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Iraq : Briefing by Amnesty International to the Security Council

In an oral briefing to the members of the UN Security Council, Amnesty International today raised its concerns about the current situation in Iraq and made a number of proposals to ensure the immediate and long-term protection of human rights of the Iraqi people.

"The immediate challenge for the Security Council is to ensure the respect of the laws of war, including accountability for violations," Amnesty International said.

"The broader task is to secure order and ensure that occupying powers respect their obligations to all the people of Iraq."

The recommendations submitted to the Security Council include calling for:

- a moratorium on the use of cluster bombs;
- an end to the use of unlawful tactics by Iraqi forces;
- an investigation into abuses of international humanitarian law.

The organization stressed the need for the UN to play a leading role in addressing the question of impunity for past and current violations of human rights and humanitarian laws. The Security Council should:

- recommend the establishment of a UN commission of experts that would consult with Iraqi society and make proposals to end impunity;
- support the deployment of an effective human rights monitoring presence throughout the country.

"The most difficult challenge lies ahead: ensuring that in the post-conflict period human rights stand at the centre of the reconstruction effort," Amnesty International added.

"Addressing impunity for past violations, building a fair and effective justice system, ensuring respect for the rights of minorities and women, and insisting that the Iraqi people themselves drive the process forward, will be of central importance," Amnesty International concluded.

For comment, or to obtain a copy of the briefing, please contact Alistair Hodgett on +1 202 544 0200.

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