

Campaigning against the forced deportation of Iraqi Kurdish Asylum Seekers in Europe

ECHOS

COALITION TO STOP DEPORTATION TO IRAQ

NEWS LETTER 5

A public demonstration in the city of Gothenburg in Sweden 19 April 2007



On 19th April 2007, from 3pm to 4.30pm around 250 people took part in a public demonstration against The Swedish Governments decision not to extend the previously agreed refugee status to 1400 Iraqi Kurdish refugees living in Sweden. The 1400 Kurdish Iraqi refugees had received letters from the Swedish Immigration Department saying they should return to Iraq voluntarily or steps would be taken to forcibly remove them. The demonstration was organized by the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees and the Committee of cooperation of Iraqi Refugees.

Mr. Hawry Fatih the director of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees in Gothenburg welcomed the participants and explained the demands of the demonstration

The demands of the demonstration were:

- 1-Abolish the policy of forced deportation of asylum seekers.
- 2- Challenge and oppose any agreements regarding the forced deportation.

The second speaker Dashty Jamal Director of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees explained that the policy of forcibly deporting Kurdish Iraqi Refugees by the Swedish government was also being used in the UK, Germany and Finland. Dashty insisted that the only way to challenge this policy is keep campaigning and organizing our efforts to end these terrible policies of these Governments. Dashty stressed that this demonstration is just one step of that process to challenge the Swedish Government. Dashty also spoke about the appalling situation in Iraq which is causing the asylum seekers to flee Iraq and promised that the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees will continue to do its best to stop these inhumane policies. Following Dashty Jamal's speech Azad Mawaty the Director of Kurdish Communities and two Swedish human rights campaigners spoke and pledged their support.

Dashty Jamal, Vian Karim, Shilan Osman, Azad Mawaty and Hawry Fath handed a petition calling for an end to forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurdish refugees to the immigration office of Gothenburg which contained 4000 signatures.

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Dashty Jamal met the UK Swedish Counsellor to discuss Swedish Kurdish asylum seekers.



On 01 May 2007, Dashty Jamal (Director International Federation of Iraqi Refugees) and Aso Goran (representative International Federation of Iraqi Refugees) met Louise Bonbeck (UK Swedish Counsellor). To discuss the Swedish High Court decision of not extending the right to asylum for 1400 Kurds in Sweden and planning to forcibly deport them back to Iraq.

At the meeting the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) representatives explained the danger of forcibly deporting Kurdish asylum seekers who have lived in Sweden for more than three years. The Kurdish Asylum Seekers are integrated and settled in Sweden and their children are educated in the Swedish language. The IFIR Representatives asked the Counsellor to ask the Swedish government to review their decision and extend the right to asylum to all of the 1400 Swedish Kurdish asylum seekers. Dashty Jamal gave a letter to the Counsellor and asked her to forward it to the Swedish Prime Minister and the Swedish Parliament which is due to meet to discuss this issue on 9th May 2007.

The Counsellor explained the decision was not made by the Swedish Government but by the High Court and Immigration Office. Therefore, the asylum seekers have the right to appeal against the decision. The Ambassador also confirmed that the Swedish government is committed to the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the Swedish Government will deal with each case individually.

Dashty Jamal emphasised that the case of Iraq is exceptional and should be dealt with accordingly. That the situation in Iraq is deteriorating every day and Iraq is becoming increasingly unstable.

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Solidarity with Kurdish and Iraqi Asylum seekers

demonstration in the city of Gothenburg >>from page1

The immigration office replied that they do not have the power to deal with the issue. However, they promised to ask the high office to reply. The delegation, warned them that if the Swedish government would not reply, it would face a huge demonstration across the whole of Europe. The demonstrators chanted the slogans below:
No to deportation , Asylum rights are human rights.
Finally, the demonstrators decided to continue the campaign and by writing letters to both the Swedish parliament and the Kurdistan Regional Government calling for an end to forced deportations and calling on the Kurdish authorities not to accept forcibly returned asylum seekers. The Swedish and Kurdish media were present at the event.

Dashty Jamal met >>from page1

That the Kurdish Iraqi asylum seekers have every right to asylum and that the decision to forcibly deport Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers is against International and Human Rights Laws. Dashty Jamal informed the Counsellor that if the Swedish Government implemented the decision of the High Court to forcibly deport the Kurdish Iraqi asylum seekers that IFIR would not only make a complaint against the Swedish government to the European Union Parliament but IFIR would also organize demonstrations across the EU against the Swedish Government.

The Counsellor promised to deliver all these messages and all documents regarding this matter to the Swedish prime Minister Mr.Fredrik Reinfeldt and would let IFIR know the response. The IFIR representatives also passed newsletters and documents regarding the activities of the Federation in particular regarding the demonstrations held in Gothenburg and Stockholm to the Counsellor .

Seminar for asylum seekers in Birmingham



On Sunday 8 April Birmingham IFIR AND CSDIraq held the following seminar - Defending the rights of asylum seekers and challenging the policy of deportation. The lead speaker was Dashty Jamal Secretary of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees . The seminar was chaired by Mr. Shapol Said. When opening the seminar the Chair asked for a two minute silence for asylum seekers who had lost their lives. Following the two minute silence the chair introduced Dashty Jamal.

Dashty opened his speech by saying that the policy of the UK Government of forcibly deporting Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers had led to other European Countries such as Sweden, Finland and Netherlands to threaten to forcibly deport Iraqi Kurdish asylum

seekers. Dashty spoke of ways to combat these policies through campaigning and the importance of making links with other human rights campaigners and MP's. Dashty also talked about the current political situation in Iraqi Kurdistan. Dashty explained that despite the latest statement from the Kurdish authorities regarding forced deportations the Kurdish authorities are not prepared to refuse landing permission for European planes carrying forcibly deported asylum seekers. Dashty finished his speech by talking about the anti deportation campaigns happening across Europe. At the end of his speech Dashty answered questions from the Seminar's participants. Ways of challenging the UK's deportation policy were discussed. At the end of the Seminar Dashty spoke of the importance of joining the Birmingham Federation of Iraqi Refugees and asked if there was anyone at the seminar who wasn't a member they should join to help the campaign become bigger and stronger.

A Demonstration in front of the Swedish parliament against the decision of forced deportation of Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers.



The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees organized a demonstration on 26th April 2007 from 2 until 4 pm in front of the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm against the Parliaments decision of forcible deporting Kurdish asylum seekers. Many human rights campaigners and refugees and asylum seekers took part in the demonstration.

Halala Rafi (Director of the committee Defending Iraqi women), Halala Rafi and Kalid Mohammed the co-organizer of the demonstration submitted a statement and a petition to the Swedish Parliament. A representative of the People Party was present in the parliament and was given the statement and petition. The Representative said that he would pass the statement and petition to the Minister of Immigration. He also said that the Swedish Parliament would be discussing this issue on 9th May 2007.

The Organisers of the demonstration decided to hold another if possible larger demonstration on 9 May 2007 in front of the Swedish Parliament to protest at the Swedish Parliaments decision to forcibly deport Iraqi Kurds. We ask all refugees and asylum seekers and human rights campaigners to take part in the 9 May demonstration demonstration. Your presence will boost our campaign.

Meeting to support about Iraqi Kurdish asylum Seekers in Norway



On Sunday 22 April 07 the Iraqi Kurdish Organisation in Norway (the Iraqi Kurdish Organisation are members of IFIR) held a meeting to support Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers who had failed the MUF process. Which means that Norway has refused their right to asylum in Norway. Ninety Iraqi Kurdish Asylum seekers attended the meeting. Kamel Ahmad and Omar Xatat representatives of the Norwegian Iraqi Kurdish organisation spoke at the meeting. Both speakers stressed the importance of the Norwegian Kurdish asylum seekers organising a campaign against Norway's asylum policy of forced deportation. The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees will support and help any campaign the Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers in Norway organise.

Activities of the IFIR regarding the asylum seekers issues in Finland

Following Grant B's decision to forcibly deport Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (IFIR) has organised the following events.

IFIR contacted organizations in Helsinki who work with refugees and asylum seekers. The IFIR has also contacted the Young organization, The Young Organization is part of the Green Party. After discussions and meetings about the conditions of asylum seekers and Grant B programme it was decided to undertake the following activities:

- on the 18 April 2007 a press conference was called addressing the problems of the following groups of asylum seekers Afghans and Somalis. Mr. Rebwar Arif IFIR representative spoke to the press of the problems of Iraqi refugees first he addressed the continuing unstable situation in Iraq which has led to people being forced to leave Iraq and seek asylum in European countries. He then spoke of the Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers in Finland.

On 20 April 2007 IFIR organised a demonstration in Helsinki which was attended by 700 people. At the

end of the demonstration Rebwar Arif from International Federation of Iraqi Refugees explained to the demonstrators the current political situation in Iraq and the consequences of forced deportations. Paavo Arhinmaki MP from Left Party, Anni Sinnemäki MP from the green party also addressed the demonstrators. Mr. Rebwar Arif was interviewed by Finland Radio, Hilinski Radio and TV Channel 1.

21 and 22 April, in the city of Helsinki a Socialist Forum was organized by human rights activists. The Forum addressed political, social and economic topics.

The following people spoke at the forum Miss Afghani, Rahra Abdullah MP from Socialist Democratic Party, Representatives from Somalia refugees and Rebwar Arif from the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees. The panel discussed the current situation in Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan and also the policies of the Finnish government toward asylum seekers from these countries. Sixty people attended the forum including a few journalists.

Happy May Day International Workers Day



Baghdad may day

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.**

Asylum Rights are Human Rights

Support Kurdish Asylum Seekers in Sweden!

1, 400 Kurdish asylum seekers have been threatened with forced removal. The Kurdish asylum seekers have been living in Sweden for 4 – 5 years. Last year they were granted indefinite leave to stay. This has now been cancelled many of them have married and have children, because of this decision by the Swedish Immigration Office they have been forced out of their jobs. The Swedish Government claim Kurdistan is safe and they should leave before they are forcibly removed.

International Federation of Iraqi Refugee (IFIR) and Committee to Defend Kurdish asylum seekers called a demonstration of the Swedish Immigration Office, Gothenburg city, Thursday 19 April 2007 against the Swedish Immigration Office's decision. The Iraqi Kurdish refugees need the support of all progressive and humanitarian forces in Britain to face the racist and inhumane policy of the British state. We call on all progressive and humanitarian forces to join this campaign and support our struggle.

The Iraqi Kurdish refugees need the support of all progressive and humanitarian forces in Europe to face the racist and inhumane policy of the Europe Government . We call on all progressive and humanitarian forces to join this campaign and support our struggle.



Time to set up a European Coalition against Deportations to Iraq and support Refugee Rights

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ECHOES

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Freedom of Movement and the Freedom to Stay