



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Iraq - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 4 and 6 August 2009

Treatment of failed asylum seekers

The *Freedom House* annual report issued in July 2009 covering events of 2008 says “Though many refugees returned to Iraq in the early months of 2008, about two million remained abroad as of August, and another 2.8 million remained displaced within Iraq. The government has indicated that it will remove internally displaced persons (IDPs) from property they do not own. In addition, water and electricity infrastructure continued to fall short in every province.” (Freedom House (16 July 2009) *Freedom in the World - Iraq (2009)*)

Commenting on refugees and IDPs a paper in July 2009 from the *Brookings Institution* says “Although a host of problems, including threats and tensions, still exist for returnees, in Baghdad there are reports of returnees relying upon local authorities to improve security– for example, reporting security incidents to security forces and to the Awakening councils–which mitigated the threats.” (Brookings Institution (2 July 2009) “*Going Home? Prospects And Pitfalls For Large-Scale Return Of Iraqis*”)

Page 12 of an *IOM* paper from May 2009 says “Priority needs nationwide for assessed returnees are food, non-food items, and fuel. However, returnee needs and conditions differ considerably from governorate to governorate and from district to district. Legal help and health needs are also listed as high priority.” (IOM (31 May 2009) *IOM Monitoring and Needs Assessment, Assessment of Iraqi Return, May 2009*)

In April 2009 the *UNHCR* issued a paper on Iraqi asylum seekers (UNHCR (April 2009) *UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines For Assessing The International Protection Needs Of Iraqi Asylum-Seekers*).

Also in April 2009 page 1 of a report by *Refugees International* says “The number of displaced Iraqis remains high, both inside the country and in neighboring ones. They remain reluctant to go back due to lack of security, the creation of ethnically cleansed neighborhoods, and poor government services” (Refugees International (7 April 2009) *Iraq: Preventing the Point of No Return*). Page 3 of this paper says

“Many people will still not return until they feel the root causes of the conflict have been addressed. They need to feel accepted by the community and provided with security guarantees. Baghdad, and indeed the rest of Iraq, resembles a large military base today. Each neighborhood is sealed off by walls, and people are unable to move freely when they choose.” (ibid)

Considering 'IDPs' section 2d of the *US Department of State* report published in February 2009 on events of 2008 says "According to information collected by UNHCR a total of 185,000 IDPs and 23,000 refugees returned during the year. Returns to neighborhoods were haphazard and lacked a comprehensive government plan for handling consequent displacement of squatters and were often marred by violence." (US Department of State (25 February 2009) *2008 Human Rights Report: Iraq*)

Commenting on Northern Iraq page 61 of a *HRW* report published in November 2008 says "The Turkish authorities detain Iraqis who have been deported or summarily expelled from Greece until they gather a sufficient number to fill a bus. After transporting them to the Habur crossing point on the Iraqi border, the Turkish authorities turn the Iraqis over to the Kurdish regional authorities.¹³⁷ According to the following testimonies, the Kurdish authorities sometimes imprison and abuse the returnees." (Human Rights Watch (26 November 2008) *Stuck in a Revolving Door, Iraqis and Other Asylum Seekers and Migrants at the Greece/Turkey Entrance to the European Union*)

No further information on this issue could be found among sources available to the RDC.

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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