

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAQ

The 15th Commemoration the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq

Major Announcement Regarding Ending Impunity for the 2003 War against Iraq



Join us in a two Panel Discussion on accountability related to the 2003 War

Thursday 15th March 2018 Room XXIV

EAFORD 12:00 to 13:00 & International Lawyers 13.00 to 14.00

Palais de Nations, United Nations-Office Geneva

Concept Note:

On the occasion of the 15th commemoration of the invasion and occupation of Iraq, the International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFord), International-Lawyers.Org and Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ) as well as several partner organizations are organizing a side-event at the 37th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council. During two panel discussions, the panellists will first address the grave violations committed during the illegal invasion and occupation. They will then reflect on the somber reality 15 years after the invasion of Iraq, including accountability for committed crimes and justice for the Iraqi people, which remain a distant hope.

With Iraq lying shattered after the brutal sanctions regime and the total financial and trade embargo imposed in 1990, the 2003 military invasion by the US was effortless. Despite the relative speed of the invasion, what lay ahead was unparalleled bloodshed, destruction and disintegration. 20th March 2003 bears testament to an abysmal milestone in the history of Iraq as well as international legal history. In flagrant violation of Article 2 (4) of the UN Charter and in grave violation of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Protocols, the United States (supported by a so-called “coalition of the willing”) initiated an aggressive, destructive war against Iraq. Waged unilaterally without justification, the war on Iraq classifies as war of aggression, which according to the Nuremberg Tribunal amounts to the “supreme international crime that contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole.” The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court similarly defines acts of aggression as international crimes. The invasion entailed unimaginable atrocities and systematic war crimes.

It is in the context of complete destruction and lawlessness that sectarian violence could thrive and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) could emerge, gain a foothold, and commit horrendous atrocities. The Iraqi population today faces a deep humanitarian and human rights crisis; public services, including the healthcare and educational system, register substantial shortages and deficits; ethnic tensions and sectarianism have escalated; and the justice system is rife with corruption and brutality with arbitrary arrests and torture being systemic and execution rates skyrocketing.

15 years later, the Iraqi people—indeed, the entire international community—waits for redress and justice. During the side-event, the panelists will make a strong case for the need of accountability of all transgressors that have committed violations during the occupation and invasion of Iraq, as well as for redress of inflicted injustices. To finally achieve accountability and bring justice to the Iraqi people, documentation and investigation mechanisms must be established for the formation of an international tribunal to try all the perpetrators of such violations.

Panel One: End Impunity for War Crimes

12.00 – 13.00

Main organizer: The International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD)

Panellists:

Jan Lonn:



Chair of the Swedish Network against War 2002-2003 and Secretary-General of the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (ISMUN). His advocacy work includes campaigning for accountability and justice for Iraq.

Ahmed Al Quraish:



Policy Analyst, Researcher and Writer. Ahmed Quraishi was embedded with a US Army unit in the invasion of Iraq 2003, also accompanied British units in southern Iraq, and covered Iraq since 1991. He has worked for Aljazeera and authored articles in Arabic and English over the past 24. He is currently associated with an independent, Islamabad-based think tank projectpakistan21.org.

Moderator:



Daniela Donges:

President "Scales for Justice" and former human rights officer at Geneva International Centre for Justice.

Panel two: Human Rights in Iraq

13.00 - 14.00

Main organizer: International-Lawyers.Org

Panellists:

Sabah Al Mukhtar:

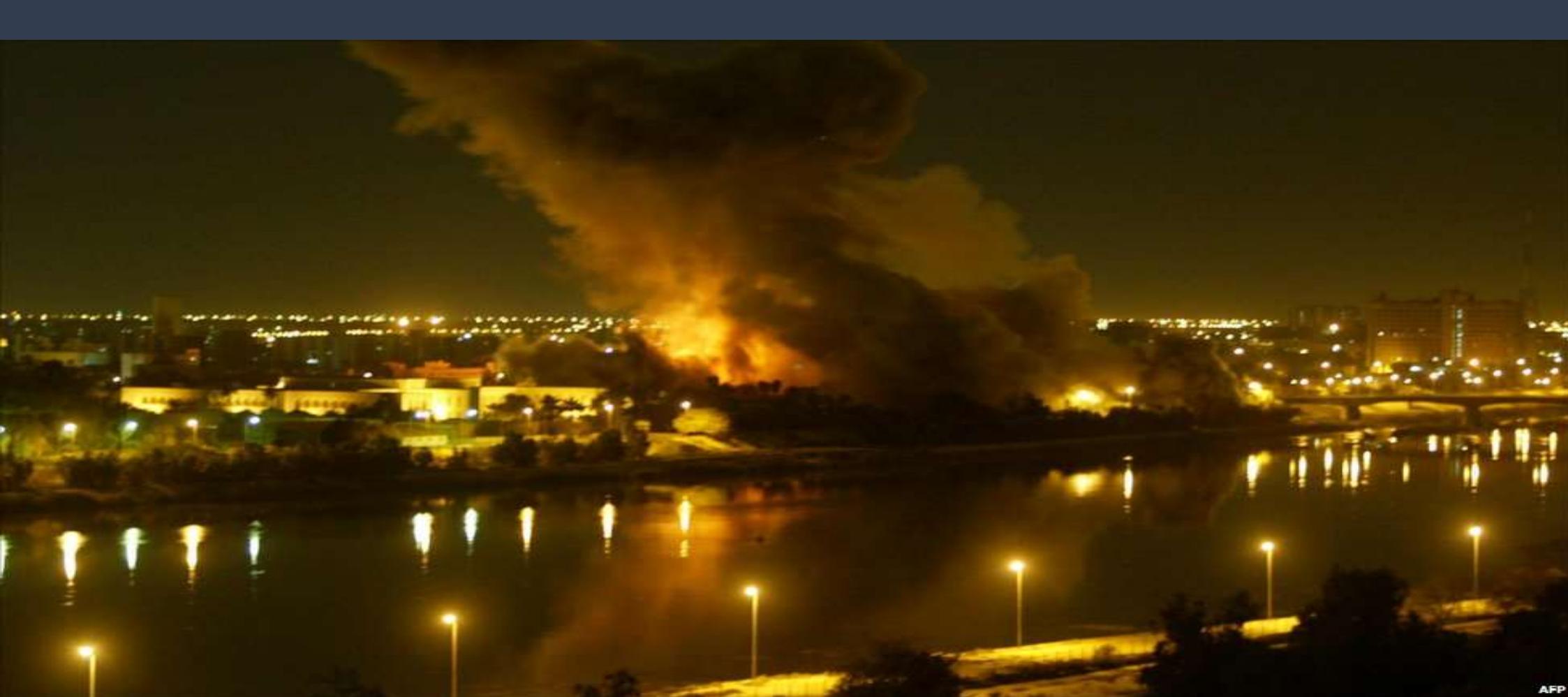


President of the Arab Lawyers Association-UK and Vice-President of Geneva International Centre for Justice. As a lawyer, Mr. Al-Mukhtar is a legal consultant in England on Arab affairs and Islamic Law. He is an independent analyst with special knowledge of Iraq, UN-Iraq relations, economic policies and risk analysis.

Inder Comar:



A U.S.-American lawyer and the Executive Director of Just Atonement, a legal non-profit dedicated to building peace and environmental sustainability. He is a recognized expert on international and U.S. law as it relates to crimes of aggression, immunity of high ranking officials, and the war in Iraq representing Sundus Saleh in the case Sundus Saleh v George Bush et al.. He has been actively involved in the only case yet filed in the US that questions the legality of the war in Iraq.



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Organizers:

International Organisation for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discriminations (EAFOR), International-Lawyers.Org, International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations (ISMUN), International Educational Development, World Peace Council, Union of Arab Jurists, (Ecosoc NGOs), Geneva International Centre for Justice (GICJ), Just Atonement Inc, The BRussells Tribunal, The Arab Lawyers Association-UK, Association of Humanitarian Lawyers (AHL), The Iraqi Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), Association of Human Rights Defenders in Iraq (AHRD), General Federation of Iraqi Women (GFIW), The Iraqi Centre for Human Rights, International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON), (*Non-Ecosoc*)

Interpretation available English & Arabic

Light Lunch and Refreshments will be served