



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH IRAQ

PRESIDENT

PRESS RELEASE

9th February 2013

Deadly mortar and missile attack this morning on Camp Liberty, Iraq

We are shocked by the appalling news of a deadly mortar and missile attack this morning on Camp Liberty, West of Baghdad. The attack has left at least 6 residents dead so far and 100 wounded.

It is more than one year since 3100 Iranian dissidents, members of the main Iranian opposition PMOI, were forced by the Iraqi Government, at the insistence of the UN Envoy in Iraq Martin Kobler and the US government, to move from Camp Ashraf to this camp. Camp Liberty, at only half a square kilometre in size, is 80 times smaller than Camp Ashraf and unlike Ashraf, there is no shelter and protection at this camp with the residents crammed into trailers that are jammed next to each other.

The residents and their legal representatives have time and again warned about the extreme vulnerability of people in Camp Liberty, but their fears were repeatedly discounted by the UN.

Commenting following the incident, Struan Stevenson MEP, President of European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with Iraq said: "Camp Liberty's atrocious prison-like conditions, its inadequate protection and lack of progress in relocating these innocent refugees and asylum seekers to third countries, further necessitates the return of these residents to Camp Ashraf until they can be taken out of Iraq to countries of safety. The US Government and the UN are directly responsible for the security and protection of these refugees and they have failed them miserably. I hold them fully accountable for this latest atrocity. The 3100 residents crammed into Camp Liberty are sitting ducks who can be murdered at will by Iraqis and their Iranian sponsors. We warned that this would happen and absolutely no notice was taken. I call on the newly appointed US Secretary of State John Kerry to take immediate action to get these people relocated to places of safety."

Stevenson also called on UNHCR to declare the refugee status of the residents of Camp Liberty immediately in order to protect their lives. He urged the UN High Commissioner, Antonio Guterres, to force the Iraqi government to relocate the residents of Liberty back to Ashraf without delay.

"This is a humanitarian necessity, a legal necessity, and an ethical necessity that the European Union, the U.S. government, and the United Nations must try immediately to make happen."

Struan Stevenson, MEP

President of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with Iraq

STRUAN STEVENSON, MEP

The European Parliament, ASP 12G306, Rue Wiertz, B - 1047 Brussels (Belgium)

Email: struan.stevenson@europarl.europa.eu Tel: +32-2 28 45710 Fax: +32-2 28 49710