

PUBLIC

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27 March 2006

UA 68/06 Fear for safety / fear of extrajudicial killing

IRAQ/JORDAN 88 Palestinian refugees, including 42 children

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Eighty-eight Palestinian refugees, including 42 children, have been stranded near the Iraqi/Jordanian border since 19 March. They have fled the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, where many of the group had lived for decades, following an increase in killings and "disappearances" of Palestinians living there. Jordan has denied the group entry to Jordanian territory, in violation of its obligations under international law. Under the internationally-recognized principle of *non-refoulement*, Jordan has an obligation not to reject individuals at its borders if they are fleeing a country where they risk persecution or where their life or freedom is at risk.

The group is currently living in tents in the desert on the Iraqi side of the Iraqi/Jordanian border. The group is dependent for food and water on the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society.

According to reports, 12 Palestinians have been killed in Baghdad during the first three weeks of March, and an unknown number have "disappeared". These killings and "disappearances" have reportedly increased since the invasion of Iraq in April 2003, indicating a clear failure on the part of the Iraqi authorities to provide adequate protection for Palestinians living in the country. In 2005 the Minister of Displacement and Migration is reported to have said that Palestinians were not welcome in Iraq and should leave the country. More recently, in the aftermath of the bomb attack against a Shi'a Muslim holy shrine in the city of Samarra, north of Baghdad, on 22 February 2006, Palestinians were targeted in the ensuing sectarian violence. The Palestinians claim they are being targeted because they are associated with the insurgency. The Palestinians had enjoyed a privileged position under Saddam Hussain, who subsidised their schooling and health care.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

A group of approximately 190 Iranian Kurdish refugees, including 86 children, have been living on the Iraqi side of the Iraqi/Jordanian border for nearly a year, surviving in very difficult conditions in the desert. They had been living in the Al-Tash refugee camp in Iraq for approximately 27 years, and attempted to flee Iraq in 2005 and enter Jordan. They cite fears of their safety in Iraq as the reason for which they are seeking to enter Jordan. The Al-Tash refugee camp was reportedly attacked by armed groups, which led to the death of 12 refugees. The Jordanian authorities have refused to let them enter Jordan. Jordan has allowed at least 1,500 non-Iraqi refugees from Iraq to enter the country in 2003 and live in refugee camps, but has not allowed them to leave the camps. Hundreds have been resettled in other countries but 495 remain confined to the Ruweished refugee camp.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Arabic, or your own language:**

To the Iraqi authorities:

- urging them ensure that all Palestinians in Iraq are afforded adequate protection against targeted armed attacks, killings, disappearances, and other human rights violations;
- calling for investigations into all cases of targeted armed attacks, killings, and disappearances against Palestinians in Iraq and to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.
- calling for guarantees that the 88 Palestinian refugees, the 190 Iranian Kurdish refugees and all those stranded on the Iraqi/Jordanian border have adequate food, water, shelter, and medical assistance.

To the Jordanian authorities:

- calling on them to give the group of 88 Palestinians access to Jordanian territory, in accordance with its obligations under international law;
- urging them to allow other individuals fleeing Iraq due to persecution or threats to their lives access to Jordanian territory, including the group of 190 Iranian Kurds who have been stranded at the Iraqi/Jordanian border since 2005.

**APPEALS TO IRAQI AUTHORITIES:**

**Fax numbers and e-mail addresses for the Iraqi Prime Minister are not available. Please send appeals via the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country, asking them to forward your appeals to:**

Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, Dr. Ibrahim al-Ja'afari

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**Appeals can also be sent directly to:**

His Excellency, Baqir Jabr Solagh, Minister of Interior

**Fax: + 964 1 7180305 (Please keep trying; if you cannot get through please send appeals via the Iraqi diplomatic representative in your country)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:**

Ask for the Iraqi embassy or diplomatic representative in your country to send copies to the Acting Human Rights Minister, Nasreen Barwari.

**APPEALS TO JORDANIAN AUTHORITIES:**

His Majesty King 'Abdallah bin Hussein

Office of H.M. the King

Royal Palace

Amman

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Fax: + 962 6 462 7421**

**Email: [info@nic.gov.jo](mailto:info@nic.gov.jo)**

**Salutation: Your Majesty**

His Excellency, Mr Eid Fayeze

Minister of Interior

Ministry of Interior

PO Box 100

Amman

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

**Fax: + 962 6 560 6908**

**Email: [info@moi.gov.jo](mailto:info@moi.gov.jo)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of Iraq/Jordan accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 8 May 2006.