



EUROPEAN UNION

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Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the signature of Memorandum of Understanding regarding Camp Ashraf

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission made today the following statement:

"I was pleased to hear that the Government of Iraq and the United Nations have signed yesterday night a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the rules applying to the transfer of the residents of Camp Ashraf to a transit location, in order for UNHCR to proceed to the verification of their status and to facilitate their repatriation or resettlement. The EU fully supports this agreement and wishes to commend the good will and constructive spirit shown by all parties involved.

I would like to praise more particularly the Special representative of the UN Secretary General Martin Kobler for his persistent efforts to arrive at this promising result. I thank also the Government of Iraq for having showed the necessary flexibility, including with the timing. We count on it to ensure that this process takes place in an orderly way, avoiding violence or coercion. The safety of the Camp residents is under its responsibility and we count on it to discourage any provocation against them as from now.

I hope that the residents of Camp Ashraf will be prepared to respect the terms of this Memorandum and I encourage them and their leadership to cooperate fully in its implementation.

They should be reassured by the terms of the MOU and the commitment of UNAMI and the United States to ensure a robust monitoring. Thanks to this, the entire International Community will be able to follow closely the whole process and the EU intends to bring its support to this whole arrangement.

P R E S S

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UNHCR will soon be able to proceed to the interviews of Camp Ashraf residents and the verification of their status. This will greatly facilitate their repatriation to the home countries of those wishing to do so voluntarily and the resettlement of others in third countries.

The EU is prepared to help UNHCR in the fulfilment of this task and will continue to follow very closely the implementation of this agreement.”
