

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO IRAQ

DENMARK

- Denmark is deeply concerned about the extensive use of the death penalty and the great number of executions carried out since the resumption of the practice in April 2009.
- The short period of time between the sentencing of the prisoner and the actual execution is also a source of concern, as is the limited access to judicial recourse for those sentenced to the death penalty.
- How does the Iraqi Government propose to improve the current situation on these issues?
- The situation for ethnic and religious minorities such as the Jezidis, the Baha'is and the Mandaeans is deeply worrisome.
- Minorities are being persecuted as heretics by militants without interference by the Government of Iraq – and in some cases with the apparent consent of the GoI.
- What is being done to secure these vulnerable groups from continued attacks and persecution?
- Denmark is troubled by the reports of widespread use of torture and other ill-treatment of detainees, including children, in Iraqi prisons and detention facilities.
- The government of Iraq bears the full responsibility for its prisons and detention facilities.
- How do you address the serious human rights violations in the prisons documented by numerous human rights organizations?

LATVIA

- According to the information by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 65 countries from different regions of the world have issued standing invitations to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Considering previous cooperation with special procedures mandate holders and despite some still pending requests by several special rapporteurs to visit Iraq - would your country consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council in the future?

SWEDEN

- Sweden very much regrets and is deeply concerned regarding the reintroduction of the death penalty in Iraq. Well above 100 persons have been executed since May 2009. There are credible reports that trials are not meeting international human rights standards and that confessions are being extracted using torture. Sweden is also concerned regarding the lack of transparency in investigations and court proceedings.
- Sweden considers the death penalty a cruel and inhuman punishment and a violation of the right to life and is convinced that the death penalty does not have any deterring effect. As a recommendation, Sweden urges the Government of Iraq to resume the *de facto* suspension of the death penalty pending its abolition, and to immediately launch independent and credible investigations into alleged cases of torture and hold those responsible to account and provide compensation and support to the victims.
- Sweden is deeply concerned regarding the protection of human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists. Exposed categories, among which killings and disappearances have been reported during 2009, include individuals working in women's organisations and persons advocating against prison conditions and torture. Insurgent groups have targeted female politicians, civil servants, journalists, and women's rights activists and advocates. Female lawyers representing women in personal status matters are particularly targeted, as well as women providing protection for vulnerable girls and women, such as those threatened with "honour killings".
- Further, Sweden is deeply concerned about reports regarding a persecution campaign targeting homosexual men in Iraq. During 2009, killings and brutal torture of men who are homosexual or not considered "manly" became widespread. It is believed that militias are the perpetrators. There are worrying accusations that Iraqi security forces have colluded and joined in the killings.
- Sweden would like to ask the Iraqi Government what measures it has undertaken to protect its population from such attacks and its plan to tackle these problems in the future?
- Sweden reiterates the importance it attaches to the fight against impunity and recommends the Government of Iraq to deepen its efforts to work to improve accountability structures with the view to eradicate impunity.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

- We would be grateful if you would provide information on the extent to which civil society was consulted in the preparation of your national report.
- Please could you inform us as to your plans to develop an independent national human rights institution operating in accordance with the Paris principles designed to guide the practice of such institutions?

- We welcome the commitment of the Iraqi Government to increase awareness of human rights among employees in the judicial system. What steps have been taken to ensure respect human rights by the Iraqi police force?
- Many Iraqis killed by the previous regime remain in mass graves; what steps is the Government of Iraq taking to identify the bodies and bring those responsible for these atrocities to justice?
- Could you please provide further information on the likely timetable for the opening of juvenile detention centres and additional female only prisons?
- How many men and women were executed by the state authorities in Iraq in 2009?
- What role does the Government of Iraq see for itself in developing Civil Society? What measures are in place to ensure that legislation regulating Civil Society activity meets international best practice?
- Could you please tell us what steps has the Government of Iraq taken to remove the 'honour' defence in murder cases?
- We would be grateful to know when Iraq will ratify the optional protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women?
- We would be grateful to know what criminal sentences does the Government of Iraq consider appropriate for law enforcement agents found guilty of torture?
- What measures are in place to protect Christian and other minority communities from attack? Are additional measures under consideration?
- Several Iraqi journalists have been murdered in recent years. Could you please tell us what steps have been taken by the Government of Iraq to protect journalists and promote freedom of expression?
