

**Kheder Kareem
Mayors for Peace**

**CWC 24th Conference of States Parties (CSP-24)
The Hague, The Netherlands
November 25-29, 2019**

Mr. Chairman, Director-General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank you for organizing this conference where people from around the world can spread messages of peace.

The inhumane chemical attack on the people of Halabja may never be forgotten, and reminds us that we need to ban all weapons of mass destruction and war.

I have been invited several times to participate in this conference and I say that as a delegate of a nation with forty million people, we still do not have a representative nor a flag at the United Nations in order to have the voice of Kurds heard by the world. Delegates of other countries cannot officially support our cause and nation.

As Kurds, and like all other nations on earth, we have our own land, language, and flag. In front of the world, Kurds are being killed and chased out of their houses. And during military invasions of our nations, banned weapons are being used against our people in the past and now. There are still not enough actions from the United Nations and other human rights organizations to protect our people, all this while our Peshmarga forces fought against the most dangerous terrorist group, ISIS, so bravely with the support of some other member states of the UN. They were the first and main force to fight against ISIS. Today we are sad as we feel betrayed and abandoned once again.

I have been working as a volunteer for more than fifteen years with Mayors for Peace and the International Peace Bureau in order to have a better and more peaceful world for our children.

I want to invite all OPCW members and participants in this conference to work much harder in support of the plight of the Kurdish people. Kurds want and need to be recognized with a full membership and representation at the UN.

Together we will be stronger to work towards peace in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and any other place on earth where people suffer from violence and exclusion. Let us work together for all people who should live free and with respect to their basic human rights, in a world free of war and environmental destruction. We want a world where our children can grow up without racism and war. Let us work together.

Thank you for your attention, and I request that this statement be made part of the CSP record and included on the website.