

Basrah Directorate of Information's Raid

Coalition Army Units have ambushed the directorate of information and investigations in the Iraqi city of Basrah. The building was entered by the military personnel, the guards were all held at gun point when the military personnel freed 37 detained terrorists. The military personnel then went through files relating to these detainees and ordered them to leave the prison compound using vehicles belonging to the directorate. The military personnel also confiscated important documents relating to these terrorists and also funds held at the directorate as well as funds belonging to the guards. What is strange, they left behind paper cuttings indicating that this has taken place with the full knowledge and cooperation of the central and local government.

The people of Basrah deplore this illegal and irresponsible attack especially as the Country is going through a very difficult period, in which the National Government need every help and support it can get.

For this purpose we would like to clarify the following:

1. This is a true violation of Iraq's sovereignty and its elected government.
2. This comes as a set back at a time when the city of Basrah is preparing to take a lead over the security role from the Coalition forces.
3. This incident contravenes UN Resolution 1546, which stipulates that security is a joint responsibility between the Iraqis and the Coalition forces
4. The timing of this incident and others in Mosul and Diyala, where coalition forces released terrorist activist from custody, attacking a mosque in Baghdad and the killing of people praying at the Mustafa mosque, and the abduction of members of the local authority in Wasit province seems to feed into the thinking that Coalition forces are contributing to the state of unrest and instability!
5. These terrorists in Basra where detained in full compliance with all human rights legislation, they have not been subjected to any harm.
6. At least eleven of the freed detainees had already been charged with murder or kidnapping by the Iraqi judiciary.

Henceforth we call on the following:

1. A full investigation into this incident and to know who gave the go ahead for these coalition army units to act in this way. Iraq's prime minister Nuri Al Maliki has already said that the Iraqi Government will suspend work with the British forces until the perpetrators of this violation have been brought to account
2. It is important to seek to put in place a set of measures which would help to release tension and not to escalate the situation in Basrah
3. It is important to acknowledge that Iraq is for the Iraqis in the first instance, they will decide its destiny without external interference.
4. It is even more important that the security lead in Iraq is taken over by Iraqi personnel.

5. The Iraqi government needs to be open with the public about what is happening on the ground and some of the reasons why and how these security breaches are happening.

By: Basrah members of Parliaments