



UNAMI continued concern over the humanitarian situation at Camp Ashraf

Baghdad-26 October 2009: During his recent meeting with representatives of the diplomatic community in Baghdad, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Iraq (SRSG) Ad Melkert expressed continued concern over the humanitarian situation at Camp Ashraf. He confirmed UNAMI's commitment for the duration of this critical period to monitor the situation in the Camp on daily basis.

Over the past few years the UNAMI and the High Commissioner on Human Rights have been closely monitoring the situation in Camp Ashraf, exploring possible assistance in reaching a resolution that is consistent with Iraq's legitimate sovereignty rights, and international law.

To this end, the United Nations has engaged with all parties concerned, including the Government of Iraq which has reiterated its commitment to abide by Iraqi and international laws when dealing with Camp Ashraf and its residents. UNAMI is working with the Government through various channels to assist in meeting this responsibility.

UNAMI's mandate includes the promotion of human rights in Iraq, and the Mission's Human Rights Office regularly assesses the situation in and around the camp. The UN continues to advocate that Camp Ashraf residents be protected from forcible deportation, expulsion or repatriation contrary to the non-refoulement principle.

At the same time the Camp Ashraf leadership has been urged to meet the requirement by individual inhabitants of the Camp to cooperate with Iraqi authorities on the basis of their voluntary expression of preference concerning their options for the future. UNHCR and other relevant UN agencies stand ready to provide any legal and social counseling in this regard in a fair and neutral environment.

Efforts are now needed on all sides to reduce tension and look for solutions. The UN calls on the international community to provide all possible assistance in this regard, including resettlement to third countries of those that want to leave the camp.