

**Improving Security for Minorities in Iraq** Minority Rights Group International (MRG) 19 July 2012

*ICRtoP member, Minority Rights Group International, has published a report, “[Improving Security for Minorities in Iraq](#)”*

To improve security for minorities in Iraq, impunity must end, and those responsible for attacks against these vulnerable communities must be identified and brought to justice, says Minority Rights Group International (MRG) in their new report.

Most members of Iraq’s ethnic and religious minorities continue to fear for their safety, and have a deeply held mistrust of security agencies, according to the report, *Improving security for minorities in Iraq*, based on research carried out by MRG and its Iraqi partner organization, Iraqi Minorities Council.

The communities who feel most insecure are Armenians, Yezidis, Black Iraqis and Shabaks.

‘Many of the minorities surveyed have little faith in the Iraqi security forces, and see them as being corrupt and easily infiltrated by extremists. Immediate measures must be taken to address this situation; beginning with setting up an independent commission to identify and remove corrupt police officials’ says Chris Chapman, MRG’s Head of Conflict Prevention and author of the report.

Despite lacking confidence in the state to protect them, those surveyed in the report feel that in order to provide effective security for minorities, state structures must be strengthened. Yezidis, Shabaks and Chaldean-Assyrian-Syriacs were enthusiastic supporters of increasing the representation of minorities in security bodies, and almost three quarters of those surveyed called for improved relations and information sharing between the police and ethnic and religious communities.

(...)

‘Minorities fear an encroaching “every community for themselves” approach, in which they will face the choice of being outnumbered and outgunned, or accepting offers of protection made by other communities, with the terms necessarily dictated by the protector. Ethnic militia can only mean a further cementing of ethnic and sectarian differences,’ says Chapman.

Opinions on the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq at the end of 2011 were very mixed amongst minorities, with many appearing to be happy they were leaving, blaming them for creating a situation where ethnic and sectarian differences have become highly toxic. However the report says that the withdrawal is also a source of uncertainty and anxiety for communities, especially in the disputed areas in the North, where US forces played an intermediary role mediating between competing powers. (...) **Find [more information](#) . Download [the report](#)**

in English, or  
[Arabic](#)

.