

Ensure minimum guarantees for Camp Liberty residents

Following the statement made in January and owing to the fact that unfortunately no improvement has been made, the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe calls on the Iraqi authorities to stop turning Camp Liberty into a prison. It also calls on the UN Secretary General to ensure the minimum guarantees required by the camp residents.

In spite of the lack of humanitarian and human rights standards, to date, 800 Ashraf residents have been moved to Camp Liberty in order to find a peaceful solution. But this camp is suffering from a serious shortage of drinking water and electricity. Open sewage has made the area terribly polluted and the danger to human health and many of the trailers are extremely badly damaged, making them unusable. Liberty residents are not allowed to leave the camp. They have no direct access to medical services nor to lawyers. There is a police station and nearly 150 armed Iraqi forces equipped with machine guns in this very limited area of half a square kilometre in which 3400 people have to live. Several surveillance cameras and eavesdropping devices have been installed in the camp, the output of which has been passed to the Iranian authorities to threaten the residents and their families.

The Committee urges the Iraqi government to implement the minimum guarantees demanded by the residents, including the removal of all armed units, surveillance cameras and eavesdropping devices from the camp; resolving the infrastructure problem, particularly regarding water, electricity and sewage; providing direct access to medical services, lawyers and UN monitors; allowing free movement or at least increasing the camp area; and providing the security of all residents until they leave Iraq preventing the arrest of even one resident.

We call on Council of Europe member and observer states to respond positively and rapidly to resettlement demands of Liberty and Ashraf residents.