

Date: October 22, 2024

To His Excellency President Abdul Latif Rashid,

President of the Republic of Iraq

Subject: Urgent Appeal to Halt Executions and Ensure Fair Legal Procedures

Dear President Rashid,

On behalf of the American Center for Justice (ACJ), I'm writing to express our deep concern regarding the increasing number of executions in Iraq. These actions raise serious human rights concerns and have the potential to destabilize the country, heightening societal divisions and fueling further unrest.

According to recent reports, in September, Iraqi authorities carried out one of the largest mass executions since 2003, with at least 50 detainees executed at Nasiriyah Central Prison. We are troubled by the lack of transparency in these cases, and there are credible claims that many of the individuals sentenced to death were forced to confess under torture. Judges and prosecutors have raised doubts about the validity of these convictions, citing questionable evidence and reliance on secret informants. Such practices indicate serious flaws in the judicial process, and we urge your administration to reassess these cases immediately.

Continuing with these executions runs counter to Iraq's international obligations, including its commitments under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This treaty guarantees the right to life and insists that the death penalty, where it exists, must be applied in strict accordance with due process and fair trial standards. Iraq's own Constitution also guarantees fair trials and the right to life, and these principles should be upheld in all cases.

Carrying out further executions risks worsening societal divisions and undermining public confidence in Iraq's justice system. It could lead to resentment and violence, further complicating efforts to achieve lasting peace and stability in the country.

In light of these concerns, we urge you to take immediate action:

1. Impose a moratorium on all pending executions and revoke current death sentences for a full and impartial review of each case.
2. Release any detainees for whom credible charges cannot be substantiated, and ensure that independent investigations are conducted into their arrests and trials.
3. Guarantee that all individuals facing the death penalty are provided fair trials that respect their legal rights, and give them the opportunity to fully defend themselves.
4. Provide compensation to families of individuals who have been unjustly executed or wrongfully imprisoned as part of Iraq's broader efforts to promote reconciliation.

By taking these steps, Iraq can demonstrate its commitment to human rights, rebuild public trust, and move toward a more peaceful and stable future. We believe that these actions will also strengthen the relationship between your government and the Iraqi people, fostering greater unity in the long run.

We urge you to give this urgent matter your full attention and look forward to seeing meaningful progress toward justice in Iraq.

Sincerely,

Latifa Jamel

President, American Center for Justice

Michigan, USA