



ICRC

Baghdad, 16 December 2007
IQS 07E8098

Dear Mr Saffari,

Thank you for your email and for raising your concerns directly with us. We took note of the points you mentioned, and of those in the letters from Ashraf residents addressed to the ICRC.

We would like to provide you with the following feed-back, which you may share with residents of Ashraf, in particular with the authors of the letters addressed to us:

- The ICRC receives tracing requests from the families, and is not in a position to determine whether they are manipulated by anyone; this is a strictly humanitarian service.
- The ICRC transmits the tracing requests through the US/MNF-I in Ashraf, but leaves total freedom to the addressees in Ashraf to determine what to do: There is no obligation to receive the requests and to reply to the enquirers (the families in Iran). Neither does the ICRC request any confirmation of their presence in Ashraf from residents who don't want to communicate.
- It is likely that most families are generally aware of the communication facilities available to directly contact residents in Ashraf; however, hoping to restore contact, they chose to use whatever means are available, including the ICRC's. We are not in a position to reject their requests, as making that decision belongs to the addressees only.

We once more underline that we understand the concerns expressed, and in particular would like to stress again that there is absolutely no obligation on the side of the residents of Ashraf to receive the requests, reply to their relatives, or acknowledge their presence in Ashraf. This way, we believe that no undue pressure is exercised.

We would also hope to have the opportunity to meet you in the near future.

Looking forward to meeting you,

Yours sincerely,

Juan Pedro Schaerer
Head of Delegation

Mr Behzad Saffari
Iraq

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