
ISDP NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Clarifying ISDP's Independence and Roll in Serving the Community

Washington: September 10 2007 – Due to misunderstandings arising from specific comments by some during a public event, ISDP is issuing a statement from Project Director Michael Youash, clarifying its status and roll in working for the rights of our people and other vulnerable minorities in Iraq:

“During the 74th Convention of the Assyrian American National Federation, at the President’s Ball, I was introduced as a member/worker of the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM).

“ISDP takes pride in statements by any and all organizations who feel its work represents their interests, genuine aspirations and is working towards our people’s goals. Indeed, a track record exists whereby at various times and stages members of various organizations indicated ISDP was working for ‘them’ – such as the Assyrian Universal Alliance and the Assyrian Democratic Organization.

“People must understand that ISDP’s goal is to be recognized as working for all of our people - Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac, across organizational and political lines. We regret that some interpret this literally, to mean that we are directly employed by, or directed by, any organization but our own.

“ISDP is a special project of the Assyrian Academic Society. It has a Board, and is directed and managed through this structure. While contributions arrive from an array of entities representative of our community, it operates in an independent capacity.

“The Assyrian Democratic Movement is a respected and important part of our political fabric, but has no direction over ISDP. Other important political parties, such as the Assyrian General Conference, Assyrian Democratic Organization and Assyrian Universal Alliance have all assisted ISDP in its operations. At all times, however, ISDP maintains its independence and impartiality in developing its work.

“We hope that any misunderstandings can be laid to rest on this subject henceforth, and ISDP can continue to earn the level of respect where it is complimented as an organization serving the people by as broad an array as possible of our respected organizations and political parties.”

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The Iraq Sustainable Democracy Project's (ISDP) research and policy analysis maintains that ChaldoAssyrians and Iraq's other, *real* minorities (e.g. Turkmens, Shabaks, Yezidis, Mandaeans and others) are the best variable for leveraging the development of a genuine and sustainable democracy over the long term.

For the United States, Iraq's *real* minorities are also the truest '*moderates*' as defined by the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terror. As such, they are a key element in the fight against extremism in Iraq and the Middle East as a whole.

ISDP works to ensure that these minorities are factored into policy development accordingly through research and policy analysis for all relevant stakeholders.