

FEDERATION



Papar of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees-IFIR

ISSUE 2

March in Zurich against Swiss asylum policy



The Campaign against Racism and the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) with a number of Refugee and Human Rights organisations held a rally against deportations on 17 November 2007. The rally was attended by over 5000 people.

Continued on page5>>>>

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) demonstrations and activities around Europe against forcible deportation



Coalition to stop Deportations to Iraq UK in conjunction with IFIR organised a lobby of the UNHCR Head Quarters on the 9 November in London. The lobby was attended by Representatives from a number of organisations including: No Borders; No Sweat; Stop Deporting Children; Campaign against racism and fascism; the Kurdish community centre of Doncaster as well as people from International Federation of Iraqi Refugees London.

Dashty Jamal Secretary from IFIR, Karen Johnson from Coalition to stop Deportations to Iraq and Saman Sardam, Noori Basher representatives from IFIR handed a letter to a UNHCR representative for Ban Ki-Moon (General Secretary of the UN) calling on the UNHCR to condemn the UK Governments' policy of forcible deporting Iraqi Kurds and the problems facing Iraqi asylum seekers around Europe. Dashty and Karen also gave the UNHCR representative copies of a petition with for the home office calling for an end of forcible deportation to Iraq of several thousand signatures. The petition illustrated the strength of opinion against Deportation of Iraqi Kurds in the UK. The lobby was filmed by ASO TV. ASO TV also interviewed a selection of the demonstrators regarding how they came to be involved in the campaign to stop Deportations to Iraq.

Continued on page 3>>>>

**Dashty Jamal Letter to Ban Ki-Moon
General Secretary of the United Nations p2-3**

Forcible Deportation by German Government is a violation of human rights p4

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees condemns any attack on the Kurdish people from Turkey P4-5

UK Home Office deports two Iraqi Kurds back to the Kurdish region of Iraq

2nd Anniversary of forcibly deporting 15 Kurdish Iraqis' back to Northern Iraq by military Aircraft from Brize Norton Military Airbase

No Borders No Nations Stop Deportation

Dashty Jamal Letter to Ban Ki-Moon General Secretary of the United Nations

Dear Mr Ki-Moon

I am writing on behalf of the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees about problems facing Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers in several European countries, specifically the United Kingdom, which has forcibly deported Iraqi Kurdish refugees under the pretence that the Kurdish area of Iraq is safe and under democratic rule. These deportations have been carried out in a demeaning and humiliating way. On three separate occasions, Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers have been deported from Brize Norton, a military airbase. The Iraqi Kurds were handcuffed and escorted by security guards to Brize Norton. However, in recent months the Iraqi Kurds have been forcibly deported on Jordanian airlines via Jordan, then onto Arbil in Northern Iraq.

In the meantime, many Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers have been put under enormous pressure. Many Iraqi Kurds have had their asylum appeals suspended which has led to direct hardship, which has meant they do not have the right to work in the UK and cannot claim any welfare payments. The UK state has also forced many Iraqi Kurds to sign on weekly at police stations. This leads to a great deal of anxiety because the asylum seekers know that at any time they could be held and transferred to a detention centre. These actions against Iraqi Kurdish refugees in the UK are taking place whilst the war in Iraq continues. Also Turkey and Iran have been bombarding Kurdish villages in Northern Iraq in recent months.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) is aware of the forcible deportations and the dreadful way they have been carried out and have not acted against the policy of forcible deportation. The policy of forcible deportation undermines the basic rights of refugees as laid out in the Geneva Convention. The UK has signed the Geneva Convention.

The Kurdish authorities, instead of refusing to accept forcible deportations from the UK, have colluded with this policy by granting UK military planes permission to land with forcibly returned Kurdish asylum seekers on board. The Kurdish authorities claim to be democratic and deny all the current catastrophes and continuing violence going on in both Iraq and Kurdistan, insisting that Iraqi Kurdistan is safe and free.

In response to the policy of forcible deportation and the false pretext that Iraqi Kurdistan is safe, the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) declares the following:

Kurdish and Iraqi refugees are victims of the current war of terror and killing brought about by the continuing military presence in Iraq. These policies

are the products of the new world order and American policy in Iraq. The war that has been imposed by USA and its allies on the Iraqi people has left no place for ordinary Iraqi people to live peacefully. What is happening in Iraq is apparent to everyone through watching television news programmes. We reject all bogus claims by the Iraqi Kurdish authorities that Iraq is peaceful and free;

The situation in Kurdistan may be relatively more stable compared to other parts of Iraq, but Iraqi Kurdistan is not an independent state and continues to be subject to the outcomes of the policies of the US and occupying forces whilst the Iraq war continues. The two ruling parties in Kurdistan, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) are authoritarian and undemocratic. The Kurdish authorities continue to persecute human rights campaigners and journalists and anyone who speaks against them. Terrorist groups and Islamic parties are intimidating Kurdish people on a daily basis. Iraqi Kurdistan is also under constant threat of aggression from surrounding countries, principally Turkey and Iran;

The KDP and PUK are not able to protect Kurdish people and provide public services and utilities, for example clean water and provision of electricity and so on. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the US State Department all report violations of human rights in Iraqi Kurdistan. All of the factors above lead to the continuing flow of refugees leaving Iraqi Kurdistan. This is a particular problem amongst the youth of Iraq;

We condemn all policies relating to the deportation of Kurdish refugees. We seek the support of freedom-loving people and the civilised people of Europe to stand against these policies towards refugees. Furthermore, the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees announces that we have got the ability to disprove all false claims regarding Kurdish refugees and we are ready to put forward our evidence in front of an impartial international court.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees regards the UN as directly responsible for the inhuman treatment of refugees;

The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees condemns any assistance and co-operation of the Iraqi government and Kurdish authorities with European countries to forcibly deport Iraqi Kurdish refugees;

The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees will endeavour to mobilise the support of people across the world and in Kurdistan against policies of forcible deportation.

The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees supports all progressive organizations which campaign and work for a better future in Kurdistan. >>> *Continued on page3*

Our demands for European countries threatening to return Iraqi Kurds are:

Stop deportation policy immediately.
Grant indefinite leave to remain to all Iraqi asylum seekers.

Our demands for the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees are:

Put pressure on European countries to stop deportations to Iraq.
Give refugee status to all Iraqi asylum seekers.
The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees asks that you play an active role, as an international organisation responsible for human rights in halting the deportation of the Iraqi asylum seekers.

Dashty.Jamal

Secretary of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees-IFIR

“Anyone who may face detention, arrest or persecution if returned to her/his country of origin because of choices within her/his private life or if an asylum seeker joins a political party and takes part in political activities that would endanger them if returned to their home country must be granted refugee status”



>>>from page1 IFIR demonstrations

Switzerland

Over a hundred people gathered from all over Switzerland at Hieger Plaza and marched to the Immigration Department in Berne.

The demonstrators used the following Slogans in Bern whilst they marched:

Refugee status for Iraqi refugees; Northern Iraq is unsafe and an unsuitable place to return Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers to.

Representatives from Sans frontier organisation, Augen Auf organisation, and IFIR joined the march. IFIR representatives Ahmed Ali, Jamal Koshish, Ismael and Balthasar Glattli Secretary of Sans Frontier and member of Zurich parliament met Swiss Immigration officials. At the meeting IFIR representatives discussed the situation of Iraqi

Kurdish asylum seekers in Switzerland, the current situation in Northern Iraq and the new policy of the Swiss Government to forcibly deport Iraqi Kurds. The Swiss Immigration officials promised to find a solution for the Kurdish asylum seekers from Iraq and said they would not enforce forcible returns further to this they will review the policy of forcible returns back to Iraq and will continue to meet IFIR representatives. They committed to answer all IFIR demands in due course. The meeting lasted one hour at the end of the meeting the representatives handed in a petition of approximately 500 signatures from different human rights organisations against the policy of forcibly returning Iraqi Kurds.

The demonstration featured on the Hawlaty and awena Kurdish news websites.

Sweden

Kawa Karim IFIR activist in Sweden met Mr Magdalena Streijffert a member of Swedish Parliament (refugee section of the Swedish parliament). Kawa Karim talked about the situation of the Iraqi asylum seekers in Sweden and also about the Swedish policy of forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurds. Kawa asked Mr Streijffert to put pressure on the Swedish Government to change its policy of forcible deportation of Iraqi Kurds. Mr Streijffert said that now both the Social democrat and green party were in parliament they could work together on a proposal to change the policy of forcibly returning Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers in Sweden. Further to this Mr Streijffert said that he would send the proposal to Kawa before forwarding the proposal to Parliament.

The same day Kawa Karim met with Mona Saleni president of the social democrats in Sweden. Kawa spoke about the invasion by Turkey and the policy of Swedish Government regarding Kurdish asylum seekers. Mona Salina offered solidarity with Kurdish people in Iraq and promised to continue working on the issues Kawa had raised with him.



Norway

Omar Amen member secretary of IFIR wrote a protest letter to the UK embassy in Norway regarding the UK's continuing policy of forcibly returning Iraqi Kurds. >>>Continued on page 4

Seeking Asylum is not crime

<<<from page 3 IFIR demonstrations

Germany

The Caravan to defend refugee and migrants and No Borders held a picket of Zagross airline on 16 November calling on the airline to stop selling tickets to the German Government to forcibly deport Iraqi Kurds.

Kurdistan:

Dashty Jamal Secretary of IFIR sent a letter to Mr Kadir Aziz General Secretary Kurdistan Tolier's Party to forward to the Kurdish Parliament calling on the Kurdish Regional Government KRG to stop accepting flights from European countries to Erbil airport of forcibly returned Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers.

Dashty also asked the KRG to ask the United Nations to put pressure on European countries forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurds.

Forcible Deportation by German Government is a violation of human rights

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) has been informed by the campaign Caravan for the Rights of Refugees and Migrants. That the German Government has started to forcibly deport a number of Iraqi asylum seekers from July to August 2007 they returned 8 asylum seekers back to Iraq from Frankfurt directly to Arbil airport in Northern Iraq. From August 2007 until October they have been deporting one Iraqi Kurdish asylum seeker a week. Forcible Deportation is a violation of human rights and must be stopped!

Following the fall of the Saddam regime the German Government have been pressurising Iraqi asylum seekers refusing their cases and generally pressurising them to leave Germany twenty thousand Iraqi asylum seekers are under threat of removal back to Iraq.

The situation in Kurdistan has been relatively stable compared to other parts of Iraq. However, that is changing Iran is currently bombarding Kurdish villages in Northern Iraq and now Turkey is threatening to invade Iraqi Kurdistan. In any case Iraqi Kurdistan is not an independent state and is not part of a stable state. Thus, the Kurdish people are in limbo and the future of their lives is uncertain. The de facto status in Iraqi Kurdistan is the outcome of policies of the US and the Iraq war by changing the US agenda, the lives of Kurdish people would change. The two ruling parties in Kurdistan the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan-PUK and the Kurdistan Democratic Party-KDP are authoritative and

undemocratic. The experiences of their administration in the last 16 years demonstrate their incompetence. The Kurdish authorities (PUK and KDP) are not inclusive and many suffer from their biased policies. Many people are unemployed in Kurdistan and public services are very poor. Killing women, persecuting human rights campaigners and journalists is clear evidence of the inhumane policies of the Kurdish authorities in Iraqi Kurdistan. Terrorist groups and Islamic parties are intimidating Kurdish people on a daily basis. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and US Secretary state reports all indicate violations of human rights in Iraqi Kurdistan and show that the life of the Kurdish people in Iraqi Kurdistan is at risk due to the policies of Kurdish authorities. Thus, the Kurdish people are victims of international, regional powers and the Kurdish authorities. The KDP and PUK are not able to protect Kurdish people and provide public services which have lead to many Kurdish people leaving Iraqi Kurdistan.

IFIR condemns the German Governments policy of forcible deportation and calls on the German Government to cease deporting Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers. Further to this IFIR calls on all human rights organisations, refugee rights organisations, Trade Unions and MP's to support Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers and to put pressure on the Germany to stop forcible deportations to Iraq a country which is about to break down into Civil War.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees

26-10-2007

"All state or non-state racist and xenophobic propaganda against refugees and asylum seekers must be prohibited."

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees condemns Turkey's attack on the Kurdish people of Iraq.



The Turkish Government has threatened to attack Kurdistan many times. In the past they have used the

No to Detention No to Racism

Continued on page 5

>>>> From page 4 Turkey's attack

excuse of protecting the Turkmens in Kirkuk. Turkey is currently claiming to be protecting Turkish security by attacking the PKK. This is not true Turkey by attacking Kurdistan is trying to increase both political influence in the area and territory.

The Turkish government is proposing to launch a whole scale invasion on the Kurdish people in Iraqi Kurdistan. Any attack on the Kurdish people would be a catastrophe and would lead to a human tragedy in the region. In the case of invasion, the future of Iraqi Kurdistan would be uncertain. We believe that any attack would lead to many Kurdish people being forced out of their homes and ultimately leading to them becoming refugees in other countries.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) supports the Kurdish people and strongly expresses its opposition to all threats and attacks by Turkey on Kurdistan. The IFIR urges all people in particular human rights activists, trade unions, NGO's and international organisations to protect the Kurdish people and do all in their power to prevent Turkey invading Iraqi Kurdistan. IFIR calls on human rights activists, trade unions, NGO's and international organisations to challenge the Turkish governments international policy of claiming Kurdistan as its territory, by sending letters to the Turkish Ambassador calling on Turkey to stop threatening Iraqi Kurdistan.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees

17-10-2007



UK Home Office deports two Iraqi Kurds back to the Kurdish region of Iraq

Aram Abdullah and Dilzar Mohmood were forcibly taken in handcuffs by two security guards from Harmondsworth Detention Centre against their will and forcibly deported to Arbil airport in Northern Iraq via Amman at 5 pm on 31 October 2007.

Aram Abdullah is from Sulaimania a city in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. The Kurdish region of Iraq is currently under attack from Turkey. Aram, barely in the UK a matter of hours when he was arrested and sent to Harmondsworth Detention Centre, sought

refuge in the UK on 6 June 2007. Aram has not had the opportunity to apply for asylum or make a case to stay in the UK. On arrival in Amman Aram and Dilzar phoned the Coalition reporting that the Home Office Security Guards had forced them into handcuffs and had beaten them.

We call on all human rights campaigners and refugee organisations to keep up the pressure on the UK Home Office's policy of forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers. Please encourage friends, members and colleagues to send faxes to the to the Home Secretary at the Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P demanding that they stop forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurds back to the war zone in Iraq.

Coalition to Stop Deportations to Iraq

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees

31-10-2007

>>>Continued on page1 March in Zurich

The protestors chanted the following slogans: No borders; Stop Deportation; No one is illegal; Bluchar must go. Following the rally Dashty Jamal Secretary of IFIR addressed the protestors. .Dashty spoke about the following subjects: the political situation in Northern Iraq; the occupation and insecurity in Iraq; the situation of Iraqi and Kurdish asylum seekers in Switzerland and the problems of Iraqi asylum seekers across Europe; the campaign called by IFIR against the forcible deportation of Iraqi Kurdish asylums seekers and the importance of building a strong movement around Europe against deportation, racism and discrimination;

Dashty finished the speech by saying together we are stronger, no borders, no nations, stop deportation. Ahmad Ali IFIR Swiss Representative addressed the protestors

"All refugees have the right to family reunification. The refugee's family has the right to obtain refugee status"



No to Detention No to Deportation

Stop deportations to Iraq - Protest against Zagros air line Frankfurt Germany



The German Government is using the Zagross an Iraqi Kurdish airline to deport Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers to Northern Iraq.

Caravan for the rights of refugees and migrants supported by International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) and a number of refugee rights and human rights organizations in Munich held a rally outside Zagros Airlines on 16 November 2007. The rally was attended by 50 protestors. Following the rally a GI who served in Iraq but deserted spoke to the protestors other speakers talked about the current situation in Iraq and the way the German Government is treating Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers.

The Caravan demand that Zagross Air:

not accept any more bookings for deportation flights!

all previous bookings for deportation flights have to be cancelled immediately!

The rally was covered by the Frankfurter Rundschau.

Owen Bowcott

Tuesday September 18, 2007

The Guardian

An Iraqi Kurdish asylum seeker is facing forcible removal from Britain for the second time this year. Mohammed Abdul Rahman, a 31-year-old taxi driver who is being held at Campsfield House detention centre, has pledged to return to the UK. His determination to re-enter Britain by any means possible illustrates the extreme desperation of Kurdish asylum seekers fearful of returning to northern Iraq - a region increasingly scarred by terrorist attacks and car bombs, threatened by civil war and now in the grip of a cholera outbreak. His case also highlights the pressure on immigration controls in Europe. The Home Office does not keep records of what it terms "re-removals".

Mr Rahman first came to Britain in December 2000 and lived for six years in Liverpool, working in factories. A failed asylum seeker, he was detained earlier this year and held for 25 days in Doncaster. He was then put on a charter flight from RAF Brize

Norton and sent back to Arbil, the regional capital of northern Iraq.

The Kurdish region, relatively calm since the US-led invasion in 2003, is the only part of Iraq to which the government is deporting failed asylum seekers.

Mr Rahman told the Guardian: "I came back to Britain on August 6. I was arrested in a hotel in Dover. The judge has said I will have to go back again because of the immigration laws.

"My family is in Kirkuk but the city is not safe. There are car bombs there and people who will kill me." He says he has been targeted in a tribal feud. "I don't want to go back to my country. [If I am sent away again] I will come back to this country."

Mr Rahman has been given a ticket to Amman in Jordan on October 17. He will then be transferred to Northern Iraq.

A Home Office spokesman said: "We don't comment on individual cases but the government has made it clear that it takes a robust approach to removing people from this country when they have no legal right to be here."

An estimated 4 million Iraqis have fled Iraq. Most are in Syria, Jordan and Turkey.

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.**

"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"

**2nd Anniversary of forcibly deporting
15 Kurdish Iraqis' back to Northern
Iraq.
by a military Aircraft from Brize
Norton Military Airbase**



Today is 2nd Anniversary of the first plane used to forcibly deport Iraqi asylum seekers back to Northern Iraq. On the 20 November 2005 the UK Home Office commissioned a military Aircraft from Brize Norton Military Airbase in Oxford to forcibly deport 15 Kurdish Iraqis' back to Northern Iraq. The Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers are not criminals they are civilians and victims of the war in Iraq. Kurdistan is not an independent state and is not part of a stable state. Thus the Kurdish people are in limbo and the future of their lives is uncertain. The de facto status in Iraqi Kurdistan is the outcome of policies of the US and the Iraqi war by changing the US agenda. The nature of their return was humiliating and International Federation of Iraqi Refugees believes breaks with the Geneva Convention in treatment of refugees. They were woken up early in the morning given no opportunity to collect their belongings. They were pushed out of the detention centres by armed guards, handcuffed and put into a coach and transferred to an airbase in Brize Norton, Oxford. Once on the flight they were given flak jackets prior to being pushed out onto the runway at Arbil left to be picked up by the KDP (hardly appropriate clothing for a so called safe country). A further two deportations were carried out in this way a further 34 Iraqi asylum seekers were deported in September 2006 and 38 in February 2007.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees has written to the press lobbied the Home Office and the military air base used to deport the Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers, at great cost to the tax payer. In 2005 the National Audit Office estimated that it cost 11,000 to deport each individual asylum seeker. In the case of the Iraqis' a total of 87 asylum seekers were deported by military aircraft so the true cost is estimated to be far higher.

The Home Office has recently changed the way it is deporting Iraqis from September 2005 it no longer uses military air craft but has started deporting Iraqis in ones and twos via Jordan using a Jordanian airline and then onto Arbil airport in Northern Iraq.

Currently there are 60 Iraqi Kurds being held in detention centres around the UK waiting to be forcibly deported. The UK Home Office justifies these deportations by claiming Northern Iraq is safe this is despite evidence to the contrary from agencies that work in the area. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have recently released a report confirms that Kurdistan is unsafe and asylum seekers should not be forcibly deported to Kurdistan. UNHCR and other organizations have sought urgently to highlight the fact that Iraq now contains a huge number of displaced persons, and that about four million people have fled Iraq, many of these from Iraqi Kurdistan a recent report from the US State Department says that people are regularly tortured in Kurdish prisons. Many political campaigners, journalists and human rights campaigners have been imprisoned without trial. The Akre, Qlachulan and Kani Goma prisons are full of political campaigners and people who have voiced different views from the KDP and PUK (The two ruling parties in Kurdistan). Many of the Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers are fleeing from political persecution by the Kurdish authorities and for that alone should be granted refugee status. Without taking account the fact that the whole region is about to break down into civil war, both Turkey and Iran have bombarded Kurdish villages in recent months. The Turkish government want start another war in Iraq for there own political agenda. Many of the people who have been deported have left Iraq again because their lives are in danger. Many of them have returned back to European countries or they are living in neighbouring countries. One Iraqi Kurdish asylum returned to Iraq was killed by car bomb. International Federation of Iraqi Refugees is willing and determined to work for refugees across the world, International Federation of Iraqi Refugees is not alone in this struggle we have the support from refugees right human right organization trade unions, MPs and MEPs to stop deportations to Iraq.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugees to Stop Deportations to Iraq calls on the UK to Government to:

Stop the police of deportation to Kurdistan.

Release all the Iraqi asylum seekers held in detention centres

Substantially increase financial assistance to support refugee-hosting countries in the region, such as Syria and Jordan;

A greater commitment to provide opportunities for the most vulnerable Iraqi refugees to resettle in the UK;

Solidarity with Kurdish and Iraqi Asylum seekers

Better recognition of the need for protection of those few Iraqis who have got to the UK in recent years;

A suspension of all removals to Iraq, including to the northern areas where the instability has got worse in recent months;

Granting refugee status to all Iraqis in the UK so that they are not left in limbo, without any access to support and no entitlement to work.

Regards

Dashty Jamal, Secretary of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees-IFIR



Press Release 22 November 2007

Two year Anniversary of first forcible Deportation to Iraq and the Deportations still continue.

Rozhar Omer failed Iraqi Kurdish asylum seeker to be returned 20 November at 4pm.

On 20 November 2005 the first flight of forcibly returned Iraqi asylum seekers left from Brize Norton Military Airbase in Oxford. Another Iraqi Kurd to be forcibly deported in the same week as the first flight 2 years ago. The Home Office has now stopped flying Iraqi Kurds direct to Arbil via military aircraft. From September 2007 Iraqi Kurds are now being forcibly deported via a Jordanian airline to Jordan and from there to Arbil airport in Northern Iraq. Rozhar Omer is being held at Heathrow by two body guards. Rozhar will be escorted on to a plane flying to Jordan and then on to Erbil Airport today (22 Nov 2007) at 4pm.

IFIR still maintains Iraq is not a suitable place to return failed asylum seekers to. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees recently issued a report confirming that northern Iraq is unsafe. Iraqi Kurdistan's two ruling parties, the KDP and PUK, regularly imprison trade unionist activists, socialists and other political opponents. Moreover, in addition to the threat of an Iraqi civil war, there is an external threat from Turkey and Iran, both of which have bombarded Kurdish villages in recent months. Those returned to Iraqi Kurdistan face not only poverty and

unemployment, but the threat of harassment, torture and death.

That is why IFIR are calling for the immediate suspension of all removals to Iraq, and the right for all Iraqis living in the UK to study, work and access public services.

If you wish to talk to Rozhar Omer his Mobile number is 07925 719095

PRESS RELEASE

20 November 2007

IRAQ: Refugee Council calls on the UK government to halt all deportations to Iraq immediately and do more to address the growing refugee crisis

Two years to the day from the first forced removals flight to Iraq, the Refugee Council today condemns this practice and urges the UK government to address the growing refugee crisis as a matter of urgency.

The Refugee Council has criticised the government for putting a lot of time, effort and resources into sending Iraqi asylum seekers back to Iraq while at the same time failing to act to help the huge number of Iraqis who have been displaced from their homes because of the on-going conflict.

Since November 2005, over 1 million Iraqis are estimated to have fled their homes (source: UNHCR)

In the same period, the UK has forcibly removed around 100 Iraqis, at an estimated cost of at least £1 million¹

"We are witnessing a massive humanitarian crisis in Iraq, with a movement of refugees bigger than any in the last fifty years" said Donna Covey, Chief Executive of the Refugee Council.

"The UK, as a leading country in the international community, is failing to live up to its responsibility. Instead, it continues to focus on removing relatively small numbers of refused Iraqi asylum seekers, at great cost, so as to meet Home Office targets. Quite apart from being very dangerous, this is a total misallocation of resources. Ministers need to get their priorities in order."

In a letter sent last week to Foreign Secretary David Miliband, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Rescue Committee and the Refugee Council urged the following actions:

A substantial increase in financial assistance to support refugee-hosting countries in the region, such as Syria and Jordan;

A greater commitment to provide opportunities for the most vulnerable Iraqi refugees to resettle in the UK;

Better recognition of the need for protection of those few Iraqis who have got to the UK in recent years;

STOP DEPORTATION FLIGHTS TO KURDISTAN

A suspension of all removals to Iraq, including to the northern areas where the instability has got worse in recent months;

The granting of some form of temporary status to all Iraqis in the UK so that they are not left in limbo with no access to support and no entitlement to work. The agencies also called on Mr Miliband to provide much more information about the UK's assistance plans for its former employees in Iraq, including the reasons for excluding Iraqis who have worked for the British for less than 12 months or who did not use a high level of English in their work.

Ends

Notes to editor:

In 2005, the National Audit Office estimated that it cost around £11,000 to deport each individual asylum seeker. In the case of Iraqis, the first two flights were made using military aircraft, so the true cost is estimated to be far higher.



Millions in flight: the Iraqi refugee crisis

See the link to Amnesty International's report:

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE140412007?open&of=ENG-IRQ>

IFIR Meeting with Green Party MP in Zurich.

Dashty Jamal and Jamal Koshish from IFIR Secretariat met Baithasar Glatti Green Party MP in Zurich. Dashty and Jamal raised the problems facing Swiss Iraqi asylum seekers and the continuing problem in Iraq.

Baithasar Glatti promised to write a letter to the Swiss Parliament calling for support for Swiss Iraqi asylum seekers. Baithasar Glatti also offered to set up meetings with IFIR representatives with the leading political parties in Switzerland.

IFIR held a press Conference in Zurich 15 November 2007.



IFIR in Switzerland called a press conference for Ahmed Ali the Swiss IFIR representative and Stephen Mechie from Augen Auf Organisation.

Ahmed Ale spoke about the current situation in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan and the problems facing Swiss Iraqi asylum seekers.

For some Iraqis, flight from strife is cut short By GREGORY KATZ

LONDON - The British government, faced with the clandestine arrival of thousands of Iraqis fleeing their homeland, is quietly sending some of the would-be refugees back to Iraq despite the dangers they face there. The "forced return" policy, criticized as cruel and inhumane by human rights groups and refugee organizations, was implemented even though the government's official Web site warns Britons against travel to Iraq because of the high risk of a terrorist attack or kidnapping. The people being sent back are Iraqis who sought political asylum after entering Britain without proper documents. Their initial applications for refugee status have been rejected, and their appeals have been turned down as well, leaving them with no more legal options. They have been unable to convince British judges that they face persecution if sent home, clearing the way for their return. British officials are not deporting people to the Baghdad region in central Iraq or to southern provinces that are deemed too volatile, but they are sending refugees to Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq because that area is seen as relatively secure despite a spate of recent bombings. "We think it's immoral and may be illegal," said Jan Shaw, director of the Amnesty International refugee program in

Continued on page10>>>

Iraqi is Unsafe

from page 9<<<

Britain. "We don't think any part of Iraq is stable or safe, and this is sending waves of terror throughout the refugee community. Everyone knows about it and fears they will be next." She said Britain has forced more than 70 people to return to Iraq in the past two years. The total is far more than other European countries, which are showing more tolerance for Iraqis uprooted by the war even though they did not participate in the U.S.-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003. "The United Kingdom is avoiding its responsibility," Shaw said. "It partially created the situation in the first place.



The U.K. used to have a policy of showing compassion to people from certain countries, but they have eliminated all of that." She said Iraqis who voluntarily report to British Immigration officials to pursue asylum claims are later rounded up, put in detention centers and forced to go home. This leaves many to conclude that it is wiser to avoid the system altogether. As a result, she said, thousands of Iraqis are living underground in Britain without the legal right to work or to receive health care. "They are languishing in abject poverty," she said. "We should be trying to resettle them, not force them back to Iraq." Put on commercial flights The number of Iraqis living underground is difficult to poll, and people who come into contact with them disagree on the size of their community, but most estimates range from 10,000 to 15,000. The deported refugees were initially put on British military planes, but recently officials have started to use commercial airlines. The Iraqis travel from London to Amman, Jordan, and then into Arbil, the capital of Kurdish-controlled Iraq, where the heavily guarded airport is operational. British officials maintain that each asylum seeker is given a chance to pursue his or her case through legal channels but

is expected to leave Britain voluntarily once the appeals process has been exhausted. When this doesn't happen, the government is within its rights to force the person out, according to a spokesman for the Border and Immigration Agency, which is part of the British Home Office. "If they do not leave the U.K. voluntarily, we may enforce their return," the spokesman said. "Enforced returns to Iraq are taken forward on a case-by-case basis and only where we are satisfied that an individual does not have protection needs." Recent crackdown Some of the people facing deportation entered Britain before the 2003 invasion and managed to avoid contact with authorities until recently, when the government launched a crackdown on illegal immigrants. Others have returned to Britain without permission despite being forced out earlier. Still others have arrived in recent months as sectarian killings inside Iraq have worsened. Many held in detention centres facing deportation complained of receiving poor legal advice and only perfunctory hearings before British officials. Mohammed Abdul Rahman, a 31-year-old factory worker who is in the Campsfield House detention centre just outside of Oxford, said he has been told he will be sent back to northern Iraq on Wednesday. If the deportation is carried out, it would mark his second expulsion from Britain. He was flown back to Irbil, the capital of the Kurdish region in northern Iraq, earlier this year, but paid smugglers \$14,000 to help him flee once more, because, he said, his life was at risk there. 'My country is not safe'. That plan didn't work. Immigration authorities found him hiding in the back of a truck that arrived in the British port of Dover. "My family is in Kirkuk and that city is very dangerous," he said, referring to the oil-rich city in northern Iraq that is rife with sectarian violence. "My country is not safe I just want to save my life," he said in a telephone interview from the detention centre. "But nobody interviewed me, nobody is talking to me; they are just making me go back." He has managed to find a lawyer and still has hopes of staying in Britain. "I don't know what happens next," he said in a telephone interview from the detention centre. Dashty Jamal, secretary of the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees in London, said Rahman has a legal right to a new hearing but instead will be deported. "This is an inhuman policy," he said. "We are campaigning against these forced returns, and we've gotten

Stop Violating Refugees Rights

from page 10<<<<

support from some people in parliament, some trade unions, some women's groups. We think this violates the Geneva Conventions. Our people are living in a very bad situation." The group is also trying to pressure commercial airlines that fly into northern Iraq to refuse to transport the handcuffed detainees who are being forced back into Iraq, he said.

"Lack of identification or evidentiary documentation and or even use of fraudulent and illegal documentation by asylum seekers should not be classed as a crime and must not have an adverse effect on the granting of refugee status. Furthermore, having a passport and legally exiting country of origin cannot prevent someone from being granted refugee status"



Fears of deportation Jamal said the British government has a political interest in sending Iraqis back because it wants to demonstrate that security in Iraq is stabilizing. "They are supporting the war in Iraq, they are part of the occupation of Iraq and they are trying to legitimize the government of Iraq," he said.

"They want to show the world there is a democracy there, which is not true." At the Oakington detention centre, outside of Cambridge, many rejected asylum seekers fear they will soon be flown to northern Iraq now that their appeals have been turned down. Ali Ahmad, 27, said he believes the British authorities will soon deport him even though he no longer has family living in northern Iraq. He has lived in Britain since 2001 without authorization and was taken into custody shortly after his final appeal for asylum was turned down. "The situation in northern Iraq is very bad," he said in a telephone interview. "It has been attacked by Iran and by the Turkish government, and just two months ago 600 to 800 Kurdish Iraqis were killed in a big explosion, and there were explosions in Arbil, the Kurdish capital. "Is that a safe country to go back to?" <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/special/iraq/5213785.html>

"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 status"

"No asylum seeker can be prosecuted or imprisoned for being an asylum seeker and or entering without proper or legal documentation. If an asylum seeker commits a criminal offence in the country where s/he has applied for asylum, s/he must be tried in accordance with the laws of that country in that country."

**Tune in to ASO TV station
To hear the
Voice of Iraqi and Kurdish
asylum seekers every Tuesday
from
12 – 1Greenwich Mean Time**



**Satellite, Hotbird 8
Orbital Position: 13 degrees
East, Transponder: 14
Downlink Frequency: 11
470, Downlink Polarity:
Vertical
FEC: 5/6 ,Symbol Rate:
27,500**

Definition of a Refugee

“A refugee is anyone who seeks refuge in another country for a safer and freer life as a result of political, social, or economic pressures. While the causes of flight are numerous, reasons are similar in nature and indicative of despotic economic and social systems and regimes. Consequently, anyone who flees war, violence, discrimination, despotism, and the domination of repressive religious, nationalistic and rights violating states or groups - whether state or non-state - must be granted refugee status”

FEDERATION ISSUE 2

24 November 2007

Editor: Dashty Jamal

Deputy Editor: Karen Johnson

For more information on International Federation of Iraqi Refugees

Please contact:

Secretary: Dashty Jamal

Contact Details: 078560 32991

d.jamal@ntlworld.com

Secretariat: Aso Goran Contact Details

00447895636633

asobalabarz116@hotmail.com

Jasm Ghafor, Contact Details

00447872970807 jasimghafor@gmail.com

Jamal Koshish 0787557786

jamal-hasan@hotmail.com

Baban Osman – Stockholm, Contact Details

0046 704532270

Rbwar Arif -Finland

0440464905

fediraq@welho.com

Zozan Hussen Sweden

0736746701

Omer Amin Norway

omeramin8@hotmail.com

Baker Hammad Germany

bakir0107@yahoo.de

Details of International Federation of Iraqi

Refugees across the world:

Representatives:

Sweden: Baban Osman – Stockholm

Contact Details: 0046 704532270,

Email: baban-osman@hotmail.com

Karwan Latfe - Gothenburg

:karwanlatif@yahoo.se

Swaziland: Ahmad Ali : Contact Details

:0788532004

Germany : Erfan Karim

arfun96@yahoo.de

Netherlands: Kawa:

kawadebra@hotmail.com

Canada JalalSaed:iraqifederation@yahoo.ca

Kurdistan: Bshdar

Ali:bashdar_net@yahoo.com

“The Federation believes that home is the country where one lives and works. We consider that human rights are universal and they can not be limited by factors of geographic territory, gender, culture, religion, race, age or place of birth. Any belief or movement that restricts human rights for reasons of racism, fascism or cultural relative theory, is a reactionary belief and movement that stands against universal human right”.

Defend Refugee Rights for Kurds and Iraqis