



الاتحاد العام للاجئين العراقيين  
فيدراسيونى سهراسهري پهنا بهراني عيراقى

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF IRAQI REFUGEES-IFIR

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11/12/08

**PRESS RELEASE:**

## **Deportation flight to Iraq forced to come back to the UK**

The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees has heard that the Kurdish authorities have refused to accept the forty nine people deported from the UK by charter flight last night. They arrived back in the UK at approximately 19.30. They are currently being held in Colnbrook detention centre.

Hassan Mohammed Kochar, one of the deportees, says:

'We were taken to Erbil, the plane was circling in the air. None of us knew what was going on. After three circles the plane turned round and landed in Turkey. We waited there for an hour and a half. The guards said they'd take us to Kurdistan but they didn't. Then we went to Romania. They told us again that they'd send us back but they didn't. They said it was because of the weather but, like the whole situation, that doesn't make any sense.'

The families of other deportees in Kurdistan were told by airport staff they had been refused entry at both Erbil and Suleimania airports.

The wife of one of the deportees said earlier: 'I'm distraught. I don't know where my husband is – I feel like he has been kidnapped. The Home Office has lost him. This is disgraceful behaviour by them.'

More details to follow.

(ends)

Contact:

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10th December 2008

Press Release: Fifty Iraqis deported today

The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees has been informed that fifty Iraqis are currently being moved from Dover and Colnbrook detention centres to be sent back to Iraqi Kurdistan by charter flight today.

Two of the people being deported, Ahmed Ali (held in Dover) and Jabar Aziz Ahmed (Colnbrook), informed us that they are being taken in vans from the detention centres to Stanstead to be removed tonight.

All the people we are in contact with (the majority of deportees) fled Iraq due to political or social persecution. Kurdistan, in northern Iraq, has been classified as safe by the Home Office and so acceptable to send people back to. Recent deportees have committed suicide, been kidnapped and killed in a car bomb.

Jabar Aziz Ahmed fled to escape political persecution. He returned in 2006 but was forced to flee again after being tortured. The Medical Foundation has confirmed that he has been tortured and testified to this in court. In spite of this he has been held in Orpington detention centre for a year.

He says:

—If I go back I will be tortured again and my life will be in danger. I have made a life here and campaigned for the human rights of other Iraqi refugees in the UK. I've tried to appeal my case again but I can't afford the fees my solicitors charge. I can see the vans coming to take us. My life is over if I go back.—

Ahmed Ali for example fled to escape death threats from his girlfriend's family, from a different tribe, who objected to them being together. She was killed by her family when she became pregnant and he was forced to leave the country to escape the same fate. The family are waiting for him to come back.

Other people on the flight include a sports teacher persecuted and threatened by radical Islamic groups for teaching female students sport and a shop owner tortured and threatened for selling alcohol.

Dashty Jamal from the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees says:

—Kurdistan is not safe, as the Home Office describes it: human rights and freedoms are violated on a daily basis, often by the political parties that run the state. It is madness that people who fled their persecution are being sent back to the mercy of the very people who were persecuting them before. We call on all concerned people to take a stand against the Home Office's increasingly inhumane stance and to help us campaign against these deportations which are putting people's lives at risk.—

(ends)

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Notes for editors

1. The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees is a political, civic, non-governmental organisation, which advocates the rights of refugees.

2. Details of the last mass (violent) deportation can be found here:

[http://csdiraq.com/index.php?option=com\\_frontpage&Itemid=1&limit=5&limitstart=5](http://csdiraq.com/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1&limit=5&limitstart=5)

[http://csdiraq.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=50&Itemid=1](http://csdiraq.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=50&Itemid=1)

3. The carrier for previous mass deportations has been Hamburg International

4. More than 500 people have been forcibly deported back to Iraq since 2005.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees-IFIR

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### **CSDIRAQ**

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