

## **Fear for the safety of 36 Camp Ashraf residents who are currently detained by the Iraqi security forces**

**Geneva, 13 August 2009. The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) expresses its utmost concern about the fate of the thirty six Camp Ashraf residents, who were detained following the raid by the Iraqi security forces on the camp, and call on the United States (US) authorities and the international community at large to take effective measures to protect Camp Ashraf residents.**

On 28 July 2009, the Iraqi security forces entered Camp Ashraf with bulldozers, and used grenades, teargas, water canons and pepper spray against Ashraf residents. At least eight people were killed and several injured during the raid. Furthermore, 36 residents were arrested and first taken to an unknown location before being transferred to a police station in the town of al-Khalis, outside Camp Ashraf. Reports indicate that they have been subjected to torture and other ill-treatment and some of them would be in need of urgent medical attention. OMCT remains deeply concerned for their safety all the more since they are at serious risk of being forcibly return to Iran where they could face further torture and ill-treatment as well as execution.

OMCT recalls that about 3,500 members of the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI), an Iranian opposition group that left Iran for political reason in order to escape persecution and to organise resistance against the Iranian regime, are living in Camp Ashraf, Iraq, since 1986. In April 2009, the Iraqi security forces surrounded the Camp following several statements by both Iranian and Iraqi officials that the PMOI should be expelled from Iraq and the camp closed, although their members have been designated as “protected persons” under Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, of which guarantees were clearly stipulated in various protocols signed with US forces.

In light of these events, OMCT reiterates its previous calls:

to the Iraqi authorities:

- to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of the 36 Camp Ashraf residents currently detained, including by providing immediate adequate medical assistance, and to order their immediate release in the absence of any legal charges that are consistent with international law and standards, or, if such charges exist, bring them before an impartial, independent, competent and fair tribunal and guarantee their procedural rights at all times;
- to not forcibly return any Camp Ashraf resident to Iran where they would be at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

to the United States (US) authorities:

- to ensure the effective protection of Camp Ashraf with the immediate transfer of the responsibility for its protection to the US forces.

to the United Nations (UN):

- to dispatch a representative to collect information on the situation in Camp Ashraf in order to inform thereon the relevant UN human rights bodies, including the Human Rights Council, and, if necessary, to immediately urge the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Iraq and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to set up a permanent presence in the camp in view of monitoring the situation;
- to ensure the effective protection of Camp Ashraf by establishing an international force in the camp;
- to order the conduct of an international investigation into these events.

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L'OMCT a son siège à Genève, en Suisse. Elle coordonne le réseau SOS-Torture composé de 282 organisations régionales et internationales dans 93 pays sur cinq continents.

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