

**Opening Session**  
**Ms. Nadia Taha**  
**Yazda**  
**Germany / Iraq**

His Excellency President Lykketoft, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,

Heads of State and Government, Honorable Ministers, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen.

I am a survivor of the Yazidi Genocide, now a refugee, a villager who found herself ripped from her free life with dreams to that of a slave without hope under the rule of the so-called 'Islamic State'.

When Daesh attacked us, they killed men and enslaved women, they killed my mother with 80 older women because they did not want to use them for sexual enslavement, they killed six of my brothers and took me with other 6500 Yazidi women and children.

Many days passed and I wished I had died before what happened so that I did not see everyone I love killed or enslaved, or at best a refugee or displaced.

I wished that the rapes I endured by 12 terrorists were 12 bullets in my flesh.

Despite the tragedy that devastated me for the last two years, I was lucky comparing to others. My three nieces were with me, Rojyan aged 13, Kathrine 19 and Nisreen 16 when they took us to Mosul. There they separated us by force, punching us in the face and lashing us with whips, then dragging us by our hair down the stairs. Then they took us to another place and violated us. Kathrine was killed by an IED as she attempted escape, Rojyan was harmed by an enormous militant who was many times heavier than her, and until now we have not heard what became of Nisreen.

After I escaped, I found myself an IDP in Kurdistan Region of northern Iraq where a million and half refugees live. For more than a year I lived there, waiting for food distributions, standing in endlessly long lines along with people who lost everything and for whom life was almost unbearable.

I was very happy when Germany took me in for therapy because this showed there are still people in the world who care about people like me.

But do you know when the happiest day in my life was? It is not today speaking to world leaders! It is when I was working my mother's farm planting vegetables, or when we would go for a picnic to mountain, or when I was with my mother. Those indeed were the happiest days.

I met many refugees in Greece whose lives, freedom and dignity have been destroyed. One of them said, and I quote, "There is no life here, and there is no place to return to".

Millions of children are living in camps that don't provide the basic necessities of life, especially health and education.

We live in a third world war – but without naming it such.

Today I want to pass a message from all victims in the world because you must know as leaders whatever you do will impact either positively or negatively on the lives of simple people such as me.

You decide whether it is to be war or peace.  
You decide to give hope or suffering.

We have to address the causes of immigration, not just the immigration itself, we have to eradicate terrorism and stop instability, we have to end wars and put humanity first, we have to hold accountable those who have taken the lives of innocent people, we have to hold accountable those who have committed genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity.

As you know terrorists and extremists, and especially ISIS, are the reason for the displacement of millions from their homes.

We have to eradicate ISIS now, yes now, not wait for endless negotiations.

Terrorism is attempting to end human civilization as we know it.

Until security is established in conflict areas, we should not close our borders to innocent women and children who flee from violence and we must stand with persecuted minorities.

The world has only one border, it is called humanity.  
The differences between us are small compared to our shared humanity.

From this stage, I beg you all to put humans first and that all of you support peace.