

Urgent web action 04/04 UPDATE – MDE 14/039/2004

Bring justice to thousands still illegally detained in Iraq

Thousands of men, women and children are still held without charge or trial in detention facilities in Iraq, including Abu Ghraib, after the official end of the occupation on 28 June 2004. Some detainees are housed in tents, and are suffering under the intense heat of Iraq's summer.

Thousands of men, women and children are still held without charge or trial in detention facilities in Iraq, including Abu Ghraib, after the official end of the occupation on 28 June 2004. Some detainees are housed in tents, and are suffering under the intense heat of Iraq's summer.

The cases of Nahla Hafez Ahmad, a mother of four, and her sister Huda are typical. Nahla was detained by US troops in the al-A'dhamiya neighbourhood of Baghdad in November 2003; when Huda went to look for her, she too was taken into detention. Others in their family are also believed to have been detained, including their brother Ayad, who reportedly died in custody in December 2003. Nahla, whose health is said to be fragile, and Huda were not seen by a lawyer for more than six months. Although Huda and Nahla were released on 17 July, thousands of others remain in detention without charge or trial.

The Iraqi authorities must act now to address the injustices inflicted on Nahla, Huda and all those illegally detained in Iraq.

TAKE ACTION

Write to the Iraqi government, urging that it respects the human rights of those held in Abu Ghraib and other places of detention across the country. You could base your letters on the following example:

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear

I am deeply concerned that, weeks after the transfer of power to your government, thousands of people are still held without charge in your country.

Your government must ensure that all prisoners and detainees in Iraq are informed promptly of the reasons of their detention; that they are brought promptly before an independent judicial authority; that they have access to their relatives, lawyers and doctors without delay; that all complaints of torture are promptly, impartially and effectively investigated and that the methods and findings of such investigations are made public.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

APPEALS TO

Dr. Iyad ‘Allawi
Prime Minister
Interim Government of Iraq
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma’aridh)
Baghdad, Iraq
Salutation: Your Excellency

Also...

Go to the US Department of Defence website [[LINK TO http://www.defenselink.mil/faq/comment.html.](http://www.defenselink.mil/faq/comment.html)], and call on the US authorities to launch full, impartial and public investigations into the human rights abuses committed during the occupation of Iraq, including the torture and ill-treatment of detainees in Abu Ghraib.

IMAGE CAPTION

Iraqi female prisoner works prayer beads through cell bars at Abu Ghraib Prison
© AP Graphics Bank