

**Official Statement by the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy  
Regarding the Arrest and Release of Omed Barshki**

On July 20th, 2023, Omed Barushki made derogatory remarks about the Kurdistan Regional Government in the Erbil appeal court building, in the presence of the media outlet, without providing substantiated evidence or a legal basis for his claims.

In light of the Kurdistan Region's current legal framework, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy consider that it is imperative to explain the circumstances of Omed Barshki's arrest and subsequent release as such violations significantly impact public trust in government institutions and public opinion.

The defamatory statements made by Mr. Barshki against the Kurdistan Regional Government fall under the category of "punishing the witnesses," as specified in Article 3 of Law of Principles No. 23 of 1971.

As per the amended Article 3 of the Principles Law No. 23 of 1971 in the Kurdistan Region, the act of accusing and defaming the Kurdistan Regional Government by the accused falls under this legal provision.

In accordance with the law, the special investigator possesses the authority to summon and prosecute the accused in exceptional circumstances. However, it is important to note that if the concerned party (the defamed person) does not complain within 24 hours, the accused will be released as stipulated by the law.

If the concerned party submit a complaint within the designated 24-hour period, the case would be referred to the special judge to determine the fate of the accused. Notably, the accused was released promptly as the relevant authorities, namely the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, did not file a complaint against him.