

**REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)
ON THE TREATMENT BY THE COALITION FORCES OF PRISONERS OF WAR
AND OTHER PROTECTED PERSONS BY THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS IN IRAQ
DURING ARREST, INTERNMENT AND INTERROGATION**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its "Report on the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and other protected persons in Iraq", the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) draws the attention of the Coalition Forces (hereafter called "the CF") to a number of serious violations of International Humanitarian Law. These violations have been documented and sometimes observed while visiting prisoners of war, civilian internees and other protected persons by the Geneva Conventions (hereafter called persons deprived of their liberty when their status is not specifically mentioned) in Iraq between March and November 2003. During its visits to places of internment of the CF, the ICRC collected allegations during private interviews with persons deprived of their liberty relating to the treatment by the CF of protected persons during their capture, arrest, transfer, internment and interrogation.

The main violations, which are described in the ICRC report and presented confidentially to the CF, include:

- Brutality against protected persons upon capture and initial custody, sometimes causing death or serious injury
- Absence of notification of arrest of persons deprived of their liberty to their families causing distress among persons deprived of their liberty and their families
- Physical or psychological coercion during interrogation to secure information
- Prolonged solitary confinement in cells devoid of daylight
- Excessive and disproportionate use of force against persons deprived of their liberty resulting in death or injury during their period of internment

Serious problems of conduct by the CF affecting persons deprived of their liberty are also presented in the report:

- Seizure and confiscation of private belongings of persons deprived of their liberty
- Exposure of persons deprived of their liberty to dangerous tasks
- Holding persons deprived of their liberty in dangerous places where they are not protected from shelling

According to allegations collected by ICRC delegates during private interviews with persons deprived of their liberty, ill-treatment during capture was frequent. While certain circumstances might require defensive precautions and the use of force on the part of battle group units, the ICRC collected allegations of ill-treatment following capture which took place in Baghdad, Basrah, Ramadi and Tikrit, indicating a consistent pattern with respect to times and places of brutal behavior during arrest. The repetition of such behavior by CF appeared to go beyond the reasonable, legitimate and proportional use of force required to apprehend suspects or restrain persons resisting arrest or capture, and seemed to reflect a usual modus operandi by certain CF battle group units.

According to the allegations collected by the ICRC, ill-treatment during interrogation was not systematic, except with regard to persons arrested in connection with suspected security offences or deemed to have an "intelligence" value. In these cases, persons deprived of their liberty under supervision of the Military Intelligence were at high risk of being subjected to a variety of harsh treatments ranging from

