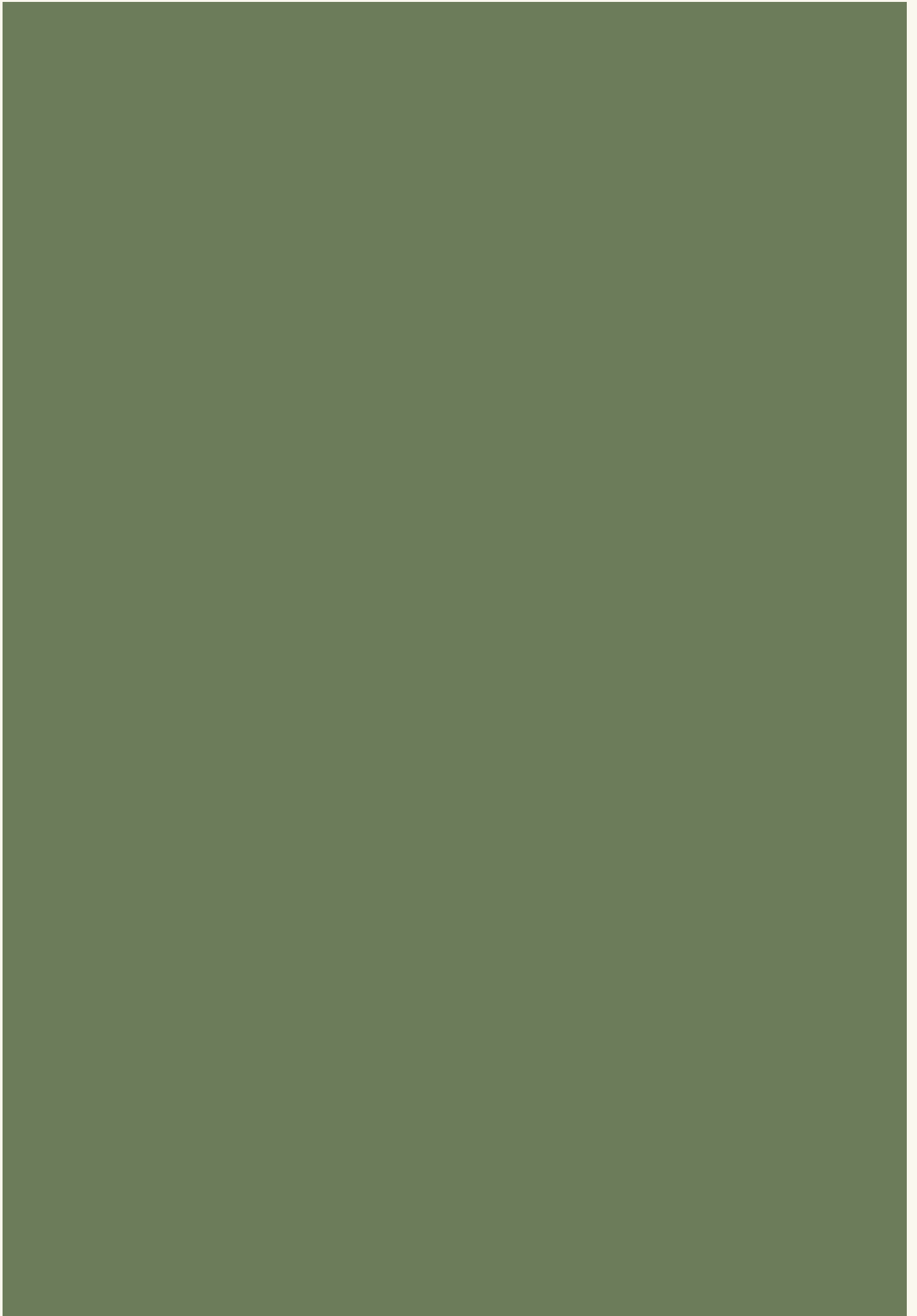
In 2023, YLN initiated a collaborative partnership with the [Columbia Law School](#), the [Clooney Foundation's Docket initiative](#), [NYU Law Clinic](#) and [CILDA Italy](#) to bolster and consolidate ongoing endeavours aimed at amplifying survivors' **access to justice**. This collaboration seeks to further augment, expand, and streamline existing efforts, ensuring a unified and comprehensive approach towards enhancing justice accessibility for survivors.

Over the years the concept of the project has grown with the understanding that the information collected and consolidated in our Airtable database is applicable to other affected communities. In that light YLN has teamed up with [Ukraine Legal Network](#) to facilitate access to the information for Ukrainian survivors. Students of the [University of Amsterdam, Law Faculty](#), have been essential in further developing a strategy for setting up a program based on our format for Ukrainians in the Netherlands. These students participated in the [Legal Startup Event 2023 by the Amsterdam Law Hub](#) and with their pitch won second place in the challenge, giving them a spot in the [Incubator programme](#).

Furthermore, in 2023 YLN's Access to Justice team has been working on publishing an informative campaign on survivor rights designed to meet the Yazidi community's needs. See a part of the campaign efforts [here](#). Throughout the year 2023, YLN has been consistently engaged in providing substantial legal support to Yazidi families residing in the Netherlands, Germany, Kurdistan, Iraq and Australia. This assistance encompasses a wide spectrum of migration-related inquiries, addressing diverse concerns ranging from intricate legal matters, legal aid and administrative support.



Photo Credit: Rebaz Majeed





FUTURE ENDEAVOURS

Photo Credit: Yves Gellie

Organisational Growth

As of 2023, the organisation has focussed on stabilising its administration and governance. This included having a stable and active board with a clear vision and transparent administration. We are proud to say we have accomplished just this. A substantial part of this success is also due to the fact that we have a paid legal office manager who is able to support this **professionalisation and sustainability process** of the organisation. These ongoing transitions are set to persist throughout 2024, strategically driving the growth and advancement of the entire organisation.

Yazidi Survivors Law

In March 2021, the Iraqi Parliament passed a law to compensate Yazidi survivors abducted by ISIS, acknowledging their suffering and aiming to aid their recovery. However, despite the Yazidi Survivors Law being ground-breaking in many aspects, concerns have emerged over recent requirements. One of these concerns revolves around the criteria that survivors have to file a criminal complaint to qualify for reparations. This conflicts with international norms, as administrative reparation programs aim to simplify access for survivors, particularly those of sexual violence,

without requiring such obstacles or subjecting victims to the risk of re-traumatization. Requiring a criminal complaint contradicts non-judicial processes and violates international human rights standards for an effective remedy. To help navigate the complexities of the Yazidi Survivors Law (YSL) and enable the Yazidi community in the Netherlands and Iraq to leverage its potential opportunities, we plan to support applications for reparations under this law for Yazidis in Europe.

2024 Yazidi Genocide Survivors Conference

In commemoration of the upcoming 10th anniversary of the Yazidi genocide in 2024, YLN is co-organising the Yazidi Genocide Survivors Conference in January 2024. This three-day Conference aims to serve as a pivotal platform for Yazidi Survivors of the 2014 genocide.

During the initial two days, the conference will convene representatives of the global Yazidi community and mainly Yazidi Survivors to facilitate a comprehensive dialogue concerning the current state of the Yazidi community's well-being. This discussion will address pertinent issues such as the lack of justice, reparations, and mental health support.

The primary objective is to amplify the collective voice of the community, discerning their evolving needs a decade post-genocide. This platform will enable organisations committed to supporting Yazidi Survivors to effectively comprehend and address these identified needs.

The third and final day of the conference will unite those interested, international organisations and YLN's global partners. The Conference will be dedicated to listening to the perspectives and insights offered by the Yazidi community. The aim is to align organisational strategies with the articulated needs and aspirations of the community, fostering a collaborative approach to better meet these requirements.

Photo Credit: Rebaz Majeed



NETWORK TEAM

AMBASSADORS

YLN prioritises the Yazidi community's needs, maintaining close ties with its global network. The organisation's Yazidi ambassadors play a central role. They guide the team, ensuring projects align with community needs and continuously enhance YLN's efforts based on their invaluable insights. Due to privacy and security concerns, we do not always publicly share the names of our ambassadors.

BOARD

Nadia Grant

Chair of the Board

Nadia is a lawyer specialised in public international law and working in the humanitarian sector. She has conducted research in the fields of international criminal law and international humanitarian law. She has experience within the non-profit sector across a variety of jurisdictions.

Grant brings important insight to the organisation through her experience in oversight and management of international organisations.

Eline de Vos

Secretary of the Board

Eline has a legal background with an LLB and an LLM in Constitutional and Administrative Law. Currently she works as a tutor at the Erasmus School of Law.

De Vos has a strong interest in human rights law and this interest has kept her on board in YLN since 2019, first as an ambassador and then as a board member.

Akbal Mohamed

Treasurer of the Board

Akbal has extensive expertise in automation across various industries. He has experience in dissecting organisational structures, reconstructing them systematically and digitally.

Mohamed's broad expertise allows him to guide YLN in establishing coherence across strategic vision, management goals, and operational decisions.

Genevieve Zingg

Vice Chair of the Board

Genevieve Zingg is an international criminal and human rights lawyer passionate about pursuing justice and accountability for victims and survivors of atrocity crimes and abuses perpetrated during armed conflicts. She has extensive experience working on the Yazidi genocide and ISIL crimes against Yazidis in both Iraq and Syria. She has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Yazidi Legal Network since April 2022 and it is her privilege to currently serve as Vice Chair.

Adel Kkeder Khalaf

Board member

Adel originally hails from a Yazidi family in Sinjar, Iraq, and now resides in the Qadiya IDPs camp. He has a B.A. in English Language from the University of Mosul.

Khalaf currently works for Yazda Global Organization as a team leader, translator, interviewer, and field researcher in Kurdistan. As a survivor of the 2014 Yazidi genocide, Khalaf offers crucial firsthand insight to the YLN team.

***YLN is currently looking for more board members for 2024 - 2026.
We prioritise applications from Yazidis and Yazidi community members.***

ADVISORY BOARD & INDEPENDENT ADVISORS

The Advisory Board consists of accomplished professionals with diverse backgrounds. As the title implies, these members provide counsel to YLN on organisational, legal, and other pertinent matters. Moreover, the advisory board plays a crucial role in guaranteeing the organisation's adherence to established regulations and standards. They convene regularly with the founders and team to deliberate and promote their recommendations, fostering the advancement of YLN's objectives. The Advisory Board is comprised of **Frederiek De Vlaming** and **Catherine van Kampen**.

Saber Saeed

Ambassador & Advisor

Saber is a Yazidi from Sinjar, Iraq and is one of the Yazidi ambassadors and advisors for the Yazidi Legal Network. Saber has extensive experience in advocacy, documentation efforts and other Yazidi Survivor support-related work as well as a specialisation in digital media. Prior to becoming an ambassador for the YLN, Saber worked for Yazda Global Organization. Currently he is also a public relations officer at the C4JR.

Emmanuel Didier

Senior Legal Advisor

Emmanuel is a Barrister and Solicitor in the Bar of Ontario, and specialises in comparative and international law. With a diverse background spanning membership in multiple bars in the US and Canada, roles as a Law Professor, refugee judge, and First Secretary of the International Court of Justice, Didier has extensive experience. He initiated the Yazidis Bibliography and is collaborating with YLN to expand it into a comprehensive database which aims to document ISIS crimes against Yazidis and other minorities, supporting their communities in recovery and adaptation.

Jela Keyany

Legal Advisor

Jela is dedicated to enhancing accountability mechanisms for war victims in complex settings like Iraq and Syria. Keyany's background involves safeguarding displaced communities with UNHCR, establishing local evidence collection in Northern Iraq/Kurdistan on Foreign Fighters in the Yazidi Genocide (in partnership with IOM, CIGE, and UoD Genocide Center), and preparing cases on terrorism and international criminal law for the Netherlands Prosecution Service. In the role of YLN's Legal Advisor, Keyany works towards ensuring justice for Yazidi victims and bolstering their rights.

Alan Frank

Senior Analyst

Alan holds a PhD in Experimental Psychology from Indiana University. He leads the development of the General Database. With 40 years of expertise in problem analysis and designing decision-support tools, he advises the YLN team on setting data analysis goals and formulating policies governing General Database access.

Marissa Kardon Weber

Legal Advisor

Marissa is an international criminal and human rights lawyer. She works on strategic litigation against abusive governments and other actors on behalf of survivors, including dissidents, political prisoners, and communities. She also advises NGOs addressing atrocity crimes. Marissa has worked on rule-of-law initiatives relating to conflicts in Iraq/Syria, Ukraine/Russia, Libya, Iran, Afghanistan, Myanmar/Bangladesh, and Seychelles, and previously worked in the ICC's Office of the Prosecutor. She zealously seeks justice and healing through victim-centred and trauma-informed practices. As Legal Advisor at YLN, Marissa supports investigations and case building toward sustainable accountability.

MANAGEMENT

Denise Alkadiri-Kohi

Legal Office Manager

Denise is the first and only paid part time staff that the Network has had. She manages the General Database Project and oversees the Outreach team, while actively contributing to various other YLN initiatives and handling organisational administration.

With an LLM in International Criminal Law, her background includes roles such as a Project Coordinator at the Finnish Immigration Services and volunteering for a prominent Finnish Women's organisation dedicated to aiding victims of violence.

Hope Rikkelman

General Director

Hope serves as the General Director and Co-Founder of YLN, and hails from a lineage deeply rooted in the justice sector. She possesses extensive expertise in international public, criminal, and humanitarian law, with a particular focus on intelligence and open source investigations, particularly in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

Co-founding Syria Legal Network-NL and YLN through her affiliation with the Nuhanovic Foundation, Rikkelman's projects centre around justice, accountability, and reparations for victims of war crimes.

In December 2023, Hope was promoted to Director of the Nuhanovic Foundation, YLN's mother organisation.

By the conclusion of 2023, YLN has nearly 40 active volunteers contributing across the organisation's diverse projects. These volunteers represent an array of academic and professional backgrounds, showcasing a mosaic of talents within the team. Hailing from various nationalities spanning the US, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, YLN's volunteer base encompasses individuals at different life stages—some pursuing studies, others employed, and a few in retirement. The organisation takes pride in its dedicated and diverse team, adeptly managing, expanding, and enhancing YLN's projects year after year. Their collective wealth of skills and perspectives plays a pivotal role in the organisation's success.

PARTNERS & FRIENDS

Yazidi Legal Network takes immense pride in its journey and current standing. Our foundation is deeply rooted in the values of collaboration, cooperation, and mutual support. These principles and foundation of the network resonate across all our projects and endeavours. We cherish our expansive and growing network throughout the academic world, legal field and, more specifically, the Yazidi community.

As we step into 2024, we are excited to spotlight our newly forged formal partnerships in the past year. These organisations join our existing network of partners and friends, with whom we look forward to a fruitful collaboration in the future.



Towards the end of 2023, YLN established collaborations with various organisations and initiatives, expanding our partnerships significantly. One notable collaboration involved Zentralrat Eziden in Germany, through which German Yazidi students were enlisted to contribute to our newly developed Germany Criminal database. Presently, five students, mainly with a Yazidi background or affiliation, are actively involved in compiling information on German foreign fighters for this database.

Moreover, in 2023, YLN forged strategic partnerships with several key entities. We joined forces with the Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights (CILD) and NYU Law Clinic, establishing a productive collaboration for our Access to Justice Project. Concurrently, discussions and collaboration began with the Docket Initiative of the Clooney Foundation, exploring potential mutual support avenues, particularly aligning our Access to Justice project with their Justice Beyond Borders Database.

Additionally, formal agreements in the form of Memoranda of Understanding were signed with both Yazda and the Commission for Investigation & Gathering Evidence (CIGE). YLN maintained close ties with the Global Survivors Fund, particularly in coordinating the upcoming Yazidi Genocide Survivors Conference scheduled for January 2024.

Recognizing our commitment and expertise, YLN was invited and subsequently became a member of the Alliance Against Genocide in November 2023. Furthermore, our General Database project embarked on a collaborative endeavour with Project FERMAN from the Lower Saxony Memorials Foundation, affiliated with the Bergen Belsen Memorial Institute in Germany.

SUPPORT THE YAZIDIS



Photo Credit: Yves Gellie

BECOME A DONOR!

Please contribute what you can and encourage others to do the same.

We are a formal tax deductible non profit organisation! Every donation, large or small, helps YLN find justice for the Yazidis in the Netherlands and abroad.

Bank Account: NL41 INGB 0674602854

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Alternatively, you can donate through Yazidi Legal Network's [GoFundMe campaign](#), which will directly contribute to strengthening the fight for justice.

All donations will be used to fund our programs: the documentation, research and analysis program and the awareness raising and capacity building program.

For detailed financial reports, [visit our website](#).

JOIN US

Our mission would not be complete without the help of our volunteers. If you are interested in our cause and want to help, please send an email to: info@yazidilegalnetwork.org.

Please remember that we are an organisation managed primarily by a team of volunteers so we might take some time to get back to you.

We appreciate your interest and we will get back to you as soon as possible!

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS


All of the art and photography shared in this report is made by members and supporters of the Yazidi community. At Yazidi Legal Network, we are proud to provide a platform for the creative expression of these artists, no matter what the medium. Reach out to us if you'd like to contribute or collaborate with us.

Rebaz Majeed

 [@rebaz.majeed](#)

Rebaz Majeed is a freelance Kurdish journalist, who uses the mediums of photo stories, video stories, and articles to amplify the voice of the Yazidi community. His diverse works, published in various media outlets, aimed to portray the Yazidis not solely as victims of genocide but as a multifaceted community with a rich identity worth exploring.

Hisham

 [@hisham_art_74](#)

Hisham, a survivor of the Yazidi genocide, channels his experiences into his art. His primary aim is to illustrate the tragic events of the Yazidi genocide in 2014 and the immense hardships faced by his community during that period. Through his artistic expression, Hisham endeavours to encapsulate the suffering of the Yazidi community, portraying it from diverse angles and through the perspectives of different individuals. Each artwork he creates holds a unique narrative, contributing as a vital piece to the larger puzzle of his community's collective trauma.

Yves Gellie

 [@yves_gellie](#)

Yves Gellie, born in Bordeaux, France, began his career in photo-journalism with a feature about cocaine production in Colombia in 1981, followed by a story about war refugees in Ogaden, Somalia. Yves has also had the unique chance to spend two nights in and photograph the Lalish temple. His work stands somewhere between Photo Journalism and Contemporary Art, and he has developed a style described as an iconographic selection of the reality underlying the day-to-day life and its trivial aspects. Yves Gellie is represented by the gallery Baudoin Lebon in Paris.



YAZIDI LEGAL NETWORK

STICHTING YAZIDI LEGAL NETWORK



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