

From: Dindar Zebari [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 October 2016
To: Belkis Wille <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Request for government comment

Dear Belkis Wille,

I hope this correspondence reaches you well.

I have received your concerns regarding the security screening and detention procedures for internally displaced individuals and have collated as much information vis-a-vis this matter in the short period provided.

With regards to security screenings at the Peshmerga forces controlled checkpoints, after analysing and investigating their paperwork and identification the internally displaced persons (IDPs) are interviewed and questioned. The exact procedure is as follows:

- Those individuals who have migrated to Kurdistan Region areas from non-Islamic State held-areas are processed at checkpoints through analysing identification and verifying their information against information compiled by the intelligence and security agencies.
- For those individuals who have migrated to Kurdistan Region areas from Islamic State held-areas, they are subject to the same security screening process as mentioned above. However, further checks are conducted based on the intelligence agencies, national security agencies, and the local security agencies in the area.
- After this process, if there is confirmation that this individual does not pose a security risk, they are then transported to IDP camps and a file is created for that individual and it is relayed to the local police/security forces and other local authorities.

Such processes serve to make sure that these individuals are not affiliated to IS and thus do not pose a security threat to the Kurdistan Region. The KRG has made it clear that such a process is subject to meticulous investigations based on collated substantial intelligence. Indeed, at times this process may be time consuming based on the large number of internally displaced individuals whom wish to enter the Kurdistan Region and the comprehensive process of gathering intelligence on an individual.

There can be no doubt that if even one individual who proves to be an IS-member of affiliated individual is permitted to enter the Kurdistan Region due to a hurried screening process, there may catastrophic consequences to the security situation in the Kurdistan Region. With this being said, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and its Asayish security forces employ serious efforts to heed to international standards of human rights in the security screening process. The IS attack carried out on Kirkuk on the 21st October 2016 which caused a large number of deaths amongst civilians and security

forces is testament to the difficult nature of security screenings amongst IDPs entering the Kurdistan Region.

Those individuals who prove to be a security risk are detained for a period of 24 hours. After this period, these individuals are transferred to special courts that determine whether or not prove to be a security risk to the Kurdistan Region. However, in a few cases, legal procedures for those who are suspected IS-affiliates may become delayed due to the extremely large number of IDPs who have fled IS-held areas and wish to enter the Kurdistan Region. Another reason for the delay in detention facilities is the lack of security personnel who are available to carry out more comprehensive questioning due to a lack of financial resources.

The KRG and its security forces are committed to making families aware if an individual within them is detained and provides information regarding the process and status of their detention. However, once again, due to a lack of personnel and financial resources this task may at times be a difficult one.

Best regards

Dr. Dindar Zebari
(Deputy Minister)

Chairperson of the High Committee to Evaluate and Respond to International Reports
Presidency of the Council of Ministers
Kurdistan Regional Government

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