

KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Council of Ministers

Office of the Coordinator for
International Advocacy



حکومه‌تی هه‌ریمی کوردستان - عێراق

هه‌نجومه‌نی وه‌زیران

ه‌ووسینگه‌ی بێکخه‌ری
ب‌اسپارده‌ نێوده‌وله‌تیه‌کان

Statement by KRG Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy (OCIA)

KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy Highlighted the Latest Human Rights Developments in a Press Conference

January 11, 2022

On January 11, 2022, Dr. Dindar Zebari, KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy held a press conference and underlined the key human rights developments in the Kurdistan Region.

Concerning the terrorist activities of ISIL, KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy stated that "more than 257 ISIL terrorist acts were recorded in Iraq in 2021, which collectively resulted in 387 martyrs, 518 wounded individuals, and 37 abductions. The types of incursions terrorists utilized included affirmative attacks, ambush, suicide bombings, body-trapped vehicle and motorcycle, IED (improvised explosive device), fake checkpoints, rockets, mortars, and abductions."

Regarding cross-border confrontations, Dr. Dindar Zebari stated that "216 airstrikes and 403 artillery shells have targeted bordering areas of the Kurdistan Region in 2021 and there have been a number of boots-on-the-ground operations", adding that "KRG requests the PKK and other armed elements to discontinue their provocations against the neighboring states from the KRG territories. Also, it calls upon neighboring countries to consider that civilians inhabit the border areas, which are currently exposed to bombardments and forced to flee their homes and abandon their farming lands."

With respect to the right to freedom of expression and fair trials, KRG Coordinator illustrated that "KRG embodies these elements in its governance which is characterized by offsetting the executive authority through a rigorous check-and-balance system and by dispersing power to a thriving civil society. KRG is a regional exemplar for essential democratic values, including the right of freedom of expression and media. It is nevertheless committed to influence, shape, and mold improvements where they are needed," adding that there is a clear split between the jurisdiction of the court and of the government. KRG respects the independence of the judiciary, committed to a coherent check-and-balance system, and cannot interfere in the judicial process.

KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Council of Ministers

**Office of the Coordinator for
International Advocacy**



حکومه‌تی هه‌ریمی کوردستان - عێراق

هه‌نجومه‌نی وه‌زیران

هه‌سینگی رێکخه‌ری
هه‌سپارده‌ نیوده‌وله‌تیه‌کان

The KRG continues to work with UNAMI and the OHCHR on media freedom, both in terms of wider policy and legislative changes as well as specific situations. "Yesterday, the representatives of the United States, European Union and its members, and Canada in Erbil welcomed the [recent report of UNAMI](#) to which the commentary of the KRG Office of the Coordinator is attached. The representatives took note of the latter's input and demonstrated support for joint endeavors to further advance human rights status", Zebaru remarked.

Dr. Dindar Zebari alluded to the issue of drug victims in the Kurdistan Region and asserted that "currently the overwhelming majority of the reformatory centers' population consists of victims of drug abuse. In Erbil, 3089 people were arrested in the past two years for involvement in drug trafficking and/or consumption. Among them, 75 were arrested for committing a felony by trading drugs; while the rest 3014 were arrested for consuming them. The international community should be more engaged to enrich the endeavors in combating this phenomenon. Serious efforts are deployed by the KRG to combat drug trafficking and implement rehabilitative measures. Nevertheless, kind support, insights, and expertise from our esteemed international counterparts are indispensable for the efforts to be fruitful."

On the unification of Peshmerga forces, Dr. Dindar stated that "four infantry brigades have come under the ultimate jurisdiction of the Ministry of Peshmerga in 2021. Furthermore, the First Reinforcement Unit has been unified and the Second Reinforcement Unit will be unified soon."

With regards to combating corruption, Zebari stated that 804 cases are in the phases of corroboration and investigation. Towards the end of 2021, 445 legal requests have been presented to the Integrity Commission. In total, 136 corruption cases have been referred to the court and in 2021, 94 cases reached the final phases in the judicial process."

In his final remarks, the KRG Coordinator stated that the KRG has a longstanding agreement with the International Committee of the Red Cross granting ICRC representatives an unrestricted access without advance notice to any place of detention in Kurdistan, and has offered the same access to UN human rights officials. Under this arrangement, towards May 2021 UNAMI has made 14 visits to detention facilities and interviewed 60 prisoners. We have invited European Union member states to support legal and judicial reforms in Kurdistan.