



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Iraq - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 23 April 2010

Re: Information on women who refuse to wear the veil/Hijan

According to a report by the *United States Department of state*:

“Regardless of religious affiliation, women and girls were often threatened for refusing to wear the hijab, for dressing in Western-style clothing, or for failing to adhere sufficiently to strict interpretations of conservative Islamic norms governing public behavior. Numerous women, including Christians, reported opting to wear the hijab after being harassed for not doing so.” (United States Department of State (11 March 2010) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2009*)

A report by *Freedom House* States:

“Women continue to be harassed or attacked by insurgents, militias, and Iraqi security forces for not wearing *hijab* (head covering) or otherwise failing to observe the perpetrators' interpretation of proper Muslim attire. Women have also been victimized for driving and for walking or talking with unrelated males” (Freedom House (3 March 2010) *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa 2010 – Iraq*)

A report by the *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre* states;

“In Basra city, a higher incidence of such cases emanated from poorer districts such as al-Hayyaniyya, al-Qibla, al-Muhandiseen, al-Tannuma, al-Jumhuriyya and al-Hussein. Notes were reportedly found next to some victims' bodies, accusing them of adultery or of “un-Islamic” conduct, such as failure to follow certain dress codes or to veil appropriately. Several of these notes were allegedly ‘signed’ by groups operating under the banner of al-Amr bil-Ma’ruf wal-Nahi ‘an al-Munkar (The Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice), while others contained only references to orders having been issued to carry out the killings, reportedly by armed militia.” (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (4 March 2010) *Iraq: Little new displacement but in the region of 2.8 million Iraqis remain internally displaced*)

Reference

Freedom House (3 March 2010) *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa 2010 – Iraq*

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=printdoc&docid=4b990123c>

(Accessed 23 April 2010)

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (4 March 2010) *Iraq: Little new displacement but in the region of 2.8 million Iraqis remain internally displaced*

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4b90da1d2.pdf>

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United States Department of State (11 March 2010) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2009*

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=printdoc&docid=4b9e52ea6e>

(Accessed 23 April 2010)

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

All Africa

BBC News

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Danish Immigration Service

ECOI

IRIN News

LEXIS NEXIS

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

Relief Web

Google

Refugees International

UNHCR Refworld