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# Security Council

## SC/10472

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Security Council  
6675<sup>th</sup> Meeting (AM)

### **WITHDRAWAL OF UNITED STATES FORCES IN IRAQ AT YEAR'S END WILL GIVE IRAQIS CHANCE**

### **TO PROVE THEMSELVES, BUT ENTAILS MANY CHALLENGES, UN ENVOY TELLS SECURITY COUNCIL**

#### **Special Representative Warns against Underestimating Task Ahead, Especially On Security Front; Seeks Extended Deadline for Resettling Camp Ashraf's Residents**

Noting that Iraq had requested United Nations assistance in facilitating a peaceful and durable solution to the situation of Camp Ashraf, he said the Organization was working exhaustively to do so. However, the positions of the Government and the camp's residents and leadership remained far apart. The 31 December deadline set by the Government to relocate the camp's residents to another location until third-party resettlement countries were identified was fast approaching. The residents, who hoped to remain in the camp until the third-party countries were found, did not agree to be transferred to a location "without the protection of blue helmets".

"There is real danger of confrontation and even violence unless a mutually acceptable solution is achieved," he said, noting at the same time that the Government had agreed to give UNHCR its mandated role. It had also given assurances of its commitment to the principle of non-refoulement. He called on all concerned to act with restraint and flexibility to ensure that a peaceful solution was found.

To that end, he said UNAMI and UNHCR had formed a working group on Camp Ashraf that had frequently met with the Iraqi Government in recent weeks. UNAMI also continued to visit the camp on a regular basis, and the Secretary-General had spoken to Prime Minister Maliki on the matter. For its part, the United Nations was emphasizing that lives must be protected and that any forced action that resulted in bloodshed or loss of life would be ill-advised and unacceptable. Any workable solution must be mutually acceptable and respect Iraqi sovereignty and relevant international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. It must also respect the principle of non-refoulement.

He appealed to the Iraqi Government to extend the 31 December deadline to permit adequate time and space for a solution to be found. UNHCR also needed time to complete its verification and interview process for refugee status determination. He also appealed to the camp's leadership and residents to give serious consideration to the proposals under discussion and to refrain from provocation or violence. And, he appealed to the international community to step forward with resettlement offers. Finally, he welcomed Iran's readiness to receive those residents who voluntarily wanted to return with the assurance that their welfare and safety would be respected.

Turning to Camp Ashraf, he assured the Council that he did not want to force any people to return to Iran and encouraged other nationals to return to their countries of origin. However, because camp residents were

preventing Iraqi forces from entering, his Government could not confirm the situation within the camp. To that end, he said he needed the Council's help to address that concern, with a view to finding a permanent solution.

The meeting began at 10:05 a.m. and ended at 10:50 a.m.

#### Background

The Secretary-General remains concerned by reports of continued human rights violations in Iraq,

The situation in Camp Ashraf remains worrisome and a peaceful and durable solution was needed, the report says. That complex and sensitive matter requires full cooperation and support of all sides. He appeals to the Government to give Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees the time and neutral space it needs to interview and register camp residents for resettlement, and hopes the Government will be willing to show some timing for the camp's closure pending tangible progress in the relocation of residents outside Iraq before 31 December, the current announced closure date

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc10472.doc.htm>