

# Reporters Without Borders

[http://www.rsf.org/iraq-journalists-denied-entry-to-camp-09-04-2011\\_39996.html](http://www.rsf.org/iraq-journalists-denied-entry-to-camp-09-04-2011_39996.html)

Middle East & North Africa - Iraq

International probe

## EU calls for international observers to probe clashes in Camp Ashraf

12 April 2011

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European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said on 9 April that the EU was "deeply disturbed at reports of the use of force against Camp Ashraf residents in Iraq, resulting in casualties." Deploring the loss of life, Ashton called on the Iraqi government "to grant access to Camp Ashraf to independent international observers in order that they can provide a comprehensive picture of the situation." (Read her statement: [http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/fr/article\\_10934\\_fr.htm](http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/fr/article_10934_fr.htm))

According to information obtained by Reporters Without Borders, a young woman who was filming the events in Camp Ashraf, **Asieh Rakhshani**, and **Saba Haftbaradaran**, a journalist working for the satellite TV station *Iranntv.com*, were killed on 8 April. <http://www.youtube.com/user/iranntv?feature=chclk#p/u/69/qhMSiOo3p0M>

**The independent international observers who are sent to Iraq to investigate the events in Camp Ashraf must shed light on the circumstances of the deaths of these two young women, along with the deaths of all the other people killed by the Iraqi army in the course of the clashes of the past few days, Reporters Without Borders said. Those responsible must be punished. Impunity must not be the rule in Iraq today.**

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**09.04.2011 - Journalists denied entry to Camp Ashraf after Iraqi army attack**

**Reporters Without Borders condemns the news blackout imposed by the Iraqi authorities on events at Camp Ashraf, a camp in northern Iraq that houses 3,500 Iranian exiles. An attack by the Iraqi army yesterday reportedly resulted in the deaths of around 30 residents and many wounded.**

**"This news blackout is unacceptable," Reporters Without Borders said. "The security forces are denying journalists access to the camp to hide abuses committed against civilians. Anyone trying to take photographs of the clashes is being attacked in a systematic and targeted fashion."**

**According to several news organizations, the camp is surrounded by armoured vehicles and army trucks. Journalists have been forced to remain at the camp gates. No media personnel have been allowed inside.**

**Located 60 km west of the Iranian border and 120 km north of Baghdad, Camp Ashraf was set up in the 1980s to house members of the People's Mujahideen, a militant Iranian movement opposed to Iran's Islamic regime.**

**US forces began disarming them after the 2003 invasion. Since then the camp's residents have been protected under the Geneva Conventions. After overseeing the camp for six years, the US military handed over control to the Iraqi authorities in**

January 2009.

The Iraqi authorities have banned journalists from entering the camp since July 2009, following clashes between Iraqi security forces and the camp's residents (<http://en.rsf.org/iraq-journalists-detained-for-trying-to-05-08-2009,34012.html>). The residents accuse the Iraqi authorities of trying to please the Iranian government while the Iraqis blame claim the violence on the Mujahideen.

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