



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés



Camp New Iraq (formerly Camp Ashraf) residents and the determination of their refugee status claims*

- UNHCR has been for some time and remains ready to undertake verification and refugee status adjudication for the residents of Camp New Iraq (formerly Camp Ashraf) who are persons of concern. It has mobilized teams on the ground, and has put in place the necessary soft and hard ware support capabilities. Individual interviews will need to take place in a safe, neutral and confidential location.
- The stipulation of the Government of Iraq remains that these processes take place outside Camp New Iraq, in the new location which is being provisioned to enable the residents voluntarily to move there and to stay on a temporary basis in safe and decent conditions. UNHCR has been advising on the technicalities of improving the camp infrastructure.
- UNHCR attaches utmost importance to peaceful solutions being found, including that any relocation outside Camp New Iraq proceed on a voluntary basis, with freedom of movement the most desirable state at the site of relocation.
- UNHCR is currently looking at how to expedite verification and RSD processing so as to enable it to be done on an individual basis fairly, fully but also speedily, in the interests of gaining time against tight deadlines.

Background

- Camp residents who have submitted requests for refugee status are formally asylum-seekers under international law whose claims require adjudication. In the absence of a national system of adjudication in Iraq, UNHCR will consider these requests on an individual basis in a fair and efficient procedure. Each individual case will be judged on its merits and in accordance with international law.
- International law requires that asylum-seekers must be able to benefit from basic protection of their security and well-being. This includes protection against any expulsion or return to the frontiers of territories where their lives or freedom would be threatened (the *non-refoulement* principle).
- UNHCR, together with the Government of Iraq, UNAMI and other concerned actors, remains committed to finding solutions to this long-standing problem, including resettlement and/or relocation to third countries.

UNHCR
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* This document will be updated as needed.