



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
25 February 2013

English only

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## Human Rights Council

Twenty-second session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

**Joint written statement\* submitted by the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (ISMUN), a non-governmental organization in general consultative status, the Union of Arab Jurists, the General Arab Women Federation (GAWF), the International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD), the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the United Towns Agency for the North-South Cooperation, the Indian Movement “Tupaj Amaru”, the Asian Women Human Rights Council, the Organisation pour la Communication en Afrique et de Promotion de la Coopération Economique Internationale - OCAPROCE International, the International Federation of University Women (IFUW), the Organisation Mondiale des Associations pour l'Education Prénatale (OMAEP), the World Wide Organization for Women (WOW), the Arab Lawyers Union, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, the World Peace Council, the Indian Council of South America (CISA), the International Human Rights Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM), International Educational Development, Inc. (IED), non-governmental organizations on the roster**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[11 February 2013]

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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

## **The impact of ten years of occupation on Iraqi children - 2003- 2013\***

The impact of ten years of occupation since 2003 on Iraqi children has been disastrous. Due to war and occupation in addition to the sanctions starting in 1990, Iraq has turned into one of the worst places for children in the Middle East and North Africa. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)<sup>1</sup> around 3.5 million children are living in poverty, 1.5 million under the age of five are undernourished and 100 infants die every day.

This report will focus on the violations by the occupying forces and Iraqi authorities of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Geneva, 12 August 1949,<sup>2</sup> and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Since the invasion in 2003, the US/UK occupying forces and the Iraqi authorities grossly failed to fulfil their most basic duties towards the children of Iraq in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Resolution 25/ Session 44, November 1989.<sup>3</sup> They should be held fully accountable for the harm they have inflicted upon the Iraqi children.

### **Children without parental care**

Due to the war and ten years of occupation the number of orphans in Iraq has drastically increased. A total of five million Iraqi orphans are reported by official government statistics.<sup>4</sup> About 500,000 of these orphans live on the streets without family or specialized institutions to take care of them.<sup>5</sup> Reports of the 'Sponsor Iraqi Children Foundation', show that about 1 out of 6 Iraqi children under the age of 18 is an orphan. Many orphans beg on the streets or sell water to support their widowed mothers or siblings. They are vulnerable to arrest for begging as well as to abuse by criminals, extremists and human traffickers.<sup>6</sup> This seriously violates Article 20 of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War that declares that children who cannot be looked after by their own family have the right to special care.

### **The tremendous suffering of refugee children**

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society estimates that more than 83 % of the displaced<sup>7</sup> persons in Iraq are women and children, and the majority of the children are under the age of 12.<sup>8</sup> According to (UNHCR), Iraqi refugees in Syria suffer from trauma, more than refugees

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<sup>1</sup> IRAQ: A bad place for children <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=93133>.

<sup>2</sup> Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/full/380>.

<sup>3</sup> The convention was ratified by 194 United Nations countries, except the USA and Somalia.

<sup>4</sup> Occupation's Toll: 5 Million Iraqi Children Orphaned - <http://www.alternet.org/waroniraq/70886/?page=entire>.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Souad N. Al-Azzawi <http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/IraqiChildrenSuffering2010.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> DC Area Foundation Reopens Baghdad Center for Street Children <http://www.sicfiraq.org/wp/news/>.

<sup>7</sup> The Government reported that there are an estimated 1,343,568 post-2006 Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq as of January 2011, with Baghdad hosting the largest number of IDPs with some 358,457 persons (62,374 families). UNAMI HR 2010 - <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/MENARegion/Pages/UNAMIHRRreports.aspx>.

<sup>8</sup> Women, children and youth in the Iraq crisis: a fact sheet January 2008.

from other recent conflicts elsewhere. A total of 89.5 % suffered from depression, 81.6 % from anxiety and 67.6 % from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.<sup>9</sup>

The problem of externally displaced children represents a serious humanitarian issue. Many of these families have no shelter, no finances, and no access to health care, education or security of any kind.<sup>10</sup>

A recent study reports that 43.6% of families left Iraq, 12.8% were forced to leave their residential areas due to a lack of services, security and law enforcement. Of the children in the study group 75.5% of them were forced to migrate from their living areas.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, 22.4% of the children could not maintain their education due to financial difficulties. Other children were forced into labour in order to help their families.

According to figures released by UNHCR surveys 20% of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 5% of returned refugees reported children to be missing. That means more than 93,500 children of internally displaced families are missing.<sup>12</sup>

All this seriously violates Article 22 of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which declares that children who cannot be looked after by their own family have the right to special care.

### **Drug abuse among children and adolescents**

Over the past ten years many children have dropped out of school and many of them, especially orphans, fallen to drug abuse. Prior to the 2003 US-led invasion, drug addiction among children was practically non-existent, yet by now many have turned to drugs to ease the pain and sufferings inflicted by the war.<sup>13</sup>

UNICEF reports have warned that there has been a 30 % addiction increase among children since 2005 and a nearly 10% increase during the last year. But the problem goes far beyond addiction. Many children are trapped in drug trade. Gangs typically target children who have lost beloved ones or are working in the streets. The dealers offer job and relief and the children fall easy victims to drug abuse.<sup>14</sup>

Experts complain that the children drug plight is ignored by the government. "The problem is worsened as the government neglects the chaotic situation children are living in," said Bayat, the psychologist. He notes that the only help children get comes from independent aid agencies and volunteers, who usually face a tough, sometimes dangerous, mission. "Security issues make it harder for volunteers to reach dependent children and offer help, as armed drug dealers can anytime take revenge against aid agents who try to take children off the streets."<sup>15</sup>

Immediate measures should have been taken in accordance with Article 33 of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, demanding

<sup>9</sup> SYRIA: UN research indicates high levels of trauma among Iraqi refugees  
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=76360>.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Souad N. Al-Azzawi <http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/IraqiChildrenSuffering2010.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Souad N. Al-Azzawi <http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/IraqiChildrenSuffering2010.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Always someone's mother or father, always someone's child. The missing persons of Iraq.

[Http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/Disappearances\\_missing\\_persons\\_in\\_Iraq.pdf](Http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/Disappearances_missing_persons_in_Iraq.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Iraq's Children Drug Addicts, Dealers , 25 December 2008 10:01 - <http://forums.understanding-islam.com/showthread.php?7464-Iraq-s-Children-Drug-Addicts-Dealers>.

<sup>14</sup> Iraq's Children Drug Addicts, Dealers, 25 December 2008 10:01 - <http://forums.understanding-islam.com/showthread.php?7464-Iraq-s-Children-Drug-Addicts-Dealers>.

<sup>15</sup> Iraq's Children Drug Addicts, Dealers , 25 December 2008 10:01 - <http://forums.understanding-islam.com/showthread.php?7464-Iraq-s-Children-Drug-Addicts-Dealers>.

that governments should take all measures possible to protect children from the use of harmful drugs and from being used in the drug trade.

### **Sexual exploitation of children**

The Organization for Women's Freedom in Iraq, an Iraqi NGO, estimates that about 4,000 women, one fifth of them under the age of 18, have disappeared in the first seven years after the war. A huge number of girls have been incarcerated for prostitution, in which they had been forced as modern day slaves. At this point the numbers of trafficked Iraqi teenagers is unknown. It may be between thousands and tens of thousands.<sup>16</sup> The invasion and instability that followed led to an environment where young women and girls became much more vulnerable to trafficking.<sup>17</sup>

The younger the girls the more lucrative the profits. The highest demand is for girls under the age of 16. According to OWW reports up to 65 %<sup>18</sup> among prostituted females are minor girls. The traffickers are aided by sophisticated criminal networks that forge documents and pay corrupt officials to remove impediments.<sup>19</sup> In some cases, women and girls request to remain in detention centers even after a sentence is complete, fearful that their families will kill them.<sup>20</sup>

British and U.S. authorities, whose forces' presence in Iraq was a contributing factor to the problem, hampered inquiries.<sup>21</sup> "The government has done little to combat trafficking in girls and women", a clinical researcher said, "there have been no prosecutions of criminals engaged in human trafficking, no comprehensive program to tackle the problem, and negligible support for victims, as noted above."<sup>22</sup>

The sexual exploitation of children seriously violates Article 34 of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which declares that governments should protect children from all forms of sexual abuse.

### **Psychologically traumatized children and adolescents due to the war**

The total collapse of Iraq's economy since 2003, the sectarian violence, and the killing of family members have deprived the children in Iraq of an unburdened childhood. They have to deal with family breakdowns, poverty, and a complete lack of security. Iraqi children are forced to assume income-generating roles when their families suffer from hunger and poverty. They are leaving school and deal with adult problems such as unemployment, manual labor, etc. Daily exposure to violence has affected their psychological development and behavior.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq <http://www.equalityiniraq.com/activities/117-prostitution-and-trafficking-of-women-and-girls-in-iraq>.

<sup>17</sup> Silent victims: Iraqi women trafficked for sex, Laura Smith-Spark, CNN November 10, 2011 -- Updated 1224 GMT (2024 HKT) <http://thecnnfreedomproject.blogs.cnn.com/2011/11/10/silent-victims-iraqi-women-trafficked-for-sex-report-says/>.

<sup>18</sup> In 2007 OWFI took on the challenge of investigating and documenting the extent of trafficking and prostitution within our outreach in Iraq . Listing of Prostitution and Trafficking houses Found in 2008 primarily addresses issues of prostitution and trafficking (P&T) in Baghdad and its suburbs.

<sup>19</sup> At a Crossroads , Human Rights in Iraq Eight Years after the US-Led Invasion <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iraq0211W.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> At a Crossroads, Human Rights in Iraq Eight Years after the US-Led Invasion <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iraq0211W.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Silent victims: *ibid*.

<sup>22</sup> At a Crossroads - Human Rights in Iraq Eight Years after the US-Led Invasion, Human Rights Watch <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iraq0211W.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> Dr. Souad N. Al-Azzawi <http://www.brussellstribunal.org/pdf/IraqiChildrenSuffering2010.pdf>.

According to the UN World Health Organization (WHO), the fourth leading cause of morbidity among Iraqis older than five years is “mental disorders,” which ranked higher than infectious disease.<sup>24</sup> Other Studies on mental disorders of children in Baghdad, Mosul, and Dohuk found that, 47% of primary school children had been exposed to major traumatic events during the previous 2 years, 14% had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>25</sup> Among adolescents 30% showed symptoms of PTSD. Almost none of them have received treatment.<sup>26</sup>

There is only one psychiatric hospital in the capital of 6 million people.<sup>27</sup> Iraqi psychiatrists, like most medical professionals, are suffering from training and funding shortages. No psychotherapy or crisis centers exist. Of all the statistics that describe the devastation wreaked upon Iraq by the illegal war, the figures describing the plight of Iraqi children are the most heart-wrenching.

According to Article 39 of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, children who have been neglected, abused or exploited should receive special help to physically and psychologically recover and reintegrate into society. Immediate measures need to be taken.

### **Discrimination against persons with disabilities**

According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), governments have to take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities. However, the absence of basic facilities, unsympathetic teachers and lack of tutoring, family protectiveness and the attitudes of society are likely to be insurmountable blocks for girls with disabilities.<sup>28</sup>

Reliable data on services for children with disabilities in Iraq is extremely limited. The UN sanctions led to a chronic lack of investment already by late 1991, when all four specialised training institutions and national coordinating institutions<sup>29</sup> were closed. Since 2003 the chronic lack of educational and training materials and the reduced educational capacity resulted in increased economic vulnerability of families with disabled children. Immediate measures should be taken.

### **The NGOs signatories to this statement call on the United Nations in general and the Human Rights Council in particular to:**

Ensure that all human rights violations in Iraq during the sanctions and the invasion and occupation be investigated by an international independent body.

<sup>24</sup> WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, Division of Health System and Services Development, Health Policy and Planning Unit, “Health Systems Profile: Iraq,” 2005.

<sup>25</sup> Mental health of Iraqi children Ali H Razokhi a, Issam K Taha b, Nezar Ismat Taib c, Sabah Sadik d, Naeema Al Gasseer [http://www.lancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(06\)69320-3/fulltext](http://www.lancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(06)69320-3/fulltext).

<sup>26</sup> Mental health of Iraqi children Ali H Razokhi a, Issam K Taha b, Nezar Ismat Taib c, Sabah Sadik d, Naeema Al Gasseer [http://www.lancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(06\)69320-3/fulltext](http://www.lancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(06)69320-3/fulltext).

<sup>27</sup> PROTESTERS PLEAD FOR PEACE Civilian toll: Iraqis exhibit more mental health problem, James Palmer, Chronicle Foreign Service Monday, March 19, 2007- <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/03/19/MNG06ONMIB1.DTL#ixzz1jcDU8UiD>.

<sup>28</sup> Girls education in Iraq, 2010 [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A3F345FEB60FD713C12577AD00341F90-Full\\_report.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/A3F345FEB60FD713C12577AD00341F90-Full_report.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> Referral Institutions and the National System for Disability Prevention and Early Detection).

All measures must be taken to end the current state of impunity, both within Iraq, and with regard to the culpability and responsibilities of the occupying powers in particular.

Appoint a UN Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights situation in Iraq.

Request the High Commissioner to present to the Council a detailed report on the Human Rights violations in Iraq since 2003 according to UNAMI and the civil society reports.

Request the Special Representative of UN Secretary General on violence against children, and the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography to take the situation of the Iraqi children in account in their reports.

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\* *BRussels* Tribunal, Arab Lawyers Association- UK, Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ), Association of Humanitarian Lawyers (AHL), The International League of Iraqi Academics (ILIA), The Iraqi Commission on Human Rights (ICHR), Women Will Association (WWA), Organization for Widows and Orphans (OWO), Ikraam Center for Human Rights, Belgian Peace Movement, Ligue camerounaise des droits de l'homme, Monitoring Net of Human Rights in Iraq (MHRI), Women Solidarity for an Independent and Unified Iraq, Geneva Global Media Centre, International Coalition against War Criminals (ICAWC), Medical Aid for the Third World, Association of Iraqi Diplomats (AID), The African Association of Human Rights (AAHR), Protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Arab World, Moroccan Association for the Right to a Fair Trial, Americans Against the War (France), General Federation of Iraqi Women (GFIW), The International Action Center (IAC), American Worker, Association of Iraqi Intellectuals and Academics, The International Network of Arab Human Rights NGOs, America In Solidarity, Federacion De Mujeres Cubanas, Association of Victims of American Occupation Prisons, International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON), International Lawyers.org, International Society of Iraqi Scientists, The Perdana Global Peace Foundation, Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War, Spanish Campaign against the Occupation and for Iraq Sovereignty- CEOSI, Arab Cause Solidarity Committee, Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, El Taller International, World Courts of Women, Center for Development Studies- India, Wariscrime.org, Action Center for Justice, 1% A Peace Army.org, A Bigger Tent.org, Agir contre la guerre (France), American Voices Abroad (Berlin, Germany), American Voices Abroad Military Project (Europe), Anti War Fair, Arizona Christian Peacemakers, Armbands for Peace, Arms Against War, Artists Against the War, Backbone Campaign, Be the Change, Become Active, Bike for Peace (Germany), Bill of Rights Defense Committee, Bird Dogger Org., Children of Iraq Association (UK),Bloomington Peace Action Coalition (IN), Blue State News Only, Boston Mobilization, Bring Democracy Back, Bring Them Home,Butterfly Gardeners Association, Citizens for Accountability on Iraq, California for Democracy, Camp Casey Blog, Camp U.S. Strike for Peace Campaign, Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran, Canada Watch, Carolina Peace Resource Center (SC), Cartoon Free America, Catalysts of Hope, Central Colorado Coalition on the Iraq War, Chester County Peace Movement (PA), Cindy Sheehan Org., Cities for Peace, Citizens for Legitimate Government, Citizens for Peace & Justice, Human Rights for all-Morocco, Christian Clergy For Impeachment.com, Clothing of the American Mind, Coalition Against Election Fraud, Coalition for Impeachment Now (COIN), Code Pink, the Iraqi Association for Human Rights (IAHR), Al-Basa'er Media Association, Consumers for Peace.org, Dhafir Trial.org, DC Anti-War Network.org, Democracy Action, Democracy for America Meetup (Birmingham, AL), The Democratic Activist, Democracy Rising.org, Democratic Underground, Human Resources (Tbilisi, Georgia), Democratic Renewal, Democrats.com, Earth Day.org, Earth Island Institute, East Cobb Democratic Alliance (Cobb County, GA), Eastern Long Island Democracy for America (NY), ECU Peace and Justice NC, Election Solar Bus, Environmentalists Against War, Envision a New America, Foundation for the Development of Fox Valley Citizens for Peace and Justice (IL), Global Exchange.org, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, Global Resistance Network, Gold Star Families for Peace, Grandmothers Against the War, Grandmothers for Peace, Grass Roots Impeachment, Grass Roots Impeachment Movement, Grassroots North shoreWI, Green Delaware, Hawaii CD-01 Impeachment Action Coalition, Historians Against the War, Honk to

Impeach, Idriss Stelley Foundation, Impeach Bush Cheney, Independent Progressive Politics Network, Impeach Bush Coalition, Impeach Bush TV.org, Impeachbush-cheney.com, Impeach Central, Impeach for Peace - Marshall, TX, Impeachable Treason, Impeach Duh, Impeachment Sunday, Inform Progressive Virginia, International Socialist Organization, Impeach Bush Cheney Net, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Iraq Veterans Against the War - Kansas City, Justice Through Music, Lake Merritt Neighbours Organized for Peace (Oakland, CA), Latinos for America, Leader of the Free Word - a great screen saver, Liberal Democracy Alliance, Liberal Kids, LIBERTY TREE Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, Los Angeles National Impeachment Centre, Louisiana Activist Network, Marijuana Policy Project, Massachusetts Impeachment Coalition, Men's Project for Peace, Michael Moore Online.org, Michigan Peace Works, Military Families Against the War (UK), Military Free Zone, Stop the War Coalition (Bedford, UK), Plataforma Aturem la Guerra (Stop the War Catalonia), Million Musicians March, Mission Not Accomplished, Montgomery County Progressive Alliance (MD), Musicians and Fine Artists for World Peace, Muslims for Peace (Australia), National Lawyers Guild - Chicago chapter, National Lawyers Guild - Detroit & Michigan chapter, Northeast Impeachment Coalition, North Jersey Impeach Group (NJ), Northeast Georgia Peace Corner Group (Helen, GA), Northwest Ohio Peace Coalition, Northwest Progressive Institute (Pacific Northwest US), Not in Our Name.org, Not in Our Name (Aotearoa, New Zealand), Nyack Impeachment Initiative (NJ), Ohio Progressive Action Coalition, One Global Community, Olympia Citizens' Movement to Impeach Bush/Cheney (WA), One Million Reasons, Operation Cease Fire, Operation Impeachment, Orange County Grassroots (CA), Out of Iraq, Out of Iraq Bloggers Caucus, Patrick Henry Democratic Club, Patriotic Pulse, Patriots for Gore, Peace Action, Peace Action Wisconsin, Peace and Accountability, Peace Drum, Peace Majority, Peace Movement Aotearoa (New Zealand), Peace Reso.org, Peninsula Peace and Justice Center (Palo Alto, CA), People's Campaign for the Constitution, People Powered Impeachment, People's Email Network, People's Glorious Five Year Plan, Picnic to Impeach, Pixel4Peace.org, Playing in Traffic, PledgeToImpeach.org, Political Cooperative, Politics and Art, Progressive Action Alliance, Progressive Action Center, Progressive Avenues, Progressive Democrats of America, Progressive Democrats of Hawaii Project Filibuster, Project for the OLD American Century, Refusing to Kill.org, Rescue Our Democracy, Sacramento for Democracy (CA), St Pete for Peace (FL), Sampsonia Way, San Diego for Democracy, School of the Americas Watch, Sheehan for Congress, South Florida Impeachment Coalition, South Mountain Peace Action (Maplewood & South Orange, NJ), Springs Action Alliance (CO), Stop the War Coalition (UK), Students for Impeachment, Students Towards a New Direction (STAND), Summit County Progressive Democrats (OH), The Known UnKnowns, The Politically Incorrect Cabaret, The Rational Response Squad, Think Blue Dems, Time for Accountability, Toronto Coalition to Stop the War (Canada), Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International, True Blue Liberal.org, Trumansburg Impeachment (NY), Truth Empowered, Truthtelling Project, UC Nuclear, Underground Action Alliance, Unitarian Universalist Peace and Justice Group (Nantucket, MA), United Blue USA, United for Veterans (Wayne, MI), United Progressives, Upbeat Defiance, US Peace Memorial, US Tour of Duty: Iraq Veterans and Military Families Demand the Truth, Velvet Revolution, Vet Gulf March, Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27, Virginia Grassroots Coalition, Voters for Peace, We the People for Peace, We the People Network, We the People Now, We The People United Bangladesh.org, Peace Surge, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (WA), Stop the War (UK), U.S. Peace Council, World Can't Wait.org, World Prout Assembly, Komite Internazionale- Basque, Asociación Paz, Igualdad y Solidaridad Internacional, Arab Cause Solidarity Committee, Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, Málaga, Spain, Stop Fascism Action Network, The Asian Jurists Centre, Association of Human Rights Defenders in Iraq (AHRDI), The African Center for Human Rights (ACHR), Veterans for Peace, Your Declaration of Independence.org, Arab Lawyers Network-UK, Conservative Centre of Environmental & Reserves in Fallujah (CCERF), Willie Nelson Peace Research Institute, Studies Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, The Iraqi Centre for Human Rights, Association internationale des droits de l'homme, NGOs without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.