

News Service: 156/99
EXTERNAL

AI INDEX: MDE 14/07/99
17 August 1999

Austria: A Vienna city councillor has filed a complaint against Iraq's second most powerful figure, who is in hospital in the city since 6 August, accusing him of torture and executions. Ecologist lawmaker Peter Pilz filed the complaint with the Vienna courts against Ezzat Ibrahim, vice-chairman of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). Pilz told reporters that Ibrahim was responsible for the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and personally took part in attacks on the Kurdish population there (*Reuters News Agency Report, 16 August 1999*)

What is Amnesty International's position on this case?

No matter where an act of torture was committed and no matter the nationality of the suspected perpetrator or victim of torture, under international law, all states including Austria, must conduct an inquiry when a person alleged to have participated in torture is present in the territory of the state.

If satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the person has participated in torture the state must take measures to ensure the person's presence on its territory, and initiate proceedings to either try them or extradite the person to a state which will try them.

All proceedings against any person suspected of having participated in torture must meet international standards for fairness.