



## **A future for Camp Ashraf's residents - 13:01:2012**



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### **High Representative/Vice President Catherine Ashton is actively engaged in a peaceful and orderly solution for Camp Ashraf in Iraq.**

Camp Ashraf is a camp of more than 3000 exiled members of the People's Mujahedin of Iran (PMOI), which is located some 60 kilometres north of Baghdad (Iraq). Camp Ashraf was until 2009 under the control of the US military, but has since been controlled by the Iraqi Government.

The European Union has given its full support to the work of UN Assistance Mission for Iraq and UNHCR to find a peaceful and orderly solution. High Representative/Vice President (HR/VP) Catherine Ashton appointed Ambassador Jean De Ruyt in September to work with the EU Member States, European Parliament, the Government of Iraq, the United Nations, the United States and other partners to help to solve the situation in Camp Ashraf in line with humanitarian and human rights principles.

Continuously and repeatedly, HR/VP Catherine Ashton has called on the Iraqi government to refrain from all violence and to fully respect the human rights of the camp's residents. She has also reiterated several times her call on the camp's residents and their leadership, as well as on EU Member States and third countries, to cooperate fully and without delay with the UN plan.

The EU-international community joint effort has contributed to the Government of Iraq's agreement to the UN plan, and to a peaceful solution for Camp Ashraf's residents.

Indeed, the Iraqi Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 25 December organising the transfer of the residents of Camp Ashraf to a transit location near Baghdad Airport, Camp Liberty.

Following the signature of the Memorandum HR/VP Catherine Ashton praised the Special representative of the UN Secretary General Martin Kobler for his persistent efforts to arrive at this promising result. She also thanked the Government of Iraq for having shown the necessary flexibility, including with the timing. *"We count on it to ensure that this process takes place in an orderly way, avoiding violence or coercion. The safety of the Camp residents is under its responsibility and we count on it to discourage any provocation against them as from now."*

UNHCR is now proceeding with identification, allowing those who so wish to return to their home countries, and facilitating the resettlement of others.

Prime Minister Maliki meanwhile has extended the deadline for the evacuation of Ashraf until the end of April 2012. The residents of the Camp and their leadership accepted to move to Camp Liberty and are currently discussing the modalities with UNAMI.



Camp Ashraf Gate © UN

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