



DISAPPEARANCES IN KURDISTAN

Iraq



Arslan Karim Ahmad



Asu Karim Ahmad



Karim Ahmad



Makwan Karim Ahmad

FIVE YEARS ago, 71-year-old Karim Ahmad Mahmood, his three sons Arslan, Asu and Makwan, and another man, Othman Ahmad Hussain, were arrested by Dezgay Zanyari, the intelligence and security service of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in Sulaimaniya, northern Iraq. They have not been seen since.

When Mahmood's family tried to find out what had happened to the men, they were told to stop seeking information. In September 2001, the Minister of Human Rights in the area controlled by the PUK told Amnesty International that extensive inquiries were being made to establish the fate of the five men. However, no further information has been provided. In December 2004, Amnesty International wrote to the recently-elected President of Iraq and PUK leader, Jalal Talabani, requesting clarification of the fate of the five men. No response has been received.

Fighting between the PUK, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Islamic Movement of Iraqi Kurdistan, in the mid-1990s, resulted in serious human rights abuses by all sides. However, no investigations into past human rights abuses have been carried out. Today, the two Kurdish parties, KDP and PUK, continue to control specific areas in northern Iraq. Following his inaugural speech as President in April, Talabani called for human rights to be respected.



TAKE ACTION

PLEASE WRITE calling for the 'disappearances' of the five men to be investigated as a matter of urgency and for their families to be kept informed of any progress. If the men are detained, ask for them to be given a prompt and fair trial. If they have not been charged with a recognisable criminal offence, call for their immediate release.

Send appeals to:

Mr Jalal Talabani,
President, Republic of Iraq,
Convention Centre (Qasr al-Ma'aridh),
Baghdad, Iraq.

Salutation: Dear Sir