

(Translated from Arabic)

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations Office at Geneva

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Reply from the Government of the Kurdistan Region concerning the killing of the journalist Widat Hussain

The Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Kurdistan Region has informed us of its response to the case file concerning the killing of the journalist Widat Hussain. The 28-year-old journalist was kidnapped at 12 noon on 13 August 2016 in the village of Siji in Duhok. He was later found with serious injuries and taken to Duhok Emergency Hospital, but he died of his injuries.

The competent authorities opened an investigation into the case (decision No. 23793) pursuant to a recommendation by the President of the Kurdistan Region on 14 August 2016. A commission of inquiry was established under the chairmanship of [REDACTED] the Director of the Crime-Fighting Unit in Duhok. The investigation found that the victim had been abducted by unidentified individuals driving a black KIA vehicle and a white Chevrolet Optra. The wounded victim was found by the Mayor of Siji. As he was the first witness of the crime, he asked the victim a number of questions. However, owing to the severity of his injuries, the only reply the victim could give was that he came from Duhok. The Mayor reported the incident to the police and the victim was taken to hospital. However, he died before reaching the hospital.

The authorities arrested a number of suspects for interrogation and recorded their statements. The competent judge decided, pursuant to article 406 of Iraqi Criminal Code No. 111 of 1969, to issue an arrest warrant for the unidentified suspects, to keep the case open and to continue the investigations until comprehensive evidence of the crime had been gathered.

According to the investigations by the crime-fighting police in Dohuk, the relatives of Widat Hussain did not file a complaint against anyone, because they had no information regarding any suspect and because the victim had no known enemy. Such cases are common in legal terms. The competent governmental bodies are entitled to institute criminal proceedings. The police investigated the data on his phone and examined the closed circuit television footage for the day of the incident. The investigation proceedings will continue until the suspects are arrested and brought to justice.

