

## **The week of action is our first step in the fight for human rights**

### **Osman Rasul is a Victim of the UK & KRG's Policy**

IFIR Secretary & Amang Abdulla IFIR Kurdistan representative attended Osman Rasul burial ceremony in Rawandiz city in Kurdistan. Osman Rasul was a 27 year-old Iraqi Kurd and Father of two children. Osman arrived in the UK nine years ago in 2001. Osman Rasul was a victim of the UK



home office's the immigration system and continuing inhuman policy of forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurds.

Osman jumped from railings surrounding the seventh floor balcony of a Nottingham tower block. He ignored police officers attempts to try and talk him down and jumped to his death. Osman's body arrived back in Kurdistan on the 6 August 2010.

The UK Home office and Kurdistan Regional Government policies are responsible for Osman's death. Osman was a victim of the agreement signed by the Iraqi Government, Kurdish Regional Government and the UK home office in 2005 to accept forcibly returned asylum seekers. IFIR believes such an agreement shames both the KRG and the UK Home Office. This policy plays with the future of Iraqi refugees who have been forced to flee Iraq and Kurdistan because of the war and consequent insecurity in Iraq.

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### **5000 people demonstrated and occupied a park in Berne against the Swiss asylum and migration policy.**

On the afternoon of Saturday 26 June 2010, 1000 people marched through the old town of Bern. The march met up with a rally of 5000 in Federal Square near the Swiss parliament.

The demonstration was called by Solidarité sans frontières but was supported by a further 100 groups including: International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR), Amnesty International, Augenauf Bern and Zurich, Support Committee for Sans Papiers Geneva and various Unions and parties from the left-green spectrum.

The rally participants loudly and colourfully brought attention to their concerns with banners, flags, whistles and horns-Vuvuzela. They were a powerful symbol against xenophobia, racism and exclusion.

There were several speakers at the rally. Jamal



Koshish spoke on behalf of the IFIR regarding the political situation in Iraq and Kurdistan and the conditions that led Iraqi refugees to leave Iraq to

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## “Today we have come together to call for equality, dignity and universal rights for everyone”

### Dashty Jamal's speech from stop deportation demo at Parliament Square on 5 June

I would like to welcome you all today on behalf the stop deportation network. This demonstration is part of a



week of action against the European immigration policy. The Stop Deportation network is made up of community groups and campaigners fighting against forcible deportation. Today all these groups have come together calling for equality, dignity and universal rights for everyone.

This demonstration is important not because we are under threat of deportation, but because it is the right for every one to live where they choose in the world. We need a world without a racist immigration policy .we need equal rights for every one.

The network by standing together can have a great affect to end this inequality. To end the terrible dilemma that is facing people. Who through no fault of their own happen to be born in countries that are suffering the effects of war, or where people can not get enough to eat.

Following the financial crises the right wing parties in power are telling us these immigrants come from far away countries:

- to take the benefits you have paid for;
- to take your council houses;

to take handouts from the welfare state.

This is not true we are not monsters we are part of the working class.

In recent months we have seen the Liberals come to power in a coalition with the conservatives. The Liberals said they would give an amnesty to immigrants who have lived in the UK for 10 years. This amnesty has not been put in place. In the last 4 days the UK border

agency interviewed Iraqi refugees with a representative from the Iraqi embassy without their solicitors present. All of the detainees interviewed have been give a ticket to return to Iraq next Wednesday (9 June 2010).

We need you support and solidarity to help build our movement around the EU.

The stop deportation network has an important role to play in saving society and showing that human rights exist.

Long live our network!

Long live the struggle against forcible deportation!

Long live humanity!

***“Anyone who faces state or non-state discrimination, harassment, persecution, violence, intimidation, abuse, and rights violations because of race, ethnicity, sexuality, sex, religion, or political, social, and economic reasons must be granted refugee status”***

#### **To Human rights Campaigners, Trade Unions and Refugee Organisations,**

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees-IFIR 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.**

***“Children who flee under any circumstance either with or without their parents must be immediately granted refugee status. In addition children asylum seekers should be cared for by the state and given free housing, education, health care, sports and recreation equivalent to those provided to citizens of the country they are applying for asylum within. These rights should not be deferred or conditional upon the granting of refugee statue”***

**Freedom of Movement is every body's right**



## IFIR Switzerland branch held its third annual Conference in Zurich “organising and unifying refugees to stop the deportation policies”

On 19 June this year the IFIR branch in Switzerland held its third conference. Many IFIR Activists representing Iraqi, Iranian and Kurdish political parties, human and refugee rights cam-



paginiers came from different cities across Switzerland to attend the IFIR-Swiss annual Conference.

The aim of the conference was to organise and unify refugees to stop deportation policies. Ahmad Ali IFIR-Switzerland Secretary welcomed the people at the conference and read out the programme of the conference. The Conference was jointly chaired by Ahmad Ali and Fuad Aziz.

Dashty Jamal IFIR General Secretary opened the Conference. In his opening speech Dashty addressed the following issues:

- The European deportation policy and current problems facing refugees.
- changing IFIR policy towards refugee rights,
- The importance of moving towards a strong



and organised movement around refugee rights, that organises and unifies refugees against forcible deportation policies, that utilizes the help and solidarity of freedom loving people and human rights organizations.

- IFIR's solution to fight for refugee rights with the working class movement and progressive forces and other human right organisation in the world to bring back the right to free movement and to stand for universal human rights.

He urged all advocates of human rights to join IFIR

and strengthen the campaign to end the discrimination faced by refugees and asylum seekers.

Following Dashty's speech a number of human

and refugee right campaigners and Kurdish political party representatives read out solidarity Messages sent to the Conference.

Ahmad Ali Spoke about the activities and achievements of the Switzerland IFIR branch over the last year, which included organising joint rallies and demonstrations with other human and refugee rights organisations fighting forcible deportations. Ahmad Ali also talked about the importance of IFIR's anti deportation campaign continuing in the coming year.

Many activists spoke about the future plans of IFIR and the work that needs to be done in Switzerland.

Foad Aiziz raised the idea of collecting money to build a statue to commemorate Sardasht Osman a



Kurdish Journalist who was recently murdered in Erbil.

At the end of conference Ahmad Ali, Jamal Koshish, Foad Aziz, shamal Ahmad, Shahab Hamed, Kahalid Ahmad, Muhamad Abdull karim, Nareman Aziz, Saman Kirkukey, Saman Hussan and Esam Ali were elected to the secretariat of IFIR –Switzerland Branch

Ahmad Ali closed the conference.

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**Stop Deportation Flight to Iraqi**

## Week of Action Against the Deportation Machine

As part of the Week of Action Against the Deportation Machine (1-6 June), various groups around the UK and Europe organized a series of different events, protests and actions in their areas to protest at the Government's forcible deportation policy. See below an account of some of the events held across Europe:

### *Tuesday, 1st June*

**In London**, two protests were held at immigration reporting centre's. The first was at Communications House on Old Street from 1-2pm, the second at Becket House near London Bridge from 3-4pm. The demonstrations were organised by *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!* and *No Borders London* respectively.

**In Oxford**, the *Campaign to Close Campsfield* organised a public meeting which was addressed by ex-detainees. The campaign had also organised a demonstration at Campsfield detention centre on 29th May, calling for its closure.

### *Wednesday, 2nd June*

**In Cardiff**, No Borders South Wales dropped a number of banners throughout the city, in particular opposite the UKBA office and Cardiff Prison.

**In London**, No Borders London organised an open discussion regarding 'challenging deportations: past, present and future', the discussion was attended by many anti-deportation campaigners and groups.

### *Thursday, 3rd June*

**In Hertfordshire**, a travel agent contracted by the UK Border Agency to arrange forcible deportations of migrants was awarded the title of 'Deportation Profiteer of the Year'. Campaigners presented Carl-

son Wagonlit Travel (CWT) with the award at its main office in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire.

In April 2010, CWT won a government contract to book seats on scheduled and chartered flights for immigration detainees due for deportation. The global booking agency, which specializes in business travel management, has been used by the



UKBA to do what campaigners describe as a "dirty business" since 2004. In the financial year 2004-5, the contract was worth almost £23million.

An online campaign against the company, called by the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaign, was started in the morning of 3 June, so all office doors were locked. Protesters were met with rude and abusive attitudes by some CWT employees.

One of the protesters, who preferred to remain anonymous, said:

"While priding itself on its 'corporate social responsibility', with an alleged focus on environmental issues, CWT is making millions out of flying people to their possible death and torture.

In light of its outstanding achievement in facilitating these crimes, CWT deserves to be added to the top of a growing list of deportation profiteers."

**In Derby**, the UK Border Agency offices were locked the night before but a written message was left.

**In Lille**, France, activists from *No border Lille* occupied the local offices of CWT.

**In Vienna**, there was a street festival held by without borders, with information stalls, musicians, street theatre and more.

Friday, 4th June

The *National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns* launched a one-day online campaign against British Airways for being 'a frequent flier of forced removals'. See <http://www.ncadc.org.uk/stopthatflight.html#ba>

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**Stop agreement with EU countries that plays with the lives of Iraqi refugees**



## Report on 15 June public meeting in London regarding the kidnapping and assassination of journalist Sardasht Osman

On 15 June political activists, academics and writers from Iraqi Kurdistan attended a public meeting in London to expose the kidnapping and murder of Sardasht Osman. Sardasht Osman, 23, was a journalist in his final year at university when he was abducted on 4 May in the Iraqi Kurdish city of Erbil. His body was found on 6 May in the city of Mosul. Sardasht had written articles criticising the Kurdish government, particularly the Barzani family.

Dashty Jamal: president of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees chaired the public meeting. The lead speakers were Dr. Kamal Mirawdeli: political personality and writer, Houzan Mahmoud: political activist, Ali Kareme: Writer, Aso kamal from Worker Communist of Kurdistan.

The Speakers made the following points regarding Sardasht's murder and society in Northern Iraq. Sardasht's murder was a violation against freedom



of expression, political activism. The speakers addressed the subject of attacks on journalists and critical voices against the Government.

At the end of the meeting a resolution was passed calling for a thorough investigation of Sardasht's murder. The resolution was sent to the Kurdistan Regional Government and the president of Kurdistan.

IFIR is running a campaign regarding the murder of Sardasht Osman around the world. IFIR has held many demonstrations and events with other organisations and political parties demanding justice for Sardasht Othman.

IFIR calls on all human rights groups, political parties, trade unionists and freedom loving people in the world to condemn the killing of Sardasht Othman. IFIR asks campaigners to write protest letters to the KRG offices calling on them to defend the freedom of political activity, press and freedom of thought in Kurdistan.

### No deportations to Baghdad IFIR held a Demo in front of the Iraqi Embassy

On Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June IFIR and CSDiraq held a demonstration in front of Iraqi Embassy. Protesting at the embassy's decision to send officials to detention centres to decide which detainees should be deported. By this action the Iraqi Government has become complicit in the forcible deportation process. Iraqi politicians are accepting these deportations so they can continue to take the British Government and the oil companies' money.

The protesters chanted the following slogans:

Stop agreement with EU countries that plays with the lives of Iraqi refugees;

Iraq is unsafe - Kurdistan is Unsafe;

Asylum rights are human rights - Iraqi refugees say no to deportation;

Hands off Iraqi refugees - Iraqi refugees are vic-

tims of war and occupation.

The following people made speeches:

Aso Goran a member of the IFIR Secretariat made a speech regarding the situation of Iraqi refugees in the UK. Dashty Jamal IFIR secretary spoke about the agreement of the Iraqi government with several EU countries. Dashty said our campaign will continue around the world until this inhuman policy is stopped. We are not alone in this straggle many freedom loving people, Human, trade unions and human and refugee rights campaigners support this campaign.

At the end of the demonstration Dashty Jamal passed a letter to the Iraqi ambassador. The letter demanded that the Iraqi Government stopped colluding with European countries to forcibly deport Iraqi refugees. This is another disgraceful attack on Iraqi refugees' freedom of movement and human rights. We Condemn both the British and Iraqi Governments.

**Defend the Freedom of Political activity, Press and Freedom of Thought in Kurdistan.**

## Asylum seeker takes his own life after losing legal aid

Refugee support group blames immigration policy for leaving asylum seekers without help to pursue claims

**Owen Bowcott and Natalie Hanman**

guardian.co.uk, Sunday 1 August 2010 21.30 BST

Article history



Osman Rasul jumped from the seventh floor of a tower block in Nottingham after hearing that he no longer had access to legal aid.

For two hours Osman Rasul perched on railings surrounding the seventh floor balcony of a Nottingham tower block. He blanked out police officers attempting to talk him down and at 7pm last Sunday, placing his hand on his heart, he looked up to the sky and leapt.

The 27-year-old Iraqi Kurd, classified by the local refugee centre as a "destitute asylum-seeker" and in a fraying relationship with the mother of his two children, had lost the [legal aid](#) he needed to pursue his application to remain in the UK. A trip south to confront Home Office immigration officers in Croydon saw him being turned away and told to find a solicitor.

Nine years of legal limbo, his friends suggested, had induced mounting desperation. Rasul anticipated deportation and all hopes of a life in Britain had evaporated by the time he jumped from Cliford Court tower. The waiting ambulance carried his body to the Queen's Medical Centre. At 7.21pm he was pronounced dead.

Rasul's inability to disentangle his life from the multiple restrictions of the immigration system were not unique. His problems became more acute last month when the charity Refugee and Migrant Justice (RMJ) was forced into administration, depriving him of access to legal aid and expert immi-

gration advice.

The organisation blamed its demise on a policy of delayed payment by the Legal Services Commission [LSC], which runs the legal aid system in England and Wales. Charities including Amnesty International and Barnado's, as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury, had unsuccessfully lobbied the government to tackle the cash flow issue. [On its dissolution the RMJ warned](#): "The legal representation of more than 10,000 vulnerable asylum seekers and victims of trafficking, including nearly 900 separated children, is now at risk."

Joanna Petersen, a former case worker for RMJ, said the number of lawyers and immigration advisers available to handle cases declined rapidly after changes made by the LSC four years ago meant solicitors were only paid fixed fees at the end of each case. "RMJ asked the government for it to be paid money it was already owed," Petersen explained. "The answer that came back [in June] was no. So we had to pack everything up. The worst part was boxing up files on which we wrote 'Urgent, Victim of Torture' or 'A Minor, Trafficking Victim' — and not knowing when the cases will ever be dealt with."

According to campaigners and lawyers, the reduction in legal aid is part of a broader national pattern that risks leaving hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable people, including asylum seekers and victims of domestic violence, without access to advice.

The £2bn legal aid budget is already expected to be one of the hardest hit in Whitehall, with justice secretary Kenneth Clarke specifying in a recent interview that it was one area "where our cuts can come from".

"The LSC thinking was that they didn't need RMJ because they had plenty of suppliers willing to take on any new cases," Steve Hynes, director of LAG. "It must have been a political decision because it doesn't make financial sense. Everyone who knows about case work knows it isn't as simple as picking up a new case from another firm — there are always extra costs involved." The Law Society says firms providing legal aid are being "wiped out" by changes to the tendering process in which

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**Solidarity with Kurdish & Iraqi Refugees**

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**Asylum seeker takes his...**

But he did not come back."Woolner is now trying to raise money for Rasul's body to be returned to Iraq.Rasul was separated from his Polish partner and the mother of their sons, Malgorzata Gajda, 30, who lives in Coventry. She said he had become increasingly distant from their sometimes tempestuous relationship.

"He was on the balcony for two hours, I was told. At 6pm that evening I received a call from a private number. I said 'Hello, hello' but no one answered. I'm sure it was him. He wanted to hear me and the kids for the last time." "The police tried to keep speaking with him. He was very quiet. Then he put his hand on his heart and looked up to God and jumped.

" Dasthy Jamal, of the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees, blamed the immigration system. "The Home Office's immigration policy is responsible for Osman's death. After nearly 10 years he didn't have a chance to build a life here." A UK Border Agency spokesman said: "Any death of this kind is a tragedy and our deepest sympathies are with Mr Rasul's family and friends. We are working closely with Nottinghamshire police while this matter is being investigated. It would be inappropriate for us to comment further at this stage."

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**5000 people demonstrated and occupied a park in.....**

seek asylum in Switzerland. "our movement is growing day by day against the inhuman rights policy of Swiss Government, it is time for Government to listen to us and answer our demand for the human right to claim asylum from persecution.

The demonstrators chanted the following slogans:  
No one is illegal:

Stop deportation policy:  
right to stay right to work:  
stop detaining refugees.

Following the rally a group of 300 protestors refused to leave the small park in Berne and occupied the area until the 2 July.

Ahmad Ali and Jamal Kosish representatives of IFIR spoke at a press conference regarding the rally and occupation.

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**Osman Rasul is a Victim of the.....**

IFIR asks all human, refugee right organisations, trade unions and MPs to write letters the Home Secretary calling for an end to all deportations to Iraq.

Please send letters of protest to:

Home Secretary, 2 Marsham St, London, SW1P

Fax number: Fax:00442070354745

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees

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**Week of Action Against the Deportation Machine**

**In Brighton**, G4S 'voluntarily' withdrew from the Brighton & Hove City Future Job Fair after various campaign groups issued an official complaint to the job fair sponsors about G4S's horrendous human rights abuses against migrants. See <http://ncadc.wordpress.com/2010/06/04/g4s-withdraws-from-job-fair/>

**In Copenhagen**, a mass demonstration against deportation and the EU border agency Frontex took place.

**In Vienna**, a mass anti-racist demonstration was held.

**In Jena**, Germany, the 'against colonial injustice and to commemorate the death of the Fortress Europe' started. See <http://www.karawane-festival.org/en/>

**Saturday, 5th June**

**In London**, a demonstration was held in Parliament Square by the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees, calling for an end to the forcible deportation of migrants, the closure of all immigration detention centres, freedom of movement and equal rights for all. The protest was part of the Week of Action Against the Deportation Machine and was attended by different groups that form the Stop Deportation Network.

**In Oxford**, the *Campaign to Close Campsfield* held a street stall in the city centre.Sunday, 6th June

**In Paris**, a number of protesters distributed pamphlets and put up posters and stencils denouncing the participation of the Red Cross in the imprisonment of undocumented migrants in detention centres and their role in deporting people through the provision of 'humanitarian support' on Frontex charter flights and other European joint flights. Four people were arrested.

# Refugees Rights are Human Rights



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***Not allowing airports in Baghdad, Erbil & Sulymania to be used for the purpose of returning forcibly deported Kurdish & Iraqi refugees***

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## **Asylum seeker takes his...**

firms competitively bid for and are allocated legal aid work. In the family law sector – which covers domestic violence work – almost half (1,300) of the 2,400 firms have lost their bids, while only 252 of 410 firms applying for **immigration and asylum** work won contracts.

"Towns up and down the country have been left without a firm," said Richard Miller, head of legal aid policies at the Law Society. "Some firms can switch to private work and keep going. In a lot of cases the firms will collapse and the lawyers will become insolvent, closing down without finishing their current cases. Possibly hundreds of thousands of clients will have lost their current lawyer and will have to find another one." The LSC insists its new tendering system works well. Its chair, Sir Bill Callaghan, said: "We are confident that we now have a quality provider base, and quality-assured advice provision across England and Wales." Rasul, who arrived in Britain in 2001 claiming he was in danger from the Kurdish political factions that control northern **Iraq**, had been refused permission to stay in Britain once but was preparing a fresh claim. He had been receiving food parcels and £10 a month from a local charity, the Nottingham Refugee Forum. He was not allowed to work. "He was living on £20 a month in charitable donations plus gifts of food," said Bea Tobolewska, the manager of the forum. He was not allowed to work. "He was a destitute asylum-seeker and had been sleeping on the streets. When RMJ went into receivership it was his last opportunity of seeing a solicitor," she added. For the last few months of his life, Rasul relied on the kindness of friends in Nottingham to provide support. Harry Woolner, who works with the homeless in the city, gave him shelter. "Osman had no resources," Woolner said. "He had gone through a traumatic period." Receiving a letter from RMJ saying they could not help him any more was the last straw, said Woolner. "He felt he was never able to take control of his life. He was frustrated that his case had not been progressed so he decided to go down to the Home Office [immigration centre] in Croydon and 'hand himself in', saying: 'Either send me home or help me'. He felt he was taking control at last. It was a brave thing to do. But when he got there they said 'Who are you? We don't know you. Get a solicitor'. In terms of his mental state it was too much to take. "In London he stayed with friends some of the time but also slept rough and was not eating well. He was mentally and physically exhausted when he came back. We didn't realise the severity of the situation."He went out for a bike ride on the Sunday," Woolner said. "We thought that was positive

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**The right of Refugees to work and get support**