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News Flash

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Iraq: Condemnation of beheading

Amnesty International strongly condemns the beheading of Kenneth Bigley and appeals for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

"Kidnapping and then killing civilians are recognized international crimes involving the violation of people's most basic rights, and for which there can be no justification," said Amnesty International.

Kenneth Bigley, a British citizen aged 62, was kidnapped on 16 September by a group calling itself *Tawhid and Jihad*.

Over the past six months, dozens of foreigners of different nationalities, mostly civilians including aid workers, journalists, truck drivers and private contractors have been abducted and taken hostage by various armed groups operating in Iraq to exert pressure on their governments or employers.

"Amnesty International condemns the use of civilians as bargaining chips in Iraq and urges armed groups to respect minimum standards of international humanitarian law, justice and humanity in their actions."

The organization also urges multinational troops and the Interim Government of Iraq to maintain security, law and order, while themselves adhering to international human rights and humanitarian legal norms, and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Public Document

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