

ICJDA: Iraqi government manipulating UNAMI to imprison the residents of Ashraf

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International Committee of Jurists in Defence of Ashraf

ICJDA impresses upon its clients again that they should not go to the new location without prior inspection and presence of their lawyers.

ICJDA Press Release, 4 January 2012

While 400 residents of Camp Ashraf prepared to relocate from Camp Ashraf to Camp Liberty with their vehicles and moveable assets on December 30th (ICJDA has the relevant video clips) upon the demand of Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the Iranian Resistance's President-elect, the Iraqi government has been engaging in deception and manipulating UNAMI in order to imprison the residents of Camp Ashraf. To this end, all international humanitarian standards and UN values and norms are trampled upon as a gift to appease the Iranian regime to ensure that it is satisfied with Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

None of the three requests by Mrs. Rajavi and the residents of Ashraf has been accepted so far, i.e., inspecting the new location by a number of Ashraf engineers, immediate relocation of 400 residents with their vehicles and moveable property and accepting the minimum assurances to convince the remaining residents to move to Camp Liberty in the months remaining to the extended deadline.

While the residents of Ashraf are under tremendous pressure to hastily relocate to a site which they have not seen even once, precise reports provided by the NCRI point to a blatant "prison building" disguised as preparing Camp Liberty.

- US and UN officials had previously said that the new camp allocated for the residents of Ashraf will be around 40 Sqr. Kms and the US forces have left behind sufficient facilities and infrastructure. In practice, however, this location has been reduced to one Sqr. Km and the Iraqi government, which took over Camp Liberty on December 3, has left less than 2.5 percent of the area for the residents of Ashraf.

- Iraqi forces are using many cranes to quickly build a prison by installing pre-fabricated concrete walls, three to four meters tall, around an area which contains nothing but worn-out trailers left by the US forces. This is while the residents do not have the right to venture outside the walls and are deprived of visiting their lawyers.

- The bathrooms are out of order and unusable.

- The dining hall, which will be encircled with walls, is outside the living areas and it is extremely difficult for the wounded, the patients and the elderly to go there.

- According to a report sent to Tehran by the Iranian regime's embassy in Baghdad, the police and the police station will be inside the area encircled with concrete walls to control the prisoners on a 24/7 basis. This collection of trailers was previously a garrison and it is in no way appropriate for more than 3,000 people to live under normal living standards.

In a letter on December 26 to the UN Secretary General and his Special Representative for Iraq, the residents of Ashraf wrote: "You will concur with us that forcible displacement, is prohibited under international law. The current drive to relocate us is being done under constraint, against our free choice and will, and while we do not have the minimum assurances for our safety and security."

ICJDA draws the attention of the UN Secretary General and his Special Representative, Ambassador Martin Kobler, to the deception by the Committee to suppress Ashraf in the Iraqi Prime Minister's office. On behalf of 8,500 lawyers and jurists in Europe and North America, ICJDA:

1. Demands to visit the new site.
2. Calls on the US, the EU and the UN, in particular the Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions to inspect the site and issue a certificate as to its compatibility with humanitarian standards and UN norms before the residents of Ashraf are relocated to Camp Liberty.
3. It again impresses upon its clients at Ashraf not go to the new location before prior inspection of Liberty by the lawyers and the issuance of a certificate of compatibility by the United Nations.

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