



Report to  
**United Nations Human Rights Council- Geneva**

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The Seventh Session of the Universal Periodic Review on Iraq  
The situation of women and children in Iraq



**Report of**  
**Women Solidarity for an Independent and Unified Iraq (WSIUI),**  
**And**  
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**Executive Summary**

In accordance with a decision taken by the occupier's run Coalition Provisional Authority(CPA) a ministry of Human Rights in Iraq was established on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sep 2003. However the role and remit of this governmental body, seems to be merely advisory and reactive. This ministry had been headed by several appointees but has so far failed to take any credible action in defence of human rights. The HR ministry has failed for example to stand up for human rights during government backed military operations often accompanied with campaigns of mass arrests up and down the country. The minister would occasionally express concerns about the HR abuses in US and Iraqi detention but in a guarded and non committal language.

After the 2005 elections, a committee for Human Rights was established inside the Iraqi parliament. The deputy head of this committee Dr. Harith Al Ubaidi was assassinated on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2009, after he accused the Iraqi Interior and Defence ministries of gross violations of human rights in their detention centres<sup>(1)</sup>. There is a Committee for Motherhood, Childhood and family in Iraqi Parliament; however this committee seems not to have any plans or strategies to improve the dire situation of women and children in today's Iraq.

There is also a Ministry for Women affairs (reported to have been abolished since February of this year) this ministry was no more than an under funded shop front according to the minister herself<sup>(2)</sup>.

To date these HR institutions failed to act in order to stop torture being practiced by security and defence forces with impunity or pinpoint the responsibility for this practice, even when the torturers' names and whereabouts are well known to the public, while these torturers are afforded all kinds of measures for their personal safety and security<sup>(3)</sup>.

Iraq is a signatory of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women- ratification 1986) and the Convention on the Right of the Child (ratification 1994). The Iraqi government must act in order to meet its legal obligations under these conventions.

In this report we aim to highlight the extent of human right abuses and the government's failure to protect ordinary Iraqis, with a special attention to the situation of women and children. We outline at the end of the report our recommendations. Please note the word 'refugee' is enclosed in single quotation marks throughout this report to indicate that displaced Iraqis do not have the internationally recognised status for displaced people.

**The political process exasperates the intolerable Human Rights situation:**

We note the rise of confessional politics promoted by the political factions who were empowered in the aftermath of the 2003 war on Iraq. Confessional politics is a phenomenon not known to have any consequence in Iraq's modern history. The political process designed by the CPA, gives priority and overwhelming weight to narrow identities at the expense of the interests of the whole nation. There is an atmosphere of constant and often violent power struggle amongst the political parties behind the concrete walls of the 'Green' Zone, while Iraqis survive from one day to the

next deprived of their very basic human rights<sup>(4)</sup>. This in our opinion is at the heart of divisive politics and civil strife.

We note the rise of a political class with no real know-how, or experience in good governance and its ethics. It seems these politicians are only concerned with short term interests and personal gains. Such politicians have no concern or motivation in advancing human rights or the long term interests of the nation.

The political parties contributing to the current political process, each has a semi official militia and or a security force advancing their own narrow agenda and protecting their interests, harassing and terrorising the ordinary citizens of Iraq with impunity. Moreover, every ministry has its own security force that does not respect national forces and often act outside the law. The office of the prime minister himself has a special protection force answerable directly and only to himself.

Besides, the occupation forces and the estimated 150 000 Private Military and Security contractors, both are immune from Iraqi law and are beyond the authority of the government of Iraq<sup>(5)</sup>. Such fragmentation of the security forces encourages lawlessness and chaos. This is very dangerous situation. It encourages a culture of 'War- Lordism' and in our opinion is at the heart of the break down of law and order in today's Iraq<sup>(6)</sup>.

There is talk of establishing a Commission for Human Rights in Iraq. All these official HR institutions mentioned above are toothless. They have not and we maintain will not play any role in improving human rights in Iraq especially when the rule of law is often ignored by members of the Iraqi Legislative and Executive bodies themselves. There is a pervasive lack of consequence and accountability inside the Iraqi Government itself.

A prime example is the current Finance Minister who was the Interior Minister under Ibrahim Jaffari's government. He has not faced any independent investigation to answer the credible allegations cited by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch regarding death squads operating within the ministry's forces -an issue the minister himself did not deny. However, Mr Bayan Jebr-Soulag denied any knowledge of prisoners being tortured inside the main Interior Ministry's building in Baghdad, a woman amongst them<sup>(7)</sup>.

Another example is the Health minister and his deputies. Under their watch Baghdad hospitals and the central morgue became the playground of the militias answerable to the political party given the ministry under the sectarian and ethnic quota introduced by the CPA<sup>(8)</sup>.

In any democracy, such politicians would have been disgraced and ended up being punished for failing to discharge their duties in the least. Instead Soulag is now the Finance Minister and under his watch, Iraq has become the third most corrupt government in the world according to Transparency International.

Iraqi women once, one of the most emancipated in the region. Well educated and present in all professional walks of life, they played an active role and contributed to society's progress. Today, Iraqi women are backed into a corner between surviving the destruction of war and the feudalist and sectarian policies (in the name of religion) promoted by the political class empowered since 2003.

### **1. Equality and non discrimination**

On the issue of personal status law (family law), Iraq is well known to have one of the most advanced in the region developed over the last fifty years. Attempts of superseding this law with the introduction by powerful politicians of a deformed sectarian version of Sharia Islamic law were thwarted back in 2004. However, the realities of a country where the government is only present behind concrete walls and in the protection of private security companies where the law is not adhered to or respected, Iraqi civil law is also not enforced. We have a new phenomenon in Iraq not known for the last 70 years, temporary and unregistered marriages are now rife. Such marriages have no protection or guarantees for women and or their offspring. The majority of

women who acquiesce to temporary marriages, do so out of material necessity, in most cases it is a form of forced prostitution.

Issues of divorce, custody, children right to custody choice, contact and a divorced women's alimony are left to unaccountable religious figures empowered by the Iraqi government. Also in jeopardy are the achievements of Iraqi women for the last 70 years in terms of conditions of employment, sick and maternity leave, etc.

**Complicity in 'honour' crimes and rape:** Security forces' complicity is suspected in the stoning to death of Yazidi 17 year old Duaa Khalil Asswad in Ba'shiqua, North West of Mousel on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2007. Members of the local police force can be seen in the video of the stoning published by CNN standing around and looking on, as semi naked Duaa being pushed back on the ground as she tries to get away. This horrific incident is unheard of in the history of modern Iraq before 2003. The police officers in question escaped prosecution <sup>(9)</sup>.

No thorough investigation were carried out by the government in the numerous cases of 'honour killing' of women, especially in the three northern provinces of Sulaimaniya, Erbil and Dehouk. Moreover the Iraqi MP Mohamed al Dainy had declared back in 2007 that there were 190 complaints by Iraqi women of sexual assaults against the Iraqi security and defence forces. No appropriate action was taken to deal with the perpetrators and prevent such crimes from being repeated. We believe this figure to be only the tip of the iceberg.

## **2. Right to life, liberty and security of the person**

During 2006/2007 members of the Iraqi government failed to protect whole communities from death squads and organized criminal mafias. The government seemed to be busy finding excuses for its failures. The public's faith in the government's willingness to stop the terrorist acts is generally speaking nonexistent. The government's reaction to such acts is to go after its own political opponents by conducting campaigns of arbitrary arrests in the name of fighting terrorism. It is a well known fact that in any conflict situation, the first victims are defenceless women and children. Iraqi security and defence forces routinely violate international humanitarian law when they impose acts of collective punishment as they carry out a 'security operations'. US and Iraqi forces, put 'a ring of steel' around whole towns and villages, keeping out medical and humanitarian supplies, cutting off electricity and water and turning back ambulances. Such a situation was reported on CNN in parts of Baquba in July 2007. Densely populated areas are then subjected to heavy and relentless bombardment as the case was in Arab Jebour<sup>(10)</sup> where 100 000 pounds of explosives were dropped on the village in 10 days in Jan 2008, destroying completely whole neighbourhoods and wiping out whole families. The locals were then left to dig out the bodies from the rubble with their bare hands. No investigation was ever initiated by the Iraqi government into such incidents.

Regular and persistent complaints from Iraqi civilians of gross violations of human rights take place during dawn raids carried out by the US occupation forces and or the Iraqi security forces. Termed as 'excessive force' it can manifest itself in verbal and physical assaults of members of the family whose house being raided, beating, threats and even extra judicial execution<sup>(11)</sup>. Such humiliating treatment is generally reserved to male members of the family as a method of subjugating the female members of the household and terrorising them. However there are many documented cases of children and pregnant women being severely beaten as a result of assaults carried out by US and Iraqi forces <sup>(12)</sup>. In addition, families often complain that Jewellery, valuables, money, identity documents are routinely stolen during such raids. Such human rights violations are generally perpetrated by the raiding Iraqi forces often under the supervision and or protection of the US occupation forces.

Many Iraqi human rights organisations, noted the arrests and imprisonments of women in lieu of their men folk identified as suspects. A measure of collective punishment is imposed on whole

families, just because one member is under suspicion<sup>(13)</sup>. Apart from such behaviour being futile and imprudent, it is under international law considered to be a war crime. In the aftermath of unearthing the horrors of Abu Ghraib prison scandals, arresting women is seen as an attempt to bring shame to the whole family in their own communities.

Despite the ratification of the Status of Forces Agreement, reports of arrests carried out by the US occupation forces persist<sup>(14)</sup>.

It was noted that in the 12 months leading to the provincial elections in January 2009 there was a concerted campaign of arbitrary arrests in communities identified as 'not natural constituencies' for the players inside the political process. Those arrested did not exclude children, who like their adult counterparts were subjected to horrific torture and denied their legal rights. Mothers of these children, wives and or sisters of the detained who then go to the police stations or detention centres asking after their children or their men folk, are further subjected to humiliation by suggestions of sexual favours, or in other cases a ransom around

2 000-20 000 US dollars in return for her child/son/husband/brother freedom or in return for reducing mal treatment he suffers while in custody <sup>(3)</sup>.

A UNICEF report dated April 2008 stated that 1500 children were in official custody of Iraqi and US forces.

In some cases children are held prisoners in the same facility as adults, exposing them to more risks of assault and abuse. Media reports from Al Karkh children prison reveal a long list of mal treatment, abuse and rape <sup>(15)</sup>.

In August 2008 the minister for Human Rights Wijdan Micha'el admitted that there are no complete lists of names of detainees whether held by the government or the occupation forces. This is a basic prerequisite for monitoring the human rights situation in detention.

Mal treatment and torture at the hands of Iraqi forces belonging to the interior and defence ministries are routine and is practiced with complete impunity, reports by Amnesty international and Human Rights Watch has expressed concerns regarding this matter. Men and women prisoners are exposed to severe beatings rape and threats of rape, mock executions, being sodomised by batons, bone breaking, injecting prisoners with unknown substances, inflicting deliberate damage to internal organs such as the kidneys and the liver by standing on the prisoner's body..etc <sup>(3)</sup>.

Other methods used on Iraqi women detainees include being made to hear the screams and howling of male detainees being tortured <sup>(16)</sup>.

The Iraqi government has failed to protect civilians and stood by as militias, often intermingled in security forces carry out horrific acts of human rights violations. An example of such behaviour is the sickening attack on Maha and her family in Baquba on the 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006. Maha's father's attempts to lodge a complaint and retrieve his daughter were shunned by the local government and political parties' local representatives, he was advised to leave the country instead<sup>(17)</sup>.

In the North of Iraq the Assayish a Kurdish militia, has its own detention centres, which are out of bounds for the Iraqi government, international bodies and human rights organisations. There are grave concerns about this militia's ability to act outside the rule of law under the gaze of the Kurdish regional government <sup>(18)</sup>.

**Right to life:** The Iraqi government has sentenced 1000 Iraqi men and women to death since 2004. Human rights organizations have appealed for an immediate moratorium on the death penalty in Iraq, especially in view of the lack of trials conforming to the minimum of standards of fairness <sup>(19)</sup>. Human rights organizations have expressed grave concerns about detainees being held without charge or trial for prolonged periods of time in cramped and unhygienic conditions and without

proper access to medical treatment or legal representatives. This has caused riots in many prisons in Iraq<sup>(20)</sup>. While these men are in prolonged detention their women and children are left destitute.

### **Provision of basic services:**

Women and children are the prime victims of the Iraqi government's and the occupation's failures. Both parties tend to point the finger at each other or on other occasions both parties put the blame on 'elusive forces', completely ignoring their own moral and legal duties towards the Iraqi people. Iraqis are being denied their very basic human rights and their entitlements<sup>(4)</sup>.

The Iraqi government crippled by unprecedented corruption continues to fail the Iraqi people. And despite claims of vast improvement in the security situation in Iraq, such improvement has not translated into better provision of basic services for ordinary Iraqis.

The Iraqi government is not seen to be impartial when it comes to the provision humanitarian and of basic services, many Iraqis are deliberately deprived of their entitlements or are too fearful to approach the government offices demanding their rights<sup>(4)</sup>. Iraqis living in communities seen as not the natural constituencies for the political parties in the government are the ones at the sharp end of the government's deliberate neglect.

### **Education:**

92% of Iraqi children suffer from learning impediments, due to the violence and unstable situation created in Iraq according to Oxfam. This is an urgent and very important issue that is not getting enough attention from Iraqi officials. Instead the Education minister's security guards fired at students taking their end of secondary school exams in 2008<sup>(21)</sup>.

In 2006/7 Iraqi children in Baghdad and the surrounding areas had to step over dead bodies on their way to school. They witnessed wild dogs feeding on these bodies<sup>(22)</sup>. Sudden curfews and flare ups of violence also affected the children and interrupted their education. Iraqi children have to live from one major trauma to the next. Many children had to cope with abandoning their home, separating from their friends and their familiar surroundings to face an uncertain future as 'refugees' without income or proper support.

### **Interruption and disruption of Education:**

"...roughly two million Iraqi children face daily threats of poor nutrition, disease and lack of schooling." According to UNICEF. School closures due to curfews or lack of security. Schools are often used as a shelter for internally displaced communities or as a military base during military operations, therefore disrupting the children's education. Aerial bombardment by occupation forces caused severe structural damage to some schools in areas undergoing military operations. All these factors mean that the education system already teetering on the brink is further disrupted.

It is estimated that 43% of Iraqis live in abject poverty, children are in such cases sent to work instead of going to school, others go begging in market places. Such children work long hours and have no protection from exploitation and abuse. No protection from exposure to social ills such as child prostitution and substance abuse.

This particular problem is especially acute for 'refugee' children in the surrounding countries. Despite improvements in the access to education in Syria and Jordan for Iraqi children, the number of them not attending school is significant still. Children working illegally in Syria and Jordan are less likely to be caught, arrested or deported than the adults. Another factor is the expenses of provision of a uniform and stationary are beyond the means of their families' already meager resources. Displaced disabled children and those with special educational needs do not even register on the Iraqi government's concern scale. Nongovernmental organizations with limited funding are taking up this task upon themselves. Women Will Association an Iraqi

registered NGO in cooperation with local organizations has opened two centers in Syria one for training Iraqi teachers (themselves ‘refugees’), on education for special needs children and another centre for educating special needs displaced Iraqi children.

NGO and Media reports also speak of significant number of teachers leaving their jobs due to lack of security or becoming displaced persons as reported by IRIN. The Iraqi government has failed to provide temporary replacement for absent teachers. Education staff appointments had been officially frozen apart from those with good connections with the government or one of the government’s political parties, which is generally a pre requisite for applying to any government job. This had also affected the quality and continuity of children’s education.

Only 50% of school age Iraqi children are attending school <sup>(23)</sup>. There is a significant increase in illiteracy amongst females, this once stood at only 5% at the end of the seventies of the last century. There are an ever increasing number of girls kept out of school, due to lack of security or to families’ inability to meet the expenses involved in sending their daughters to school. We now have in the urban areas a generation of girls who are less educated than their mothers and grandmothers.

Despite the alleged relative improvement in the security situation, most functioning public schools lack adequate number of teaching staff, basic supplies, clean water and proper sanitation. No proper education facilities for children with special educational needs. No adequate education services for children with physical disabilities. Schools with such children are left to cope on their own.

The government is failing its duties in making schools a safe haven for children, let alone equipping them and staffing them adequately. It has failed to protect educationalists, it has failed to protect schools from the domination of militias who use it to propagate their indoctrination and as a recruitment grounds.

It is estimated that 70% of the 2.9 million internally displaced Iraqis are women and children according to Oxfam. In view of breakdown of law and order, such women and children are the most vulnerable to exploitation, kidnapping, trafficking <sup>(24)</sup>, forced prostitution and abuse. There are “three million female headed households in Iraq” according to the ICRC’s most recent report on Iraqi women. The government is failing to assist or have strategy for assisting such households.

Moreover 50% of externally displaced Iraqis are children according to the UNHCR and one third of ‘refugee’ households are headed by women, this is the group again is particularly vulnerable to exploitation. The Iraqi government, whose failures are largely responsible for the displacement of these people, is also failing the Iraqi ‘refugees’. There is no evidence of any support program run by the Iraqi government in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt, to where the most vulnerable ‘refugees’ fled.

### **Health:**

Humanitarian reports describe the state of the health care system in Iraq as ‘catastrophic’. The Iraqi government has failed to keep hospitals neutral and safe zones for injured and sick people. It has failed to protect the health professionals, 75% of them have left their jobs and some have fled the country <sup>(25)</sup>.

Hospitals were bombed from the air or deliberately damaged such as the flattening of the maternity ward in Al Qaim hospital in 2006 <sup>(26)</sup>.

Media reports on military campaigns conducted by US and Iraqi forces in Basra, Nassiriya and Sadr city in 2008, overseen by the prime minister himself, showed blatant disregard to human rights and international humanitarian laws.

Media reports showed targeting of ambulances, bombing of medical facilities and direct occupation of hospitals and preventing medical staff from carrying out their duties in treating sick and injured Iraqis.

In May 2008, Al Hakim hospital in Shu'la district of Baghdad was attacked by the Iraqi forces. They evacuated the sick and injured and occupied the facility preventing staff from carrying out their duties, according to the head of the hospital Dr. Yaseen Abdul Hasan Al Rikabbi. This is a blatant violation of International humanitarian law. A similar incident was recorded on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008 when US and Iraqi forces entered Rashad Mental hospital and occupied it according to Qassim Abdul Hadi, the Media Officer in Baghdad's Health Authority.

Women maternity care is sporadic and in some areas non-existent. Women have to travel long distances from their home to receive such services. Road closures and curfews means the route to the medical facility is even more difficult. Again the poorest sections of Iraqi society suffer the most<sup>(27)</sup>.

Under the previous regime: Iraq had 180 hospitals, 1394 public Health Centres and 402 Local Public Clinics. Despite UN sanctions these centres were functioning all be it inadequately and providing a much better service than the level public health service today.

In Iraq 90% of hospitals today "lack key resources including basic medical and surgical supplies" according to Oxfam.

There is no excuse for the lack of basic health supplies in Iraq's hospitals especially when private hospitals (a recent phenomenon) are adequately supplied.

In 2006/7, Baghdad hospitals and morgue were taken over by militias loyal to the then health minister. Ill and injured people kept out of hospital for fear of being arrested or killed on the spot by the sectarian militia. Women took up the job of claiming the dead bodies of their relations as their men folk feared being killed by the militia controlling the morgue. A prosecution of the officials considered responsible for all these horrific crimes has failed because of the lack of protection for witnesses.

Internally and externally displaced Iraqis are the most affected in terms of lack of access to public health services, women and children being the most vulnerable. No initiative by the Iraqi government to alleviate the suffering of those having to flee Iraq at a very short notice and in traumatic circumstances. The trauma of fleeing in all probabilities has caused or exacerbated their medical conditions.

The Iraqi government takes the stance of an NGO when it comes to serious factors affecting public health. Narmin Othman the Iraqi minister for the Environment admits that 350 locations in Iraq are contaminated due to the war's bombing and 140 000 Iraqis got Cancer due to exposure to Depleted Uranium<sup>(28)</sup>. Yet no action has so far been taken to neutralise or clean up these locations. DU seen as a weapon that causes cancers, childhood cancers and causes birth defects well past the date of impact, it is therefore an illegal weapon. Brave and hard working Iraqi doctors unaided and unsupported are documenting the cases of birth defects and monitoring cancer rates. Dr Jawad Al Ali an oncology specialist said that in 70% of cancer cases, the patient dies, despite good prognosis, due to the lack of necessary medical supplies<sup>(29)</sup>.

TV reports aired in May 2008 regarding the birth defects in the city of Fallujah in the aftermath of the sacking of the city in Nov 2004. Deformed babies are now born there at the rate 4-5 a week

<sup>(30)</sup>.

Moreover, children in Iraq continue to be exposed to dangers of unexploded ordnance and landmines.

The situation with access to clean water and proper sanitation is getting worse every year. Today 70% of Iraqis have no adequate access to clean water and 80% have no access to proper sanitation (Oxfam). Therefore Diarrhoea and water borne diseases are the main killers of infants in Iraq.

### **Orphans, Street and Unregistered children:**

Iraqi government figures state that Iraq today has 5 million orphans. We see no evidence of a strategy or concerted effort for a special assistance to orphaned children living with their surviving relations. There is no information from the government regarding protecting children left with no family members to host them.

As women increasingly give up on the provision of medical services, they regress to the days of early last century by giving birth at home. This is coupled with the fear of women in some sections of Iraqi society of approaching any government office. Such women see the government as a source of harm to their communities and their families.

The Iraqi government must tackle the increasing phenomenon of street children in the urban areas. Further more, the government through its local health authorities must make sure that all children are registered and able to get their health and education entitlements (31).

**Women and children of minority ethnic and religious groups:** Women and children in this group represent the most vulnerable section of Iraqi society, where the rule of law is not respected and adhered to. The government institutions that protected the rights of these minorities do not exist anymore. We have criminal mafias ruling the streets and the security forces are themselves corruptible and or complicit in crimes of kidnapping and ransom extraction. Iraqi society has always pride itself of being a melting pot of different ethnic and religious groups living together in harmony. There is a hemorrhage of Iraq's minority groups as they leave Iraq in droves. This will alter the fabric of Iraqi society and deprive it of their valuable role and their cultural contribution.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations:**

The Iraqi government's disrespect to the rule of law and neglect of the welfare and rights of the people makes it complicit in the creation of the intolerable human rights situation in Iraq today. There is no practical evidence that the training of Iraqi security forces offered by the UK and the US, so far has included respect for human rights. There is no strong and independent Iraqi judiciary an important institution for; justice, the rule of law and the protection of human rights. The Iraqi government is not seen to be attempting to protect ordinary Iraqis and their welfare. It is incredible that such abuse of human rights, such disregard for the interests of the nation, with corruption and nepotism should take place while the Iraqi government is effectively under the protection of the most powerful army in the world. Therefore Serious considerations must be given to initiatives such as 'Justice for Iraq' and the Transnational Foundation's Iraq Peace Plan proposal. There is a way forward what is lacking is motivation and the political will (32).

- 1- Parliament itself, an institution caught up in sectarianism and ethnic quotas. Members of this 'new institution' have been concerned mainly with their own welfare and security. Women in the parliament got elected as they claim on a platform of improving women rights. They have played no role in doing so. Not one woman MP protested against the practice of arresting women in lieu of their men folk. " One of the major shortcomings of women in office is their failure to represent the real life concerns of Iraqi women. Because of their commitment to party politics and the US political agenda in Iraq. They have been highly selective in their response to the plight of Iraqi women" (33).
- 2- The Iraqi government must heed calls of human rights and humanitarian NGOs. On the question of the dire humanitarian situation, the Iraqi government is again failing. It has evidently ignored recommendations offered by Oxfam for example to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Iraq that continues unabated. This is despite spokesmen of the government initially welcoming the report when it was first released. In July 2007.

The Iraqi government has also ignored suggestions put forwards by NGOs such as Women Will Association (WWA), in regards to refraining from separating Iraqi women from their families. Many media reports recent and in the past, showed that Iraqi women were being detained as a result of baseless accusations. WWA therefore wrote a detailed suggestion for a procedure that allows the government to pursue investigating the accusations in a proper manner without traumatizing the women and their families. The suggestion includes questioning the women in their own home in the presence of the local mayor and a legal representative. Not detaining the accused woman until she has been formally charged.

- 3- According to the Iraqi government's figures there are 1-2 million widows today (this figure stood at 300 000 before 2003), yet it is estimated that only 120 000 of them receive state aid. The Iraqi government has also stopped paying allowances for men injured/disabled and widows of the Iraq-Iran war, leaving their families destitute. The government must act as an impartial party, responsible for the welfare of all Iraqis <sup>(34)</sup>.
- 4- The Iraqi government must develop a well funded, comprehensive strategy for children's health care and education. A program of school building and expansion in order to reduce class sizes is imperative. On the question of the health services the infrastructure of an adequate health service is already in place, the government needs to protect, equip and maintain it.
- 5- Lack of resources is not an acceptable excuse for the neglect and continuing deterioration in the HR and humanitarian situation by any party. There is only rampant corruption, pervading lack of interest and political will. The oil exportation revenues for Iraq from 2005 through 2007 alone stood at \$96 billion.
- 6- We think that the ethnic and sectarian quotas that permeate down to government jobs at the lowest level at the expense of Iraq's technocrats and knowhow is a major factor for Iraq's deteriorating situation when it comes to the provision of basic services. Iraq has its own army of technocrats and professionals both men and women. These are one of the many riches of Iraq. Their expertise is desperately needed in today. Most of them have left Iraq or left their jobs because of what is seen as the ambivalence of the government while they are threatened, assassinated and terrorized out of the country <sup>(35)</sup>.
- 7- The occupiers, the Iraqi government, parliament, the judiciary, all the security and defence forces are all failing to protect the people and provide them with their basic entitlements. The UNAMI's reports have so far been of little consequence. It is imperative therefore to put together an international body that will act as the advocate of the Iraqi people's human rights. This body should be made out of countries that did not take part, supported or benefited from the war on Iraq in anyway shape or form. We also note that Iraq does not have a UN Rapporteur for human rights; this has been detrimental to the promotion and respect of human rights. We call for the appointment of such a Rapporteur as soon as possible.
- 8- The government must meet its obligations towards the internally and externally displaced Iraqis. There are proposals for allocating a portion of the oil revenues towards programs of assistance, protection and an active plan for facilitating their return to their homes and meeting their needs and entitlements while displaced <sup>(36)</sup>.
- 9- In order for the government to deal effectively with issues of domestic violence, it must first address the prevailing culture of disrespect of the law and violating human rights with impunity from the top level down.

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### **Testimonies:**

- 1) Attached the full testimony of torture victim Dr Muthana Abdullah
- 2) Bellow testimony from Baghdad, documented by WSIUI. For a young pregnant woman (19 years old) who had lost her first baby due to direct actions of the Iraqi government and occupation forces, this is just an example from many incidents happening every day.

### **الحادثة الاولى**

الاسم: ف القيسي

العمر: 19 سنة

المكان: الغزالية

التاريخ: 2006/12/15

تفاصيل الحادثة:-

تمت مداهمة منزل والدها في الغزالية من قبل قوات الحرس الوطني العراقي وقوات الاحتلال الامريكي وبعدد حوالي اربعين شخصا وفي الساعة الحادية عشرة ليلا تم بعدها مداهمة منزل ابنته بحثا عنه وقد فوجئت باقتحامهم بيتها وبالطريقة المهجبة والتي هي سمة من سمات قوات الاحتلال في انتهاك حرمان بيوت العراقيين . وكانت (ف) حاملاً في شهرها الرابع فسقطت فاقدة الوعي وعند استيقاظها كانت تحت اقدام قوات المحتل وهم يضربونها على ظهرها وهو يصرخون اين ابيك؟ وفي الوقت نفسه انتشرت القوى في كافة انحاء البيت قسم يكسرون الاثاث والقسم الاخر يضربون زوجها واخيها الصغير (عمره آنذاك 15 سنة) . لقد ادى هذا الحادث الى اجهاض طفلها الاول...مما أصابها بضرر لا يمحي من ذاكرتها فضلاً عن الأضرار الصحية المباشرة.. هذه الحادثة هي مجرد مثال من عشرات بل مئات الأمثلة المشابهة.