



Rome, 24-26<sup>th</sup> November 2006

## To stop the war and the violence in Iraq

Iraq today has become one of the most violent conflict areas in the world. With the escalating rate of terrorism, and the sectarian conflict that erupted since the aggressions on holy shrines in Samarra by the end of February 2006, the view tends towards gloomier picture in Iraq, the humanitarian situation deteriorating specifically around the centre of Iraq and Baghdad. A multilayered consequence of: the past decades of bloody dictatorship oppressions, and the US occupation policy of excessive force towards civilians, and its strategy of military, political and economic hegemony, in addition to regional conflict of interests, terrorists' militias growing control in Iraq, here are few facts on Iraqi Hell unleashed:

- The death toll for September and October, according to statistics were more than 7000 Iraqis, of which the majority are unarmed civilians who were tortured brutally before killing them.
- Unknown numbers of missing Iraqis,
- Targeting media personnel, 18 were killed in both Sept and November, which indicates a serious threat to expressions' freedom.
- Assassination of academia, and elites from university professors to doctors, lawyers, judges, think tanks, spreads waves of fear amongst their colleagues and families, causing them to flee the country in an unprecedented way, a thing that is threatening to create a vacuum and chaos in universities and schools, leading to closing them.
- The number of Iraqis fleeing the country during the past few months is estimated with 100 thousand per month. The total number of Migrant Iraqis in neighbouring countries since 2003 is exceeding one million and 600 thousand migrants.
- Ethnic minorities' increased immigration (Christians, Subbies of Mendaees) are one of alarming indicators, a number of their priests have been abducted and killed, the population of Subbies have decreased in Iraq from total of 13500 in 2001 to only 4000 in 2006,
- There are more than 420 thousand personnel who have been internally displaced as a result of the sectarian violence, since Feb 2006
- Women conditions in Iraq keep deteriorating, where the number of widows and single headed families by women are increasing, and women kidnapped, raped, and mutilated in addition to increasing incidents of assassination, and rise in honorary killing. The incidents described above are indicating endless acts of violence against women (domestic and social), the thing that will backlash on curbing women's role in civil and political life equally.

- Militias from different affiliation are systematically infiltrating Iraqi police forces and the national guards, supervising criminal and disguised kidnapping raids on governmental institutions and private companies, kidnapping hundreds of people in broad day light, as the incident of kidnapping nearly 140 employees from one of the institutions in the ministry of higher education. Breaking off the state of law and order will lead to chaotic and legislative of terrorism and rule of gangs that consequently crumble the fabric of Iraqi society, which based on ethnic, religious, sectarian, and literature pluralism.

### Civil Society role:

Under this difficult and painful situation, civil society in Iraq has prevailed, strategizing workshops, seminars and conferences, for capacity building, still alive and working with the grass root, government organizations, and CSO. In spite of the fact that most of the Iraqi civil society organizations are very new, most of them were formed after the fall of the former regime in April 9<sup>th</sup>. The groups of CSO have taken initiatives when the government couldn't, supported the political process through two elections and one referendum on the constitution, coordinated and took alliances to bridge the gap between CSO and decision makers. They are still functioning and working relentlessly amongst slices of society, challenging with determination and sacrifice against terrorism, insecurity and anarchy.

The extreme challenges that we face in Iraq, lead us to dedicate our efforts to:

1. Mobilize national identity amongst Iraqis.
2. Adopting dialogue as the only way for national reconciliation between Iraqis, based on citizenship, unity within diversity, non violence and human rights, unity of Iraq and it's national independence, to preserve the natural resources from waste and deceit and to bring persons who committed crimes against Iraqi people to judicial punishment.

### Recommendations:

Our choice is life not death, construction not destruction, peace not war, we urge the international community and the social movement in Mediterranean to work in solidarity with our people to stop the bleeding towards surviving the crisis by:

- Denounce terrorism and violence and support the call for end of violence in Iraq.
- Encouraging initiatives of conflict resolution and national reconciliation through dialogue and negotiation.
- Putting pressure on all international and regional parties to stop turning Iraq into a chronically hotspot of tension and yard of revenge and call them to resolve their conflicts in diplomatic ways, to come with understanding to improve the security situation and progressing the political process in Iraq and to achieve a universal peace process in Middle East.

- Schedule withdrawal of occupying forces that should be in parallel with building capacity of all government institutions, rule of law and dissolving all militias.
- Emphasizing on humanitarian needs and human conditions of Iraqi people in order to ensure their safety and their rights for human security.
- Building capacity of local civil society, enhancing its role in promoting the culture of non violence and respect of human rights and women human rights, fighting illiteracy, mobilizing public initiatives against fundamentalism and fanatics and fostering constructive dialogue.

The continuous explosive situation in Iraq would be detrimental not only to the Iraqi people, but also to countries in the region and the world security in general. For that, we call on your solidarity with us for life, liberty, justice and democracy.

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