

Stop Deporting Asylum Seekers to War-Zones

ECHOS

COALITION TO STOP DEPORTATION TO IRAQ

NEWS LETTER 15

Violence against asylum seekers by holding them in detention centres and forcible deportation must not be allowed in the 21st century.



Secretary IFIR Dashty Jamal speech to 4th October 2008 Sheffield demonstration 'Stop Deporting asylum seekers to War-Zones'

On behalf of the International federation of Iraqi refugees, I welcome you all. I would like to thank the committee to defend asylum seekers in Sheffield who have organised this important demonstration.

It is very sad that Muhammad Hussien is not with us today, however his fight for asylum rights still continues. Muhammad Hussien died following 8 years struggling for refugee status sadly he did not achieve this. Muhamad Hussien asked for asylum from the British Government but officials not only refused his case but imprisoned him in a detention centre. It was only with your support that he was released from detention. However, the fear of getting arrested and being deported was still living with him. Unfortunately 2 months after his release he died of Cancer on 3rd of August 2008.

Muhammad's only crime was that by chance he was born in a country where human rights do not exist. For the crime of attempting to escape to a safe country the UK authorities arrested him, put him in a detention centre and threatened to deport him to a country where even the smallest of human rights do not exist. The UK Government gives Iraqi Kurds future to murderers who are responsible for killing civilians and undermining the rights women and children.

I do not want to talk about the attacks on Iraqi Kurds by the labour party over the last 3 years. However as a reminder I just want to say that this Government has deported approximately 500 Iraqi Kurds in the most inhuman way. Iraqi Kurds have been forced to wear military clothes to make them look like war criminals.

Continued on page 3>>

Stop Deporting asylum seekers to War-Zones demonstration 4th October 2008



Refugee rights and anti racist campaigners took to the streets of Sheffield on Saturday 4 October to protest against the inhuman treatment of asylum seekers by the authorities in Britain. In particular they highlighted the Government's policy of locking up asylum seekers, sometimes for long periods, in detention centres -- in some cases along with their young children. Over 100 people marched from Sheffield City Hall to the Peace Gardens to call for asylum seekers to be given the right to work and for an end to deportations to war zones.

Amongst those on the protest were Iraqi Kurds who have been threatened with removal to Iraq. They were supported by the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR). Dashty Jamal Secretary of IFIR said: "We must never forget that asylum rights are human rights. We must join together with all those British people who believe in freedom and stop these racist policies."

On the march were Associate Nimpagaritse, a young woman who fled violence in Burundi, recently released from a detention centre. Associate hopes to train as a nurse but is not allowed to work.

Continued on page 4>>>>

The right of asylum seekers to work and get support

Minutes of CSD Iraq Committee meeting Tuesday 30 September



Sarah Parker, Gerry Hickey, Richard Whittell, Karen Johnson

Dashty Jamal attended part of the meeting via phone link

Apologies Richie from No Borders

Situation in Iraq

The situation

Report on deportations.

Dashty reported the Last big deportation flight to Iraq was the 17 September 08 Hamburg International flight. Fazzel the Campsfield hunger-striker was removed on this flight. This was the second time the authorities had tried to remove Fazzel. The first time Fazzel had been beaten by security guards two days earlier on the 15 September. Fazzel and other Kurdish asylum seekers had tried to resist deportation and were beaten by the Home Office Guards the plane was damaged during the fracas and despite being threatened the pilot refused to let the plane take off.

Richard said that he had read CSD Iraq reports referring to asylum seekers being taken away by Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) troops on arrival he asked if we knew what the KRG troops did with the asylum seekers.

Sarah answered that returned asylum seekers had reported back that they were generally questioned about why they had left Kurdistan and why they did not want to return. This was problematic in itself because many of the asylum seekers had fled because of problems with the Kurdish ruling parties. They were in effect being questioned by the same people who had persecuted them and forced them to leave in the first place. Further to this Sarah said a contact of hers Mirriam Hollis had said that many of the KRG security forces were told that all the returned asylum seekers were criminals. This was not the case and if it is true it was duplicitous of the KRG because they certainly knew this was not the case.

Asylum seekers' problems and the UK Governments tactics.

Gerry Hickey Reported that there were no big changes.

The Home Office was continuing to look at the back log of cases of asylum seekers who came into the country prior to 2007. Case work resolution teams have been set up to review a back log of four hundred thousand records. A third of the back-log has been identified as duplicate records or people who have already been given status but their record has not been updated. However if CSD Iraq had cases that had heard nothing for a while if you write to the home office with their reference number they will be able to refer the client to the case team who are looking at their case. This could speed up the decision process for the individual concerned. The Home Office has said all cases in the back log will be resolved by 2011. There will be Iraqi's caught up in this back log particularly those who arrived in the UK between 2003-2004 and were given section four support because they had no safe route home. However the people who are being targeted as a priority by the case work resolution teams are:
cases of individuals who may pose a risk to the public
cases of individuals who may easily be removed
cases of individuals receiving support
cases of individuals who may be granted leave to remain

Conditions in Detention centres

Campsfield hunger strike lead by Iraqi asylum seekers in August.

As Dashty was not present and many of the Campsfield hunger strikers have been deported it was decided to leave this item.

Activities in Europe

report back from recent IFIR conference in Zurich .
Dashty reported the Conference was well attended and successful. The Swiss IFIR branch has made links with other Swiss refugee groups and MP's
Dashty also reported 9 asylum seekers had escaped from Gothenburg detention centre. The escaped asylum seekers were from Afghanistan and Iraq. They were all due to be deported.

Activities and future plans

October demonstration in Sheffield.

Dashty reported that he had been invited to speak at a lobby of Sheffield Town Hall organised by Sheffield committee to Defend Asylum Seekers on 4 October 2008.

Dashty reported that International Federation of Iraqi Refugees TV station was in danger of closing because of lack of funds. >>>go to page4

Escape from Swedish Detention Centre



The IFIR Gothenburg branch has informed us that on the 30 September nine asylum seekers escaped from Gothenburg detention centre. The asylum seekers who were due to be returned were from Afghanistan and Northern Iraq. This is not the first time asylum seekers have escaped from the Gothenburg detention centre located in a small town outside Gothenburg. In the last four months approximately 25 asylum seekers detained in the detention centre have escaped from the detention centre.

IFIR has successfully prevented the removal of Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers three times from the Gothenburg Detention Centre.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees-IFIR CSDIRAQ

>>>from page1Dashty Jamal speech to 3 October

They have been deported in a way which is against all the principles of the united-nations convention and international human rights. Asylum seekers have no right to work or study or choose where they live. This inhuman policy against Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers which started in Britain is now practised in other European countries such as Sweden, Switzerland and Germany.

The British Government is telling us that Iraq is safe and therefore Iraqi asylum seekers must return. Nwri al Malki the Iraq Prime Minister has stated that teachers and professional people are needed in Iraq therefore the Iraqi Government supports deportation. However hundreds of professors and Iraqi scientists are still being killed by terrorists in Iraq. Are the asylum seekers being arrested and deported professors and scientists? The Iraqi asylum seekers who are getting arrested and deported are the Iraqi workers and poor people who have fled from sectarian division and civil war back in Iraq.

This is a cheap excuse the British government is using to deport Iraqi and Kurdish asylum seekers.

Ask the Kurdish youth why are they leaving their country? They will answer "we don't know where our future is heading, who is going to bombard us tomorrow.... they will answer "we are getting killed" they will answer the killing of women are the rules and the norms of society under the Kurdish Regional

Government. According to a research study in last 3 months 270 women have lost their lives by setting



fire to them selves, or have been killed by members of their families. This is the reality which people are running away from.

Ask the Kurdish asylum seekers here today why they left Iraq. They will answer we had no choice we were escaping war and terrorism. If you talk to them a bit more they might tell you the stories of how they escaped Iraq, walking across mountains for days without food, dealing with people smugglers and other horrors. No one would choose to leave their home and family behind unless they had no other choice.

The politics of deportation not giving asylum seekers the right to work, receiving any means of support and services, arresting asylum seekers, imprisoning asylum seekers in detention centre's is a crime against human rights and must be stopped. Iraqi Kurds with Iranian, Afghani, Congo and Zimbabwean asylum seekers all have the same future. We all need to work together and make links with those British people who believe in freedom. Human rights organisations and trade unions need to join together and stop these racist policies against asylum rights which are human rights.

So let us all demand.

Stop the deportation of asylum seekers to war zones.
Close all the detention camps.

UNHCR to not be silent about attacks on Iraqi asylum seekers in European countries and encourage European countries to work under the 1951 Geneva Convention.

The right of asylum seekers to work and get support and services like every other citizen in the country.

For The UK and coalition forces to take responsibility for the chaos they have caused in Iraq.

Never forget asylum rights are human rights.

Long live asylum rights!

CLOSE DOWN ALL DETENTION CENTRES

>>>from page 1 demonstration 4th October 2008



Also Claude Ndeh, a teacher from Cameroon, who was also taken into detention with his three young children who were born in the UK and released following support from campaigners in Sheffield. Two of his children have the illness sickle cell. He and his family are still fighting for the right to remain in this country.

Aman Ali, a young man from Afghanistan, who recently won the right to stay in Britain spoke from his wheelchair -- he was paralysed after an accident on a building site after he was made destitute.

Karen Mee National Union Of Teachers Sheffield Executive made the following points "Every child matters and the Detention of children is inhumane."

The protest was organised by the Sheffield Committee to Defend Asylum Seekers and drew support from refugee and community groups, trade unions and campaigns to fight deportation. Campaigners say they will continue to fight for other asylum seekers who want to make their home in Sheffield and make a positive contribution to the local community.

Following the Demonstration the Iraqi Kurds held a meeting for Dashty Jamal Secretary of IFIR in the Sheffield Kurdish Community Centre. Dashty gave an update on the situation in Iraq and the situation for Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers in the UK. Dashty also spoke about the agreement the Kurdish Regional Government has made with UK and other leading European states to accept forcibly returned Iraqi Kurds. Dashty said the best way for IFIR to deal with these problems was to build links and work with other communities facing the same threat and refugee groups in the UK.

>>>from page2 Minutes of CSD Iraq Committee Dashty said this would be a very bad thing because it was the used as the voice of the Iraqi Refugees all over the world and was a very important medium.

Re-launch campaign against Royal Jordanian Airlines.

Phone tree blocking switchboard when we know asylum seekers are being removed.

Targeting Royal Jordanian customers i.e. leafleting at airport.

Demonstration outside airline head office

Letter writing / sending faxes

It was decided this item would be taken at a future meeting.

Finances and fund raising.

Karen gave an update on the accounts

ECHOES NEWSLETTER 15 8 October 2008

Editor: Dashty Jamal

Tel: 0044-

07856032991, d.jamal@ntlworld.com

For more information about CSDIRAQ

please Contact: Sarah Parker or Karen

Johnson

sarahp107@hotmail.com

karen8johnson@btinternet.com

Manchester: Burhan Fatah, Tel:/

07756980271, burhanfatah@aol.com

Nottingham: Jasim Ghafur Tel:/ 07872970807

jasm_rg@yahoo.co.uk

Leicester :Aram Hama Tel:07729182083

aram75dokanie@yahoo.co.uk

LONDON: Samera Ahmad:

sameraahmed2@yahoo.co.uk

www.csdiraq.com

www.federationifir.com

To Human rights Campaigners,
Trade Unions and Refugee
Organisations,

Coalition to Stop Deportation to Iraq (CSDI)
needs your help and support in order to continue
our activities and campaigns to stop forced
deportation to Iraq we are appealing for your help.

Please write cheques to

Coalition to stop Deportations to Iraq

Our Postal Address is:

PO BOX 1575, ILFORD, IG13BZ, LONDON,
UK.