

**UNHCR**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين

## UNHCR Iraq closes a makeshift camp for Iranian Kurds Refugees in Iraq and Relocates them to Al Waleed Camp

**Baghdad, 8 July 2009:** The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Office in Iraq (UNHCR) closed down a makeshift camp that hosted Iranian Kurds refugees in the no-man's land situated on the border between Iraq and Jordan since 2005. The group composed of 186 refugees has been temporarily relocated to Al Waleed refugee camp, on Iraq's border with Syria. Al Waleed camp, which already hosts 1,400 Palestinian refugees, was set up to accommodate the additional 186 refugees.

Most of the Iranian Kurds refugees in Iraq live in Kawa settlement that UNHCR established in 2006, in collaboration with the Kurdistan Regional Government, following the closure of Al Tash camp in Anbar. However, this particular group fled to the border village of Trebil creating challenges for both UNHCR, which was providing basic assistance, and for the Government of Iraq, which was providing security. An intervention made on behalf of the Government of Iraq set a deadline for their relocation from the no-man's land to Al Waleed camp by 5 July 2009.

UNHCR Representative in Iraq, Mr. Daniel Endres, met with the refugees on 4 July and in close collaboration with General Fadhil, representing the Iraqi Government, agreed to temporarily relocate them to Al Waleed camp in the hope that UNHCR will be able to provide them with a better standard of living as well as access to basic needs such as food, water, a sewage system, a secured camp, a health centre and education (primary and preparatory school). "This is a very important step for us as we are keen on helping this group. Their previous location, which was very difficult to access, created limitations for how far we could go in providing support", said Endres. "Living in a tent in the desert is difficult and UNHCR will continue to search for more durable solutions for this group as well as for the Palestinian refugees who already reside there", he added.

The refugees were cooperative during the relocation process and UNHCR handled the logistics of moving them to the camp, while the Iraqi Police escorted them. All the families are currently in Al-Waleed camp.

Iraq hosts some 40,000 refugees, the majority of whom are Palestinians, followed by Turkish Kurds and Iranian Kurds. Most of them are living in camps and settlements. UNHCR is providing protection and basic assistance to them while exploring long term durable solutions.

For more information on the relocation, contact  
Mohammed Al-Ani, [al-ani@unhcr.org](mailto:al-ani@unhcr.org)  
Mobile: + 964 790194 1274  
More information Iraq wide, contact  
Maha Sidky, [sidky@unhcr.org](mailto:sidky@unhcr.org)  
Mobile: + 964 7801953141