

# Defend Refugee Rights for Kurds and Iraqis

# ECHOS

COALITION TO STOP DEPORTATION TO IRAQ

NEWS LETTER 4

A Public Meeting held in the House of Commons to stop deportation of Kurdish asylum seekers and an appeal statement was submitted to MPs



A public meeting was held in the House of Commons on the 26 March 2007 by John McDonnell for the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees and the Coalition to stop Deportations to Iraq. Many human rights campaigners and representatives from different organizations were present in the meeting including John McDonnell.

John McDonnell opened the meeting by explaining the current terrible situation in Iraq. He also spoke about the unpleasant conditions of the Iraqi asylum seekers who are facing the threat of deportation. John McDonnell expressed his opposition toward the barbaric policy of the UK government of forcibly deporting asylum seekers to dangerous countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq. He asked everybody present at the meeting and human rights organisations to support the Coalition to stop Deportations to Iraq.

The second speaker was Dashty Jamal from the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR). Dashty spoke of the conditions of the Iraqi asylum seekers in the UK and insisted that the cases of all Iraqi asylum seekers are political. The UK government has a responsibility for the deteriorating conditions in Iraq which has led to the asylum seekers being forced to leave Iraq. Dashty also spoke about an appeal statement which IFIR was forwarding to MPs. The appeal asked the MPs to oppose the policy of the deportation of Iraqi asylum seekers. The appeal was distributed amongst the participants of the public meeting and was approved. *Continued on page 2>>>*

Challenge to stop deportation



On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007, Nottingham Federation of Iraqi Refugees in Nottingham held a meeting for Dashty Jamal from International Federation of Iraqi Refugees. The meeting was held at the Refugee Forum in Nottingham from 6-8.30pm. The meeting was chaired by Jasm gahfur from Federation of Iraqi Refugees.

Dashty Jamal explained the efforts of the IFIR in challenging the policies of the UK government towards the Kurdish asylum seekers. He spoke of his visit to Kurdistan where he participated in Organizing meetings demonstrations, press conferences and asked the Kurdish authorities not to cooperate with the UK government by accepting forcibly returned Kurdish asylum seekers.

He also spoke of his meetings with representatives from the UN, Geneva UNHCR in order to press the UK government to end and stop its policy of forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers.

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**Solidarity with others Resisting Deportation to Dangerous Countries**

## Challenge to stop>>from page 1

In the second part of the meeting, the audience asked questions and a warm discussion took place on how to enhance campaigning against the policies of the Home Office and how to challenge the policies of deportation. Dashty also illustrated the deteriorating conditions of the Iraqis inside Iraq and the horrendous policies of the Home Office. The speakers and audience exchanged their views on many issues relating to the conditions of the Kurdish asylum seekers.

### Report by Jasim Ghafur

## Public Meeting>>from page 1

Following Dashty's speech two Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers Erfan and Sabah spoke of their experience in UK detention centres. They (Erfan and Sabah) were released by the efforts of Federation and other refugee organizations.

After that the following speakers spoke highlighting the suffering of asylum seekers and the dangers policy of the deportation. Paramzan from the organization to stop deportation to Congo

Spoke of the continuing dangerous conditions in the Congo and the fact that the UK Government in spite of the continuing civil war still deports people back to the Congo.

Emma Ginn from the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns congratulated IFIR and CSDIraq on their campaign work. She also said the Home Office has unleashed it's dirtiest ever war against asylum seekers ; whilst publically "condemning" the perpetrators of genocide in Darfur, they are quietly deporting the Victims of War right back into the world's worst disaster zones and the hands of the world's most brutal regimes.

Arun Kundnani from Institute of Race Relations, spoke about his experiences of working with Dashty Jamal and the Coalition to Stop Deportations to Iraq over the last year and his involvement in raising money to return the body of a young asylum seeker who had died trying to get into the UK by clinging onto a train through the Euro tunnel

Zana Aziz from the Federation of Kurdish refugees, Kirklees spoke of the work the IFIR did in Kirklees and his support for the campaign against forcibly deporting Iraqi Refugees specifically calling for an amnesty for Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers.

Tim Finch from Refugee Council, spoke of his support for the campaign and the danger of returning asylum seekers to Iraqi Kurdistan.

Gerry Hickey from Asylum Seekers Support Project spoke about section 4 of the immigration act.

Finally, Dashty Jamal handed the appeal statement to John McDonnell to give to MPs in the House of Commons. The statement was signed by all participants of the meeting and by many European Parliament members and human rights organizations. The statement highlighted the current conditions of Iraqi asylum seekers and the threat of deportation from the Home Office.

The conclusions and recommendations are as follows:

- 1- Submit the statement of appeal to all MPs.
- 2- To work with other organizations in order to stop deportation to the following dangerous countries: Iraq, Iran, Zimbabwe, Congo and Turkey.
- 3- Confirmation on establishing a trans-national organization to stop deportations.
- 4- Do our best to encourage all trade unions and MPs in order to empower the campaign to stop deportations.
- 5- Work and network with other campaigners in European countries to set up a coalition against deportations.
- 6- taking further steps to stop the Government forcibly deporting asylum seekers
- 7- Put pressure on the Kurdish authorities to not accept any further planes from European Countries of Kurdish Asylum seekers.
- 8- Attempt to organize a national demonstration to stop the policy of deportation.

### International Federation of Iraqi Refugees Coalition to Stop Deportation 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007.



## Appeal to Members of Parliament

Iraqis are suffering from the consequences of war. The widespread violence in Iraq and devastation of the public services has created many difficulties for the Iraqi people. According to recent estimates some 2 million Iraqis have fled Iraq and become refugees in neighbouring countries since 2003, while some 1.7 million are displaced persons within Iraq .

Kurdistan and the Kurds are part of the tragedy of Iraq. The whole Iraqi people including the Kurds suffered from the oppression of the Ba'ath regime for thirty five years. The Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan gained independence from the Ba'ath regime in 1991. However, the Kurdish people are still suffering from instability and uncertainty of the political situation. Kurdistan is neither an independent state nor part of a stable and successful state. The Kurdish authorities and the two major political parties (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the PUK and Kurdistan Democratic Part, the KDP) do not respect the wishes of the Kurdish people. The Kurdish political parties violate human rights on a daily basis. Corruption is part of the system. The PUK and KDP are unable to provide basic public services and are incapable of governing Iraqi Kurdistan.

Many Iraqi and Kurdish asylum seekers have fled from the problems of Iraq and claimed asylum in the UK. However, the UK government and the Home Office have put pressure on them and forced many of them to leave the country, including under the "Voluntary Return Programme". The Home Office has arrested many Kurdish asylum seekers and cut public funds from others, and many Kurdish asylum seekers were sacked from their jobs in Hull under the excuse of not having the right to stay in the UK. So they have been suffering from depression and destitution and many of them have been forced to sleep rough.

The Home Office has deported 83 asylum seekers up to now. They were treated in an inhuman way and handcuffed. Military aircraft and a military base were

used to remove them. This has all led to resentment and frustration amongst Kurdish asylum seekers and refugee organisations toward the policies of the Home Office.

We the undersigned ask you to approach the government and seek to:

- 1- stop the deportation of Kurdish asylum seekers immediately
- 2- reopen the cases of those asylum seekers whose files have been closed, and deal with

them according to European human rights law.

- 3- end the process of destitution, allowing asylum seekers to work or to receive accommodation and public funds if unable to work.
- 4- review the "Voluntary Return Programme" in the light of the evidence that the situation of the whole of Iraq including Kurdistan is unstable.

List of the organizations.

- 1- International Federation of Iraqi Refugees(IFIR)**
- 2- Kurdistan Refugee Women's Organisation.(KRWO)**
- 3- Middle East Organisation of Women's Rights.**
- 4- Kurdistan Forum.**
- 5- Federation of Iraqi Refugees in Manchester.**
- 6- Federation of Iraqi Refugees in Nottingham.**
- 7- Iraqi Freedom Congress- UK Representative.**
- 8- Federation of Worker Councils and Unions in Iraq, UK Representative.**
- 9- Kurdish Project Art Centre.**
- 10- Wolverhampton Kurdish Community Association .**
- 11- Kurdish Culture Centre- Kirklees.**
- 12- Federation of Iraqi Refugees in Leicester.**
- 13-Centre for Observance of peoples Rights in Iraq and Kurdistan.**
- 14-Kurdish Syrian and British Friendship**
- 15-Leeds Kurdish Community.**
- 16-Worker-Communist Party of Iraq-UK Organisation**
- 17-Campaign Against Racism and Fascism**
- 18-DFT/DCLG PCS London branch**
- 19- Workers Liberty**
- 20- Iraqi Union Solidarity**
- 21-George Binette &Liz Leicester International officers of the Camden branch of UNISON**
- 22-Emma Ginn from NCADC**
- 23-John McDonnell MP**
- 24-Jean Lambert MEP**
- 25-Kurdish Communities Federation-Kirklees**
- 26- Kurdish Women's Organisation- Kirklees**
- 27-Estella Schmid from peace in Kurdistan Campaign &CAMPACC**
- 28-No Sweat**
- 29-Doug Holton from stop deporting children**

The above organisations are making this appeal to you in the hope that you will do everything in your power to end the Home Office's inhumane policies toward the Kurdish and Iraqi asylum seekers. We look forward to hearing from you.

For more information please contact Dashty Jamal on Mobile: 07856032991 [d.jamal@ntlworld.com](mailto:d.jamal@ntlworld.com) Karen Johnson

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**No to Forcible Deportations of Kurdish Asylum Seekers**

## Support Iraqi Refugees in Cypres

A number of Iraqi Refugees in Cypres have made contact with the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) asking for support. The refugees were forced to leave Iraq because of the violence and sectarian war in Iraq and the continuing occupation. The Refugees are families with children. The Cypres Government has refused to allow them to work or offer them any support, and has put pressure on them to return to Iraq. The refugees have asked IFIR to put pressure on the Cypres Government to help them.

IFIR have approached the UNCHR to help the Iraqi refugees establish their rights in Cypres and also to move them to another country. IFIR are asking human rights and refugee organisations and Trade Unions to help the Iraqi Refugees in Cypres.

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.**

**Post address:**

**PO.BOX1575**

**ILFORD**

**IG1 3BZ**

**LONDON UK**

**“Four million Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan have been living in uncertainty for the last sixteen years. The future of the Kurds is unknown”  
Dashty Jamal**



**“Many Kurdish asylum seekers have been sacked from their jobs under the excuse of not having the right to stay in the UK. As a result of this harassment many Kurdish asylum seekers are suffering from depression. Many of them have been forced to sleep rough.” Dashty Jamal**

### **ECHOES**

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**Stop Violating Refugees Rights**