

No to Forcible deportations of Iraqi Kurdish Asylum Seekers

ECHOS

COALITION TO STOP DEPORTATION TO IRAQ

NEWS LETTER 6



Rebwar Arif Held several seminars and interviews with the press in Finland regarding the political situation in Iraq and conditions of Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers.

Rebwar Arif a representative of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees, organised 2 seminars and conducted interviews in Finland regarding the political situation of Iraq and asylum seekers in Finland. On Thursday, 3rd May 2007 at 2pm, a seminar was held at the University of Younso. Rebwar Arif spoke about the following three topics:

- 1- The consequences of the decision of programme B.
- 2- The terrible political situation in Iraq which caused of flee millions of Iraqis.
- 3- The issue of deportation of Kurdish and Iraqi asylum seekers.

After the seminar, Rebwar Arif was interviewed by the Central Radio Finland and Carolinian Newspaper regarding the above issues and he spoke about the above issues in detail.

The Second Seminar was held 3rd May 2007 3pm in Central Younso, 40 people attended the second seminar. The topics discussed at the second seminar were:

1. The consequences of programme B
2. The Political situation in Iraq, conditions of asylum seekers in Finland
3. How to challenge the policies of deportation, cooperation work amongst the civil society organizations
4. Organizing campaigns to stop deportation

At the end of the seminar all the organisations agreed to help and work with International Federation of Iraqi Refugees in order to stop and oppose the policy of forced deportation.

Following the second Seminar Rebwar Arif and Katja Tuominem were interviewed by the Finish News TV channel.

Kurdish asylum seekers protest for three days in the City of Gothenburg against the policies of deportation



Following a meeting of the Solidarity Committee to Defend Iraqi Kurdish asylum Seekers and refugee organizations, Kurdish asylum seekers decided to organize a three day protest from 7- 9 June 2007 and set up an encampment of tents in order to show their anger towards the policy of forced deportation implemented by the Swedish government in particular the Swedish Government's decision not to extend the previously agreed refugee status to 1400 Iraqi Kurdish refugees living in Sweden. The 1400 Kurdish Iraqi refugees have received letters from the Swedish Immigration Department saying they should return to Iraq voluntarily, or steps would be taken to forcibly remove them.

The final day of the protest 9th June, 2pm a protest a march will take place from Bruns parken to Gota Platsen. The International Federation of Iraqi Refugees requests all asylum seekers and human rights campaigners to take part in this protest and also ask the Swedish media to cover the event.

For more information contact director of International Federation of Iraqi Refugees in **Gothenburg** : Hawry Fatih on mobile number: 0704454159. hawrvh@yahoo.se

KURDISH ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE VICTIMS OF WAR AND UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Dashty Jamal Director of IFIR wrote a letter to Swedish MPs



On 9th May 2007, Dashty Jamal IFIR Director of IFIR wrote a letter to the Swedish Parliament regarding the Swedish Government's decision not to extend the previously agreed refugee status to 1400 Iraqi Kurdish refugees living in Sweden.. Dashty spoke to Karin Laan from the Swedish Parliament who forwarded the letter to all Swedish MPs on 21 May 2007.

Representative of the IFIR in Gothenburg met with political organizations in order to explain the policies of deportation and the conditions of asylum seekers.

On 23/05/2007, Hwry Fatih (Director of IFIR) and Twfiq Mohammed (works with asylum seekers and refugee organizations) met representatives from Swedish Socialist Democratic Party, Swedish Left Party, and Leninist Marxist Communist Party. To discuss the Swedish Governments policy of deporting Iraqi Kurds back to Iraq principally the Swedish Governments decision of not extending leave to remain to 1400 Kurdish asylum seekers. Hwry Fatih asked that the representatives present ask their political parties to join IFIR's campaign against the Swedish Governments policy of deporting Iraqi Kurds back to Iraq.

The representative of IFIR submitted a letter of organization to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Arbil.

On 20th May 2005, Bashder Ali the representative of IFIR in Kurdistan passed a letter from IFIR Swedish campaigners to the KRG IN Erbil. The letter spoke of the campaigning work the IFIR is undertaking in Sweden and asked that the KRG refused to accept flights from Sweden returning forcibly returned Kurdish asylum seekers.

Channel 4 shows Kurdish Director Sherabayani's film which shows the lives of Forcibly returned Kurdish asylum seekers.

Channel 4 showed Kurdish Director Karzan Sherabayani's short film addressing the issue of deporting Kurdish asylum seekers back to Iraq More 4 News, 14th May 2007. In the film Sherabayani tracked down and interviewed returned Kurdish asylum seekers. Many of the returned asylum seekers spoke of trying to return to Europe because of the continuing political repression in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Forced deportation-6 mins-More 4 News 07.

The report is available at the following link:
www.channel4.com/more4/news-opinion-feature.isp?id=586



The meeting between the representatives of the Iraqi Kurdish Organisation in Norway with the immigration directorate of Norwegian government UDI regarding the case of Muffs.

On 30th April 2007, Kamel Ahmed and Sherwn Ibrahim from the Iraqi Kurdish Organisation in Norway were invited to meet the Angar Korio, Alizabeth Tombira Nergord and Stian Molviq from the UDI to discuss the Muffs cases. The issues of Muffs cases were discussed and the representatives explained of the inhuman treatment of the government regarding the Muffs cases.

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Numerous numbers of asylum seekers and human rights campaigners and representatives of refugee organizations show their support for Iraqi Kurdish asylum seekers.



The Coalition to stop Deportations to Iraq and the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees in the UK has collected 2500 signatures calling on the Government to stop Deporting asylum seekers back to Iraq. A further 815 signatures have been collected from different cities in the UK these were forwarded to the Home Office on 30 May 2007 with a covering letter from Dashty Jamal.

Activist of IFIR Suzan Hussein presents two reports on Swedish Television regarding Kurdish asylum seekers refused asylum.

Suzan Hussein presented two reports on Swedish TV Channel 2.

The first report was shown on the 17 May 2007 regarding the conditions of the 1400 Kurdish asylum seekers who the Swedish government has denied to extend their grant of refugee. In the programme Suzan interviewed Kurdish families in the city of Vestries and explained their lives and their settlement in Sweden and the integration of their children.

In the Second report was shown on 21 May 2007, Suzan interviewed another Kurdish family in the city of Orebro and spoke about their suffering.

Canadian press interview Jalal Said one of the directors of IFIR regarding the plight of Kurdish asylum seekers in Canada

Jalal Said one of the Directors of IFIR has been interviewed by The Toronto Star newspaper (the interview was published on 19 April 2007) regarding the conditions of Canadian Iraqi and Kurdish asylum

seekers. Jalal also gave interviews to the National radio Station in Montreal and the French radio Department on 20 April regarding Kurdish Iraqi asylum seekers in Canada and Neighbouring countries.

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.**

Happy Childrens Day



Declaration of universal rights of children

“Every child has the right to a happy, secure and creative life. The welfare and happiness of every child, regardless of the child’s family status, rests with the society. Children should enjoy the highest possible level of welfare and means of material and mental development.”

“Prohibition of any kinds of restriction on free movement, inside the country, of individuals aged 16 and over, by the state or its security authorities. Abolition of all restrictions on the free travel abroad, unconditional issuing of passports and exit and entry visas for all individuals aged 16 and over.”

*Children First International Campaign
For children's Rights*

Gerry Healey From Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP) made the following speech regarding section 4 at the CSD Iraq meeting in Parliament on the 26 March 2007.



Many thousands of Iraqis here in the UK who are without any kind of support (destitute) but who feel that they cannot return as the situation in Iraq is too dangerous.

The reason for the high levels of destitution amongst this group is that since 2003, with the overthrow of Saddam regime, the vast majority of Iraqis claiming asylum in the UK have been refused. To give you some figures- in 2002 nearly 9,000 Iraqis were given some form of leave to remain. In 2004 only 195 were given leave to remain and in 2005 the figure had sunk to 160. This means that the vast majority of Iraqis entering the UK since 2003 have been refused any kind of leave to remain. This is the reasons why there now many thousands of destitute Iraqis asylum seekers in the UK.

When someone has their claim for asylum and appeals rejected they automatically lose their right to support. Some rejected asylum seekers may qualify for what is called Section 4 support but the criteria is so narrow that only a tiny number will meet the criteria. For example there are currently four qualifying criteria for Section Four support. A person applying would need to show that they are either taking steps to return home, that they are too ill to travel or have some outstanding representations with the Home Office that are still being considered (fresh claims) . At the last count only 6,500 thousand rejected asylum seekers in the UK were receiving S4 support, of which around 2,000 were Iraqis. However, there is estimated to be well over 20,000 rejected Iraqi asylum seekers here in the UK, the vast majority of whom are without support (these are estimates as it is difficult to know the exact figures).

The Home Office position in relation to rejected Iraqi asylum seekers is that it is now safe for them to return. For a brief period between December 2004 and August 2005 following a high court judgment, the Home Office accepted there was no safe or return to Iraq. At that time the only route available was to Arman in Jordan and from there overland travel using Highway 10. Based on evidence provided by various experts on Iraq to the court showing the dangers associated with using highway 10, the Home Office conceded that this route was not safe. Since Sept 05 however, new routes of return have been opened up. The Home offices latest guidance notes issue in February 07 states that they now several viable routes of return to Iraq. They point out that are now regular flights to Erbil, Suleimaniyah, Basra and Baghdad. Their guidance notes does not accept earlier advice from UNHCR which stated that travel by air to Baghdad was highly insecure,

and that passengers continue to be exposed to high level threats both on the ground when in Iraqi airspace.

With regard to internal travel UNHCR a stated that the main routes leading out of Baghdad are highly insecure including roads leading west through Ramadi, and Fullujah and south to Hilla. Overall they conclude that no major routes into Iraq are to be considered safe.

The most recent position paper from UNHCR in December 06 stated that overall, the situation in Iraq could be characterised as one of generalised violence and one in which massive targeted violations of human rights are prevalent.

However despite these warnings from UNHCR and others the Home Offices position is that any Iraqis who have no basis to remain in the UK and who fail to leave, will be liable to enforced removals. We know that do date there have been 3 lots of forced removals the latest being in Feb, but more are planned for the future. Up until now the Home Office has only removed those who they believe originate from the North of Iraq. The Home Office have stated that the 'limited' programme of forced return to date is largely due to operational considerations, which means they are limited to flying in and out of Iraq on specially equipped aircraft. They also say they need to be mindful of concerns about the situation on the ground and our wider diplomatic engagements with the authorities in Iraq. You can read into that what you will!

Since the decision to deny support to rejected Iraqi asylum seekers on the basis that there is a safe route of return, barristers and other legal practitioners have been putting together cases to challenge the Home Office position.

These challenges have mainly focus on the fact that the Home Office has failed to assess the safety of the various routes of return to Iraq, particularly for those who originate from outside of the Kurdish Autonomous Zone. Some of these cases have reached the high court and some are waiting for permission to go ahead. In the meantime as the situation in Iraq deteriorates most Iraqi asylum seekers in the UK will continue to be denied support.

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NO TO DEPORTATION NO TO DETENTION!