

URGENT ACTION

US WOMAN POSSIBLE PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

US servicewoman and Iraq war resister, Kimberly Rivera, faces deportation from Canada to the USA by 20 September where she risks being court-martialled for desertion and jailed for between two to five years. If imprisoned, she would be a prisoner of conscience.

According to a statement made by **Kimberly Rivera**, shortly before her unit was ordered to deploy to Iraq in October 2006, she began to have doubts about participating in the conflict after studying the teachings of the Bible on violence. While in Iraq, she began to seriously doubt the justification of the war, her participation in it, and being part of the US army.

While she was on leave in the USA in January 2007, Kimberly Rivera says she decided she could no longer morally participate in the war in Iraq or any other conflict, and began researching ways to obtain release from her military obligations. She decided there was no other option than to go absent without leave (AWOL), as she understood that she would not have been granted conscientious objector status, and feared being returned to Iraq while an application for conscientious objector was being processed.

Kimberly Rivera went to Canada with her family in February 2007 to avoid being sent back to Iraq. In Canada, she applied for protection as a refugee but was rejected, and in January 2009 she was ordered to leave the country, or face deportation. Her deportation was postponed while she appealed that decision.

Kimberly Rivera, who spoke out publicly about her objection to the armed conflict in Iraq, now faces deportation to the USA by 20 September. During the attempt to stop her removal, Kimberly Rivera's lawyer submitted evidence to show that those who speak out publicly with respect to their objections to the US action in Iraq have been treated more harshly than those who do not on their return to the USA. Army officials have reportedly confirmed that Kimberly Rivera will be detained and prosecuted upon her return to the USA. An application to delay her deportation on humanitarian and compassionate grounds based on the best interests of her four children is currently pending.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to cease deportation proceedings against Kimberly Rivera or, at a minimum, defer her deportation until her pending application to remain in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds has been considered;
- Stating that Kimberly Rivera will be considered a prisoner of conscience if she were imprisoned solely because of her conscientious objection to participating in the armed conflict in Iraq.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 SEPTEMBER 2012 TO:

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2
Canada
Fax: +1 613 941 6900
Email: pm@pm.gc.ca or
stephen.harper@parl.gc.ca
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

The Honorable Jason Kenney, PC MP
Minister of Citizenship Immigration and
Multiculturalism
325 East Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6, Canada
Fax: +1 613 992 1920
Email: jason.kenney@parl.gc.ca or
Minister@cic.gc.ca
Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International believes the right to refuse to perform military service for reasons of conscience is part of freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as recognised in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Canada is a state party.

Amnesty International considers a conscientious objector to be any person who, for reasons of conscience or profound conviction, refuses to perform service in the armed forces. This can include refusal to participate in a particular war because one disagrees with its aims or the manner in which it is being waged, even if one does not oppose taking part in all wars.

Wherever such a person is detained or imprisoned solely for actions taken in consequence of these beliefs, Amnesty International considers that person to be a prisoner of conscience. Amnesty International also considers conscientious objectors to be prisoners of conscience if they are imprisoned for leaving the armed forces without authorization for reasons of conscience, if they have first taken reasonable steps to secure release from military obligations, or if it was in practice impossible for them to do so.

Amnesty International opposes the forcible return of any person to any country where he or she would face a substantial risk of becoming a prisoner of conscience.

Names: Kimberly Rivera

Gender: f

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