



HEADQUARTERS
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE - IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09342-1400

October 7, 2005

MNFI-DCG

Ashraf, Iraq

To The PMOI General Secretary, Madame Sedigheh Hoseini and The Residents of Camp Ashraf

In June of 2004, the residents of Camp Ashraf were determined to be protected by the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention covering alien civilians in a territory of conflict.

Since that date, we believe that Coalition Forces and the residents of Camp Ashraf have greatly benefited from working together to ensure that the rights and protections provided by the Fourth Geneva Convention are enjoyed by the residents of Camp Ashraf, in the spirit of common humanitarianism.

As we approach the first anniversary of this legal determination, I would like to take this opportunity to review important rights and protections under international law that this determination provides to the residents of Camp Ashraf.

- i. The residents of Camp Ashraf have the right to protection from danger, violence, coercion, and intimidation, and to special protection for the dignity and rights of women;
- ii. They have the right to help in contacting their families outside Camp Ashraf, and their families have the right to help in contacting them;
- iii. They have the right to seek assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and from other international humanitarian organizations;
- iv. They have the right to freedom of thought, religion, expression, intra-community association, and political opinion; they also have the right to freedom from persecution and forced unpaid labor;
- v. They have the right to food, health care, and a quality of living which meets the standards of local residents of the territory in which they are protected;

- vi. They have the right to fair treatment under the law, in accordance with Iraqi domestic law and international standards;
- vii. They have the right to pursue employment opportunities and profit-making activities which are consistent with local laws and can be taken without compromising their overriding right to personal safety;
- viii. They have the right to speak with representatives of the Coalition, the Protecting Power, privately and with confidence in the Coalition's humanitarian interest in their situation;
- ix. They have the right to refuse to return to their country of nationality, regardless of their legal status in the country in which they are protected;
- x. They have the right to depart the territory of conflict at any time for their country of nationality or for any other country for which they possess valid travel documentation.

All of these rights are essential for the protection of the residents of Camp Ashraf, and under the terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and they cannot be renounced, either by the residents of Camp Ashraf or by Coalition Forces.

It is important that the residents of Camp Ashraf are aware of the rights they enjoy, and of the ways in which they are able to exercise those rights. It is also important that all residents of Camp Ashraf understand that they are free to depart Iraq at any time, and that Coalition Forces and international and humanitarian organizations stand ready and willing to assist them.

All residents of Camp Ashraf wishing to return to the country of their nationality are eligible for assistance from Coalition Forces, the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which have helped nearly 300 people return to Iran and other countries in recent months.


All residents of Camp Ashraf who do not wish to return to their country of nationality and instead wish to seek an individual or family refugee status determination, and individual or family claims for resettlement in a third country, can request that their cases be referred to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Coalition Forces remain committed to fulfilling the humanitarian mission of ensuring that the important rights provided by the Geneva Conventions – to safety and security, to freedom of thought, to food and shelter – are respected at Camp Ashraf.

Please do not hesitate to contact the JIATF Commander, or to speak to any of the men and women under my command who work alongside them at Camp Ashraf, if you have any questions or concerns about your situation.

Communication is one of the most important tools we have in ensuring that the rights provided to the residents of Camp Ashraf are enjoyed equally by all. We welcome conversation with all of the people of Ashraf, and the men and women under my command look forward to hearing your thoughts and concerns.

Very Respectfully,


William H. Brandenburg
Major General, US Army
Commanding