

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

AI index: MDE 14/029/2009  
10 September 2009

### **Iraq: Amnesty International urges Iraqi Prime Minister to address killings and detentions of Camp Ashraf residents**

Amnesty International has expressed its deep concern to Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki about killings and other abuses committed by Iraqi security forces when seizing control of Camp Ashraf in Diyala province, home to some 3,400 Iranian exiles, on 28-29 July 2009, and the continuing detention without charge or trial of 36 camp residents who have been held since then. At least nine camp residents were shot dead and others sustained serious injuries when Iraqi security forces stormed into the camp, driving vehicles into crowds of protesting residents and using live ammunition apparently without adequate justification.

In its letter to Prime Minister al-Maliki, Amnesty International urged him to establish immediately a full and independent investigation into the methods used by Iraqi security forces when taking control of Camp Ashraf, and to make its findings public as soon as possible. The organization urged him also to ensure that members of the security forces and other officials found responsible for using excessive force and committing serious human rights violations are immediately suspended from duty and are promptly brought to justice.

Amnesty International also expressed particular concern about 36 men who have been detained since Iraqi security forces took over the camp in late July and who are alleged to have been beaten and otherwise ill-treated before being moved to a police station at al-Khalis, a town some 25km from Camp Ashraf, where they are now being held without charge or trial. They are reported to be in poor health and to be maintaining a hunger strike in protest against their detention and ill-treatment. On 24 August, an investigative judge ordered their release, on the ground that they had no charges to answer, but local police refused to release them, in breach of Iraqi law. A public prosecutor in Baquba, Diyala province, is then reported to have appealed the investigative judge's release order, apparently as a means of justifying their continued detention, and the appeal is now awaiting determination by the Court of Cassation.

In its letter, Amnesty International urged the Prime Minister to intervene and ensure that the 36 detainees are released immediately and unconditionally unless they are to face recognizably criminal charges and brought to trial fairly and promptly, in accordance with international human rights standards. Amnesty International also urged the Iraqi Prime Minister to order an investigation into the failure by police at al-Khalis to comply with the judge's order for the release the 36 men, and to ensure that any police officers responsible for unlawful detentions are held to account.

Amnesty International reiterated to Prime Minister al-Maliki its opposition to any forcible return of Iranians, including the 36 detainees or other Camp Ashraf residents, to Iran in circumstances where they would be at risk of serious human rights violations, including torture and execution.

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