

TO: HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
FROM: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

APPEAL FOR ACTION

UPDATE: CAMP ASHRAF INJURED RESIDENTS DENIED MEDICAL CARE

On the morning of 8 April, Iraqi security forces using armoured personnel carriers and other vehicles sought to take greater control of Camp Ashraf, home to some 3,400 Iranian refugees and exiles, using lethal and other excessive force and causing a reported 34 deaths of residents. These are mostly members and supporters of the People's Mojahedine Organization of Iran (PMOI), an Iranian political opposition group that formerly engaged in armed action against the Iranian government and which is outlawed in Iran. In addition to those killed, over 300 residents of Camp Ashraf are reported to have been injured by use of live fire and other excessive force by Iraqi security forces; many of the injured are alleged to have been denied medical treatment and others have been detained while in hospital.

These attacks are the latest of a series of harmful actions including general medical restrictions that the Iraqi government has taken against Camp Ashraf residents, as part of its efforts to pressure them to leave Iraq, where they were given refuge by Saddam Hussain years before he was overthrown by a US-led coalition in 2003. The Iraqi government now has much closer relations with the Iranian government. As a result of Iraqi government actions, the medical facilities within the camp lack adequate supplies and medicines to treat those reported by the PMOI to have been injured in the latest clashes. In the few instances where residents were taken to an outside medical facility in Ba'quba, little has been done to treat or assist them.

According to credible information that Amnesty International has received from the PMOI, six women and 28 men died as a result of the events on 8 April, mostly from injuries such as gunshots to the head, chest, abdomen, legs and neck. At least two appear to have died as a result of being deliberately hit or run over by military vehicles driven by Iraqi security forces. Some of the deaths, it is alleged, could have been prevented if the Iraqi authorities had not blocked or delayed the provision of medical treatment.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY:

- Explaining that you are a health professional concerned about human rights;
- Expressing serious concern at the reports of unprovoked attacks on residents of Camp Ashraf carried out by the security forces;
- Urging the authorities to ensure immediate protection of the right to medical care by those suffering injuries;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that all health professionals are able to practice with clinical independence and without fear of reprisals by the Iraqi forces;
- Calling on the authorities to set up an independent investigation into the killings of 34 Camp Ashraf residents.

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PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 01/06/2011 TO: The Iraqi embassy in your country and address them to:

Prime Minister

His Excellency Nuri Kamil al-Maliki
Prime Minister
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior:

His Excellency Jawad al-Bulani
Minister of Interior
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Health

His Excellency
Majid Haman Amin
Minister of Health
Convention Center (Qasr al-Ma'aradih)
Baghdad, Iraq
email: advisor@moh.gov.iq
fax: no fax
Salutation: Your Excellency

IF YOU RECEIVE NO REPLY WITHIN SIX WEEKS OF SENDING YOUR LETTER, PLEASE SEND A FOLLOW-UP LETTER SEEKING A RESPONSE. PLEASE SEND COPIES OF ANY LETTERS YOU RECEIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT, ATTENTION OF THE HEALTH TEAM, 1 EASTON STREET, LONDON WC1X 0DW OR E-MAIL: health@amnesty.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Video clips of the clashes that the PMOI has uploaded to YouTube appear to show Iraqi soldiers firing indiscriminately into the crowds of residents of Camp Ashraf and using vehicles to try and run others down.

An Iraqi government spokesman said Camp Ashraf residents threw rocks at security forces in what he termed a "riot." Troops did not open fire, he said, but force was used to push residents back inside the camp.

Since the US military ceded control of Camp Ashraf to Iraqi security forces in mid-2009, the constant presence of Iraqi troops at and near the camp, according to the PMOI, has made it difficult for residents to access medical treatment inside and outside the camp.

An Iraqi security committee has for a long time controlled the influx of medical supplies into the camp and decides who can travel outside the camp for specialist treatment.

