

August 3, 2021

Statement by KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy (OCIA)

KRG Heeds the Findings of the UNAMI/OHCHR's Report and Deplores the Detested Practice of Torture

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released a report on the status of torture in the Kurdistan Region. The preliminary commentary of the KRG Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy (OCIA) is attached to the report in the annex. OCIA has an arrangement with UNAMI/OHCHR to submit the final commentary in the next few days, due to the short time limit set by the latter.

KRG has embraced coherent policies and legislations to preserve individual liberty and dignity. The underpinning foundation of the legal framework in place is empowered by a robust policy-making process, fair execution, and consistent monitoring and enhancement by international counterparts and organizations.

Torture is a horrendous practice, and it is alien to the democratic values by which KRG governs. KRG strives to accommodate reformatory policies in the detention and prison facilities. Furthermore, the right of legal defence and family contact are indifferently upheld for the inmates.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, the visits to the detention and prison facilities have been considerably restricted, making the bureaucratic procedures to obtain permission for the visits more cumbersome. Nevertheless, there have been no shackles on UNAMI/OHCHR's requests to visit the facilities since January 2020, where the Covid-19 witnessed a moderate decline. Furthermore, KRG is willing to cooperate with the aforementioned counterparts to make further improvements, and it reiterates its commitment to materialize procedural safeguards for zero tolerance for torture across the Kurdistan Region.

KRG respects UNAMI/OHCHR's mandate for confidentiality. Nevertheless, for the end of broadening areas of cooperation and therefore for the efforts to be more productive, we request UNAMI/OHCHR to funnel down to some specifications, underlining the focused territorial scopes where, according to their findings, torture is noticed. This will help the government and the judicial authorities to swiftly identify the allegations and issue punitive measures for the perpetrators accordingly.

KRG has exhibited the embodiment of the crucial democratic values and has exemplified the consolidation of pillars of good governance. The legal proceedings solely rely on the laws and rules in place. KRG has a consistent and reciprocal connection with UN agencies, chief among them UNAMI/OHCHR, and looks forward to actualizing the required improvements and enhancements cooperatively.