We must save the seven Ashraf hostages

Conference at the UN

- I call on Navi Pillay to take the necessary urgent measures to save these hostages - Maryam Rajavi

- Premeditated crime against humanity was planned and executed in Ashraf - Sid Ahmed Ghozali

- It is a crime of the Prime Minister of a State. Because without it, there would be no order. And he must be blamed - Bernard Kouchner

- It is UN and U.S. obligation to secure the release of seven Ashraf hostages - Jean-Charles Rielle

Demonstration and hunger strike in Geneva ask UN to secure release of hostages

International conference in Geneva

- José Luis Zapatero: There must be a campaign for release of hostages who are suffering intolerable ordeal

- Giulio Terzi: The hostages are held by the torturers of the Iraqi and Iran’s governments

- Phillip Crowley: Security is a fundamental human right and predatory conduct of Iraq cannot be tolerated

- Horst Telschik: Such lack of security makes the government of Iraq responsible for this massacre

- Colonel Wesley Martin: The hostages can be immediately returned and the UN and the U.S. must maintain pressure
On September 1 at Ashraf, Iraqi forces massacred 52 persons and took seven others hostage, including six women. These hostages will be forcibly returned to Iran to be delivered to the religious dictatorship. They will be condemned to torture and death.

I came to Geneva to call on the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, to take urgent and necessary steps to save the lives of these hostages and it is incomprehensible why she has kept silence until now.

The first step is to call for their immediate release. Silence will aggravate the threat to their lives. We have no more time. According to the latest reliable information confirmed by several sources, they are held in a prison near Baghdad airport. They are in the hands of a force under the command of the Iraqi Prime Minister. This information has been confirmed and verified by several sources and some have directly seen the hostages. The government of Nouri al-Maliki denies their incarceration in order to prepare their forced return to Iran.

The mullahs’ regime seeks to keep the hostages by any and all means. Mullahs have confirmed the scenario to deliver the hostages to Tehran with Maliki. These seven people stayed in Ashraf with the written agreement of the United States and the UN as did the other 52 that were massacred on September 1st.

I have come here to warn that what has happened to the hostages, will happen to the other 3000 people in Camp Liberty.

From here I would like to call on the UN Secretary General not to keep silent and to demand of the Iraqi government to immediately release the hostages.

Had previous warnings been heeded, the Iraqi government would not have dared to carry out such a massive crime, and the 52 victims would have been alive today.

The reality is that the promise of ensuring security by the Iraqi government is nothing but an illusion. The real meaning of security by Iraq is more massacres.

Do the UN and its member states want to prevent another massacre or not? Now is the time to take practical and public steps.

1. Before anything else, the international community and especially the U.S. and the UN must take measures to free the hostages. The Iraqi government must realize that it cannot enjoy the extensive privileges of relations with the international community while at the same time committing the most egregious crimes such as massacres, kidnappings and hostage-taking.

2. Until all the residents have been transferred to Europe or the U.S., the only means of protecting them is the posting of a full-time UN monitoring team and a unit of Blue Helmet forces inside Camp Liberty to protect the residents. Without the presence of this third party at Liberty there can be no conceivable security. At the same time, the 17,500 protective T-walls must be installed at Liberty and the residents’ protective equipment, including vests, helmets and medical equipment, must be transferred to Liberty.

3. Property rights of the residents to their moveable and immovable assets as well as the right to sell their assets under the supervision of Senator Robert Torricelli, their legal representative, must be guaranteed.

4. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights must conduct an independent probe into the massacre at Ashraf in a set time limit. This would prevent future attacks.
It is a crime of the Prime Minister of a State. Because without it, there would be no order. And he must be blamed. And if the Americans have some honor, they will require that the seven hostages, six women and coincidentally a man be released, but certainly not given to Iran. This would be the top of the contradiction.

I said, it is a dangerous choice, but necessary, and admirable: People’s Mojahedin in favor of secularism. And democracy.

These are the words that have been broken along with the lives of 52 Camp Ashraf residents. Democracy, they [the criminals] do not want to hear about it. Secularism, they do not want to hear about it.

This crime is absolutely unbearable. And it is imperative that each government be alerted to respond to the Americans, to the United Nations. We need each of us to commit. And especially before it is too late.

This crime is unacceptable because it contains hatred towards secularism, struggle of women, and democracy.

Barbarism was unleashed in Ashraf on September 1. We have seen that the images were unsustainable. A true crime against humanity that must haunt all those and all those responsible for Ashraf and Liberty; the UN and the United States. They are six as hostages, they also have six victims in Ashraf. They fell. They fell to their thirst for freedom, democracy, secularism. These women had the responsibility for the camp. And what is unbearable to the mullahs’ regime is that they are living for this plan that promotes the opposite danger. And these people, these women also represent the Iranian people, for young people, for women, hope, great hope. We’re here to save the hostages who have been imprisoned for 20 days in Iraq for no reason. We must employ all our strengths.

Silence will heighten the threat to hostages’ lives. There is no time to Waste!

Maryam Rajavi

What happened on September 1 in Ashraf was a preplanned crime. Cowardly assassinations by the state. In addition to these 52 residents barbarically executed, seven residents including six women, were abducted. The Iraqi government has said nothing about the kidnappings and the location of the hostages. As information about it was revealed by the Iranian Resistance, the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights had to admit that these seven people are currently being held in custody. We must ensure the safety and security as well as the immediate release of the hostages. It is an obligation for the UN and the United States. Every moment extends detention of the hostages by Iraqi forces means that the hostages are being abused and tortured longer. Similarly, it is intolerable for the state to extradite the hostages to Iran.

The state is responsible for what happens on its territory. If the conduct of a State violates its international obligations, then it is responsible under international law. The Iraqi government is responsible in terms of international law because it is committed by written and oral assurances. « The facts speak for themselves », the facts that are the basis of the liability of Iraq under international law for what is clearly a crime against humanity.

This is a binding obligation to the Iraqi state, whether extradition, deportation or expulsion, the Iraqi state should not return to their country of origin or any other State, the people who would risk persecution, torture or death. There is a greater international responsibility to the international community in general to uphold the rule of law, deny impunity for those responsible for international crimes. For me, the law is clear about what is happening in Ashraf and Iraq. But justice requires more than the clarity of the law. It requires action.

Ashraf is a highly fortified camp where nobody could penetrate into the camp without the active preparation and support of the Iraqi Police and Army. There are observation towers in every corner of the camp. Nothing that happened in Ashraf escaped them. When I hear that there are doubts raised about who made the recent attack on Ashraf, it offends me. It was me who did the fact finding on April 2011 attack. They tried to put the blame on the Ashrafis residents, but they eventually admitted that it was they who did it. Nothing that happened to the Ashrafis is a secret to UNAMI. It was done by the Iraqi Army coordinated by the Prime Minister’s office ordered by Falleh Fayaz the National Security adviser. My counterparts in the American embassy also tried to hide the realities. The report about the massacre of April 2011 was sent here to Geneva in irregular manner because I was not allowed to send the report through the normal channels. There is no way for UNAMI and US embassy not to know where the hostages are. When the 36 hostages in 2009 were taken from Al-Khalis, they disappeared and I followed them where they were. I went to visit them in the presence of the Iraqi security officers. I told them now you are my neighbors and I will visit you every day. Next day, they were removed.

MEK is among democratic organizations fighting against the fundamentalist and theocratic regime that is in place in Iran, and probably one of the few to have survived. It is a democratic organization, a secular organization, and an organization that gives women their place. The President is a woman. It is a symbol.

For there is one point on which I think it is useful to emphasize again, that coincidentally, among the hostages, there are six women, and one man. Why six women? They were least likely at the camp. Many were slaughtered. We kept six women, of course, to deliver to Iran.

The UN commissioner for Human Rights is a woman, I think maybe it is an additional requirement, if possible, to do everything that is possible for these women to gain their freedom, and escape what awaits in Iran.

It is a symbol.

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Francois Colcombet, Former French magistrate and deputy

Dr. Jean-Charles Rielle, ember of the council of Geneva

Tahar Boumedra, Former head of Ashraf folder

Christiane Perreux, Presidency member of the Constituent Assembly in Geneva

Gil Goodwin, Professor of Humanitarian Law at the University of Geneva
Attack on camp Ashraf:
Bernard Kouchner accuses the
Iraqi Prime Minister

By Alain Jourdan

Former French Foreign Minister suspects Nouri Maliki was behind the operation that killed 52 people in a camp of Iranian exiles.

Tdg.Ch, Sept. 19 - Former French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner was in Geneva this morning where he attended a meeting in support of Iranian opposition National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI). Sitting next to the President of the NCRI, Maryam Rajavi, Bernard Kouchner denounced the inaction of the UN and the U.S. after the deadly attack against Camp Ashraf in Iraq on September 1. 52 residents were executed by commandos who attacked the survivors even in the operating room.

The former minister, along with several other personalities, denounced the attack as a crime against humanity. Bernard Kouchner said this “barbarism” was the “crime of a Prime Minister and a State”, directly accusing the Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki, in complicity with Iran, suspected to be the sponsor of this operation.

Today, seven residents of Camp Ashraf, held by Iraqi forces, may be deported to Iran. Such an extradition would be tantamount to signing their death warrant. The President of the NCRI, Maryam Rajavi urged the UN and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay to make every effort to save the lives of these seven hostages.

Maryam Rajavi asked Navi Pillay to investigate the massacre at Ashraf

September 19 - Another account of Iran was expressed yesterday by the President of the National Council of Resistance of Iran. She called for an investigation by the High Commissioner for Human Rights into the massacre of 52 Iranian refugees in Camp Ashraf in Iraq. On September 1, Iraqi commandos executed 52 activists. yesterday in Geneva, Maryam Rajavi denounced the planned massacre as a crime against humanity.

Maryam Rajavi: The United States had given written guarantees for the safety and protection of these persons. The UN and Ms. Pillay have a responsibility to protect these people. These seven hostages, as the other 52 who were murdered on September 1, remained in Ashraf based on the written agreement of the United States and the UN. From here I call on the Secretary General of the UN not to remain silent and ask the Iraqi Prime Minister to immediately release the hostages.

French, Algerian ex-foreign ministers say Iranian dissidents massacred, 7 taken hostage

September 19, 2013

The Washington Post

GENEVA — Two former foreign ministers of France and Algeria say a Sept. 1 attack in Iraq that killed 52 members of an Iranian dissident group was a premeditated massacre, and the United Nations must press for the release of seven more who had taken hostage while seeking asylum.

Ex-foreign ministers Bernard Kouchner of France and Sid Ahmed Ghozali of Algeria are calling for a thorough international probe into the killings at Iraq’s Camp Ashraf, the longtime home for members of the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, which strongly opposes Iran’s clerical regime.

They told a public meeting Thursday at the U.N. in Geneva that the killings represent a crime against humanity and the missing seven are in grave danger.

The dissidents accuse Iraqi security forces of carrying out the killings, but Baghdad denies involvement.
The resistance that embodies the “resounding no” to religious fascism

Maryam Rajavi

September 1 was a significant and pivotal moment in Iran’s political scene and in the history of resistance for freedom. During this struggle, those brave women and men persevered empty-handed until the last moment of their shining lives. They were the greatest symbols of the notion of “resistance at any cost,” who fundamentally rendered void the path of surrender and weakness and resolutely renounced it.

Over the past 10 years, despite facing an inhumane siege, despite undergoing 670 days of psychological torture with 320 loudspeakers, and despite being the targets of numerous military and terrorist attacks, the same PMOI and army of liberation, while empty-handed, kept alive and advanced the most important and effective resistance movement against the velayat-e faqih regime.

The greatest contribution of Massoud Rajavi, who founded the National Liberty Army and who has led this vigorous battle against religious dictatorship, to the Iranian society has been the education and nurturing of this promising generation. A generation whose perseverance and repudiation of surrender against this regime has been a source of pride for Iranian history, and whose rich existence serves as the capital of freedom for the Iran of tomorrow.

As Massoud Rajavi has said, “Khamenei and Maliki will not hesitate to use their very last bullet against us. Therefore, this perseverance and the campaign at Ashraf and Liberty are precisely equal to the campaign for overthrowing the regime.”

For nearly 900 days, honorable, determined and brave Iranian women and men who are carrying the flag of Ashraf have staged a sit-in in this city across from the UN headquarters, where they repeat this warning on a daily basis.

Was it not the United States that committed to providing protection for the PMOI in exchange for their disarmament?

Was it not the United States who at the beginning of the process of transfer of PMOI members to Liberty and in State Department statements committed to ensuring their protection and safety?

Was the U.S. not one of the parties of a quadripartite agreement which guaranteed and supported the presence of 101 PMOI members at Ashraf?

Why were all these commitments violated?

It is clear that so far as international parties are concerned, they would once again prefer diplomatic considerations and their economic interests over freedom, resistance and human rights in Iran. With that being said, let me also say that:

We have vowed to alter this unjust trend.

We have vowed to upset this unjust and illegitimate balance of power.

Today, the immediate public demand in Iran is to overthrow this regime and institute freedom and democracy. In a nutshell, the crux of the matter is over the word “overthrow,” which involves the question of whether the regime should be uprooted in its entirety or one should collude and work with its internal factions.

The crux of the matter is whether to betray the ideal of freedom or remaining faithful to it.

So, as I have said on many occasions: If resistance for freedom and refusing to surrender is a crime, we are proud to commit such a crime.

If commitment to fulfilling the rights of the Iranian people and being committed to international laws is a crime, then we are proud of it.

If martyrdom, facing massacres and being delivered coup de grace shots with our hands tied behind our backs in order to achieve freedom is a crime, then we are proud of it and we are prepared for more. And, we are proud of Ashraf and its galaxy of martyrs.
I would again strongly condemn what we saw happen to the Camp Ashraf refugees. There must be an investigation that must shed light on it. The international community, especially the United Nations must take the lead to investigate, clarify, establish responsibilities and hold accountable the perpetrators of the massacre. It needs to be mobilized to free the hostages who will certainly suffer and remain hostage in a jail in Iraq. They are held by torturers of the Iraqi and Iranian governments. When we gathered in the very successful meeting of the NCRI in June, the call was very clear. We said that violence against Ashraf residents would no longer be tolerated by the international community, governments and the public. Therefore this issue should be brought to the agenda of EU ministers.

After 30 years of national security experience, you learn that very few things happen by accident. Five attacks do not represent coincidence. They are a military campaign. We are dealing with conscience decisions made by Iraq and those choices place the residents of camp Liberty in grave and persistent danger. This is a tragedy we said we could and would solve. I join my colleagues to ask the UN become even more actively engaged in security improvement on the ground including placing Blue Helmeted personnel on the ground of Camp Liberty itself. Facts are undeniable. With the prime minister Maliki’s web site posting, the status quo is unacceptable. Security is a basic human rights and Iraq’s obstructive and predatory behaviour can no longer be tolerated and should be seen for what it is, a violation of human rights.

One of these 52 martyrs was my beloved son Rahman. He was studying in Germany and having very high scores. Since he loved freedom he decided to go to Ashraf to devote his life for freedom and democracy for his people. In one of his interviews with the resistance TV he said: Since freedom is so precious, it is necessary to have it for all and we must pay the price for it. He said: that is why I decided to go to Ashraf. Of course loosing him is very painful for me but having 7 of my hostage sisters and brothers in the hand of Maliki’s murderers under the torture, is much more painful. The US has given a written promise and commitments and responsibilities. Don’t let these 7 hostages get killed with your complicity.

I express my solidarity and that of the Italian people. This could serve as a wake-up call for the entire international community to protect the people of Liberty. Criminals [perpetrators of the massacre] should be brought to justice for the murders of protected persons under the 4th Geneva Convention. It is criminal to remove seven from the camp and keep them hostage in a jail in Iraq. This is outrageous. UN asking the Iraqi government to protect the residents of camp Liberty in grave and persistent danger. This is a tragedy we said we could and would solve. I join my colleagues to ask the UN become even more actively engaged in security improvement on the ground including placing Blue Helmeted personnel on the ground of Camp Liberty itself. Facts are undeniable. With the prime minister Maliki’s web site posting, the status quo is unacceptable. Security is a basic human rights and Iraq’s obstructive and predatory behaviour can no longer be tolerated and should be seen for what it is, a violation of human rights.

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Iran will be free. no doubt. We will win this struggle and this; we will spare no effort. History is and to the hostages if you can hear our admiration. History will never have freedom. You are on the front line souls went on a hunger strike for you to have a free country. These brave If you hear my voice in Iran, they died for end this regime – one thousand people. History was lost, one thousand people will come forward to fight, to struggle, to die, to to our front line of Iranian freedom. There are no bounds to our admiration. History will never forget you and we will always stand with you. Thank god for your perseverance. And to the hostages if you can hear our voices today in your bondage, we pledge this; we will spare no effort. History is with you, the wind is to your back. I have no doubt. We will win this struggle and Iran will be free.

Their lives had meaning. But, here is what the mullahs do not understand; the mathematics of our struggle. For every face you see here, for every life that was lost, one thousand people will come forward to fight, to struggle, to die, to end this regime – one thousand people. If you hear my voice in Iran, they died for you to have a free country. These brave souls went on a hunger strike for you to have freedom. You are on the front line of Iranian freedom. There are no bounds to our admiration. History will never forget you and we will always stand with you. Thank god for your perseverance. And to the hostages if you can hear our voices today in your bondage, we pledge this; we will spare no effort. History is with you, the wind is to your back. I have no doubt. We will win this struggle and Iran will be free.

Dear friends, I share your pain, but I'm sure you're proud of your 52 brothers and sisters and, because of their strength and because of their struggle for freedom and democratic Iran. The massacre and executions of 52 defenseless refugees is a clear indication that the mullahs see PMOI as their only real alternative. This matter is so blunt and clear by deploying a representative of her to Iraq to investigate. This matter is so blunt and clear that does not possess much complexity. Second I asked her the appointment of a group of UN personnel to be present at Camp Liberty at all times, same as the UNAMI presence in Camp Ashraf. This should get established before Maleki kills all the people of Camp Liberty.

How long the lives of Iranian refugees should be in the hands of pro-Iranian government in Iraq? How long will the international community look elsewhere to the plight of Iranian refugees? How long? Are we going to be late once again? Are we going to be late like in Rwanda, as in Sudan, as in Srebrenica? Are we going to be ashamed for not having done anything to prevent further slaughter?

When I had my meeting with Ms. Pillay, I told her how important it is for me to voice my concerns as my mother did so for me. To voice the concern about 6 women and a man that have disappeared. They have been taken hostage by the government of Iraq. I asked her to initiate an investigation on not just what happened to the 52 who were killed, but for the 7 that are still alive. We need the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights to find out where these hostages are and find ways to bring them to safety. She said that she heard voices and chants in front of her building – belonging to the marchers. She also said she did not know about the hostages and the fact that 6 of them are women. She asked me to let you know that she heard your voices and concerns. I asked her to pursue 2 matters, first to initiate her own investigation by deploying a representative of her to Iraq to investigate. This matter is so blunt and clear that does not possess much complexity. Second I asked her the appointment of a group of UN personnel to be present at Camp Liberty at all times, same as the UNAMI presence in Camp Ashraf. This should get established before Maleki kills all the people of Camp Liberty.

What moderation is in Iran where human rights are violated all the time, where there is no access to free information or freedom of expression and the rights of women are trampled, where there are political prisoners and public executions? A country where the president may be removed by the Supreme Leader. Moderation? No! But yes to terror, repression, intolerance, arrests and death. So, that exists in Iran.

What happened in Ashraf is a crime against humanity. The Spanish government condemned the violence that has claimed the lives of 52 people. I demand an investigation into the facts that will send those responsible to justice. Now that all refugees are at Liberty, must ensure their safety and that they are not responsible to justice. Now that all refugees are at Liberty, must ensure their safety and that they are not the target of further attacks. This protection is not only a humanitarian and moral issue, but a legal obligation.

IRAN LIBERATION - www.ncr-iran.org - SEPTEMBER 27, 2013
The UNHCR spokesperson Melissa Fleming told journalists in Geneva:

UNHCR was “gravely concerned” about the safety of seven former residents of the Camp New Iraq (formerly Camp Ashraf), who remain unaccounted for since it was attacked on September 1. More than 50 residents died in the attack in central-eastern Iraq.

“According to reports reaching UNHCR, the missing persons are reportedly being held somewhere in Iraq and may be at risk of being returned involuntarily to Iran, which would be a serious breach of international law,” Fleming said. “These seven are all known by UNHCR to be asylum-seekers, and UNHCR wants to have the opportunity to interview them,” she added.

In light of the numerous and persistent reports over the past week that these individuals may be at risk of forced return to Iran, she said that UNHCR was calling on the Iraqi government to locate them, to ensure their physical security and to safeguard them against return to Iran against their will.

“UNHCR furthermore urges the government to ensure the protection of the residents of Hurriya temporary transit location and calls on the international community to find solutions outside Iraq as a matter of urgency,” Fleming stated.

I come from the injured Syria that has been injured for two and a half years and has been subject to many crimes perpetrated by the criminal Syrian government and its allies, the Iranian regime and the Hezbollah using all kinds of weapons including chemical weapons.

I came to offer my condolences to the oppressed people of Iran, whose true representative is the Iranian Resistance under the leadership of Mrs. Rajavi. To victims who were killed after they trusted international protection, with each and every one of them the U.S. had signed an agreement to protect them, but delivered to the Iraqi government.

The murderers of the residents are the same that killed 200,000 Syrians. Hail to hunger strikers that mark their solidarity with their sisters and brother arrested by the Maliki regime in Iraq. I call on all governments to put pressure on the Iraqi government to release the hostages.

That assault was very well done with precision. It was organized butchery. I was told there were fast moving rifle teams, explosive experts and them the follow up assassin teams.

Over 200 explosions occurred. Over 60 vehicles were destroyed.

The first person that they killed was the man you saw at the gate shack as we call it.

He was the first one killed by the assassins and then they just moved in and started shaking and destroying.

Yet Maliki claims that he had nothing to do with it. Not only did they have knowledge of it but this was Nouri al-Maliki’s orders done.

There is only one force in the world that has an enormous responsibility to do what is necessary. But I ask for your understanding, ask you to try to find a way to work with those of us who want to do what is necessary to move quickly to bring freedom and dignity and safety to these people. The most important thing is to make sure that the prime minister of Iraq understands that it is not merely an appeal from us to him, but that there will be consequences. Consequences to him personally, consequences to his government, and consequences to the relationships that fuel his capacity to continue leading his country.

That 3000 people’s lives rest in the balance; and that it is urgently necessary for us to take the matters to the highest levels of the government and not accept merely a response that says “we understand”. No, that’s not acceptable to me and it’s not acceptable to you.