

Iraq (26)

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ME1-IRAQ-AMNESTY-TEXT

Iraq: Text of Saddam Husayn's statement granting general amnesty

14/11-02

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has issued a statement ordering an amnesty for Iraqi prisoners. The statement said that the Revolution Command Council was issuing a "full, comprehensive and final pardon" for "the convicted, the absconded and those who are detained because of their position on military service, as well as for the convicted, the absconded and those who are detained for political reasons". The following is the text of the statement by Saddam Husayn, issued in Baghdad on 19 October, read by Iraqi Information Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf; broadcast by Iraqi satellite TV on 20 October:

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

O great, loyal, struggler, generous and faithful people, men and women, young men and women, children, and old people; O men of our valiant fighter armed forces; peace be upon you.

On 15 October 2002, corresponding to 9 Sha'ban 1423 Hegira, and before and after that date, you have maintained - after you have risen high and gained a notable place in history - a stand, which you and your homeland deserve. It is a stand, which has also filled the heart of your leader with pleasure

and pride. In fact, it is a source of pride for us before the whole world.

Your patience, long struggle and the great principles you uphold have removed all the negative accumulations resulting from your being unable for hundreds of years to play the role that suits you in the message towards yourselves, nation and mankind. You have shown yourselves as you are: a noble, faithful and honourable people; a people of zeal, chivalry, conscience, brave stands and great principles; and a people of genuine civilization and noble character.

You have maintained, O precious beloved ones, a great stand, which shall remain a shining light and a bright beacon to be emulated by all those who want to rise to the level of world nations and our glorious nation as well.

You have all risen to this stand in unison and with a unanimity, which cannot be believed by those who do not have your faith and are not familiar with such unanimity and could not believe what they have heard. But, it is the great truth about this great, noble, loyal and faithful people in this age.

O beloved ones, you have thus risen to the level that satisfied you and us.

Yet, I do not doubt that some of you - regardless of who they are or what their number is - have, or some of their family members, been accountable before the law. Others might think that they are not accountable for

actions taken against them by some persons or departments. This means that your view of the national responsibility, the state, and the law has matured to the level, which makes us reassured not only about the present, but also the future. We should help those who have erred or sinned in order to get rid of the causes and evil whims that have made them commit that error or sin, which is punishable under the law and prosecuted by the executive departments in implementation of the law.

On the basis of this vision and outcome and because we and our comrades in the Revolution Command Council and the leadership of the march give precedence to mercy over punishment and pardon over implementation of the law and legal prosecution, wherever we expect or believe that such mercy would open the eyes of the one who has been blinded to the truth, and because we also believe that, once pardoned, he would see the facts as they are, the high honour as it is, and the sound course as it should be so his stand would be straight not twisted, high not low, and chaste not unclean, we hope for your help in guiding him on the right course and exercising your responsibility on him when he deviates and harms God's and people's rights.

Therefore, O brave Iraqi men and women, we convey to you the responsibility of protecting the society and the honour of the pure stand, which you have maintained. We also convey to you the responsibility of straightening out

those who are in prison or absconded and prosecuted by the law so that they will not remain in prison. Thus, once we have afforded them this opportunity - and we pray to God that we will not regret it - we and those responsible for the application of the law will be excused before God if anyone of those pardoned or others commit a mistake or a sin. For there would be no life of stability, security and prosperity for society if its affairs were exposed to the plunder of the frivolous.

We convey to their families and society the responsibility of straightening and guiding these people. We pray to God to spare them the evil of their own doings. We also pray to Him to spare society, the march and the Iraqi people's rights to their wealth and homeland and the reputation of their honour from the evil of these people.

Accordingly, the Revolution Command Council decides as follows:

A full, comprehensive and final pardon is granted for any legal, material, social and financial liabilities to the convicted, the absconded and those who are detained because of their position on military service, as well as for the convicted, the absconded and those who are detained because of political reasons; and those convicted and detained for any other reasons whatsoever from the application of the rule of law, in any degree or form, including those sentenced to death, or if the cases for which they were

wanted led to their sentencing to death, whether they are inside or outside Iraq.

Those imprisoned or detained shall be released immediately. None of them shall remain in prison or detention, except those convicted or detained due to murder. Those detained or imprisoned due to murder shall be released as soon as the aggrieved parties have pardoned them.

Those who are indebted to individuals or the state shall be released as soon as they have paid their debts in on sum or in instalments.

I call upon those who have such a right to assist their country, people and leadership by taking a stand, which will elevate them high before God Almighty, and pardoning their enemies or accepting their solicitation so that they will rise higher. I pray to God Almighty to compensate them for their losses with a dignified life in this world and God's pleasure in the Hereafter. God listens and answers our prayers.

O noble, loyal and faithful people, we have fulfilled our responsibility on 15 October 2002 and risen as a people to the level desired by God, backed by the history of the whole of Iraq and our great faith in God and the homeland. But we have also risen through our hearts that are chaste and pure as if they were born for the first time. Your leadership has also

dealt with the sinful on this basis. This includes our present decision.

We have dealt on this basis and manner, and we ask you to deal with one another, O Iraqis, as God has ordered with love that is free of malice and greed. This is what we call upon you to do, and hope that you will fulfil.

We know that the embargo conditions have enabled some parasites to grow among us. But, we know that these parasites, the hardships of the embargo, and the thorns caused by the circumstances of the fighting did not affect your zeal for your homeland and your awareness of your role on 15 October 2002. You expressed your love for your leadership along with other considerations. For you know that your leadership loves you and cares about you and your principles and interests. Love one another with the same spirit so that we will all live happily with our hearts and the hearts of our other brothers unaffected by the acts of the deviates and greedy.

I am not dreaming here, as I am not one of those who build castles in the air. But, I expect a serious response from you, because I have great confidence in you. Therefore, I believe that it will not befit you if anyone outside Iraq beats you in the race, even if he is among the zealous and faithful, because you have been raised on these principles and also because you have made sacrifices under its flag.

O brothers and sons, the loss of an Iraqi will be a big loss. For an Iraqi

believer becomes an irredeemable power, more than any other person would. Therefore, I call upon you to forget any hatred amongst you and to settle matters between you in a kindly manner. Fellow Iraqis should avoid spilling the blood of an Iraqi or hurting his feelings. You are one family, O Iraqis. The one family means that each member must love the other members and tolerate their mistakes, except in situations where there is need to teach a lesson and protect the rights of God and society.

We have done this. So too, you must do it to one another. It is the crown of good health, which we wish you. We will work for you, God willing. God is the grantor of success. God is Great, God is Great.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, chairman of the Revolution Command Council, 13 Sha'ban 1423 Hegira, corresponding to 19 October 2002.

Source: Iraqi Satellite Channel, Baghdad, in Arabic 0909 gmt 20 Oct 02

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