

Online Hate Speech Report: Duhok Land Rights Protests (July 2026)



**No Place for
Hate Speech**

Produced by Ettok: Youth-led Minority Rights Media-Hub Powered by EttokAI (Beta Version) © All rights reserved by Sustainable Peace Foundation and Ettok: Youth-led Minority Rights Media-hub 10th of July 2026

I. Institutional Mandate and Position Statement

This analytical report has been compiled utilising EttokAI, a specialised AI agent developed by Ettok: Youth-led Minority Rights Media-hub to systematically detect, track, and report online hate speech targeting minority communities and the general public. EttokAI is currently in its beta testing phase. At this stage, its programmatic monitoring capabilities were focused strictly on Facebook data. Future iterations will expand automated coverage across all major social media platforms.

Ettok: Youth-led Minority Rights Media-hub maintains a strict policy of political neutrality. This report takes no sides in local or regional political power plays. However, Ettok: Youth-led Minority Rights Media-hub firmly stands in support of the legitimate, constitutional rights of all citizens to protest peacefully, and we categorically denounce all forms of hate speech, irrespective of its origin or its target. Our sole objective is the preservation of human rights, minority dignity, and social cohesion through objective data analysis.

II. Key Findings and Quantitative Breakdown

The data scan evaluated the immediate digital aftermath of the July 6, 2026, land rights protests in Duhok. The assessment tracked content across targeted comment threads to evaluate the toxicity levels directed at the Assyrian community.

- Total Scanned Facebook Posts: 6
- Total Flagged Incidents: 75
- Unique Perpetrators Identified: 10
- Hate Speech Prevalence Rate: 100% (Every monitored thread contained flaggable content)

Severity Level	Total Incidents	Percentage of Total	Core Tactics Included
Hate Speech (Critical/High)	57	76.0%	Incitement to violence, identity erasure, ethnic cleansing justifications
Humiliation (Medium)	13	17.3%	Gaslighting, mockery, symbol destruction, paternalistic rhetoric
Offensive (Low/Medium)	5	6.7%	Conspiracy plots, general sectarian slurs, political hostility
Total	75	100%	

III. Qualitative Tactical Analysis

The report identified five primary rhetorical tactics utilised by online perpetrators to delegitimise the indigenous status of the Assyrian population:

- **Identity Erasure and Sectarian Relabelling:** Perpetrators systematically drop ethnic nomenclature in favour of the theological term "Nestorian" to strip the community of its ethnic identity. By reducing an ancient ethnic group to a mere "Christian sect," actors attempt to nullify their historical, indigenous claims to ancestral lands in Mesopotamia. Common variations include asserting that Assyrians are simply "Kurds who changed religion" or late-stage refugees.
- **The Colonial Invention Narrative:** A pseudo-academic argument asserting that the modern "Assyrian" identity and the Assyrian language name were wholly fabricated by 19th-century British colonialists (such as Austen Henry Layard). This framework relies on historical distortions surrounding the British-era Assyrian Levies to paint the entire community as historical proxies or foreign intelligence assets.
- **Coded Incitement and The Simko Shikak Slanders:** Commenters frequently celebrate the 1918 assassination of the Assyrian Patriarch, Mar Shimun XIX Benyamin, by Kurdish tribal leader Simko Shikak. Phrases such as "we need another Simko" function as culturally-coded incitement to ethnic violence that local readers immediately understand.
- **Dehumanisation:** The language frequently drops into severe dehumanisation, comparing Assyrians to "shoes," "dogs," or "nothing." This pattern mimics classic genocidal rhetoric, stripping targets of human agency.
- **Gaslighting ("Guests Should Be Grateful"):** A paternalistic narrative framing Assyrians as mere guests who should show uncritical gratitude to their hosts rather than asserting legal and indigenous property rights.

IV. Technical Monitoring Limitations

Platform Restrictions: A total of 14 Instagram posts/reels and 8 TikTok videos submitted could not be scanned due to a lack of programmatic API access.

- **Authentication Barriers:** Facebook video links and reels regularly hit login-wall challenges.
- **Format Constraints:** The system is currently optimised for text analytics; it cannot parse speech-to-text from voice notes, or text embedded in image files.
- **Linguistic Gaps:** While Sorani Kurdish and Arabic script analysis are integrated, Kurmanji Kurdish in Latin script remains limited.

V. Enhanced Stakeholder Recommendations and Action Points

1. To the Independent High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR)

- **Official Monitoring Documentation:** Establish a specialised minority hate-speech depository. The IHCHR must officially archive digital incitement data such as the "Simko Shikak violence coding" to include in national and international human rights compliance assessments.
- **Legal Referral Mechanism:** Utilise its statutory powers to forward verified digital files containing explicit calls for violence against Assyrians to the public prosecutor's office, initiating state-led public interest litigation against prominent online repeat offenders.
- **Field Fact-Finding Factoring:** Deploy human rights monitors to Duhok to directly investigate the link between digital identity erasure, systemic gaslighting, and the physical security of Assyrian protesters demanding land rights.

2. To the Security and Law Enforcement Agencies (Asayesh and Local Police)

- **Proactive Protection of Protesters:** The local police and Asayesh must ensure the physical safety of Assyrian citizens exercising their constitutional right to peaceful assembly. Security apparatuses must treat digital incitement (e.g., "shoot them" or "expel them") as credible, actionable physical threats.
- **Digital Threat Interdiction:** Asayesh digital cybercrime units must actively monitor local threat escalations on platforms without infringing on legitimate free speech. Coded death threats and active calls for ethnic expulsion must be legally interdicted according to prevailing public safety laws.
- **Sectarian Neutrality Protocols:** Implement internal training to guarantee that field personnel operate with absolute professional neutrality, treating Assyrian landowners and protesters with equal legal dignity, while actively suppressing hate speech or physical intimidation encountered in the field.

3. To the Three Branches of Government (Executive, Legislative, and Judicial)

- **The Executive Branch (Regional and Federal Ministries):** Promptly form an inter-ministerial task force to resolve underlying agrarian and property disputes in Duhok, recognising Assyrian indigenous historical claims and directly dissolving the grievances that fuel online hate loops.

- Direct State Media and Communication Commissions to penalise media outlets or public figures who amplify the "Colonial Invention" myth or apply the sectarian "Nestorian" slur to deny minority rights.
- The Legislative Branch (Parliaments): Draft and pass dedicated anti-discrimination legislation that legally codifies cyber-hate, explicitly protecting minorities against modern digital identity erasure and culturally-coded incitement.
 - Legislate explicit civil and criminal protections for the Assyrian language name and cultural symbols to counter online narratives advocating for symbol destruction.
- The Judicial Branch (Courts and Judiciary):
 - Establish specialised judicial benches familiar with digital cyber-hate definitions to expedite cases involving targeted ethnic intimidation.
 - Treat culturally-coded historical references to violence (such as invoking the assassination of Mar Shimun XIX Benyamin) as legally recognised forms of threat articulation under criminal codes governing intimidation.

4. To Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and The Community at Large

- CSO Counter-Narrative Mobilisation: Launch targeted digital literacy and historical accuracy campaigns. Local and international CSOs should produce multilingual media highlighting continuous Assyrian indigenous presence and clarifying that Assyrian is a distinct, ancient language, directly debunking the "Colonial Invention" narrative.
- Unified Digital Solidarity Networks: Civil society actors from all ethnic backgrounds must form digital solidarity networks to publicly condemn minority dehumanisation. When comments like "they are shoes" emerge, human rights networks should collectively flag and counter the discourse to neutralise the normalisation of hate.
- Community-Led Digital Safety and Reporting: Train youth activists and community monitors to safely document, archive, and report critical severity threats to platform safety teams. Communities must avoid retaliatory toxic rhetoric, keeping focus strictly on the peaceful, legal, and constitutional assertion of land and identity rights.

