

Att: Giuseppe Gentile President & C.E.O. Air Italy  
Air Italy  
Corso Sempione, 111 21013  
Gallarate (Va)  
Italia

Dear Mr. Gentile,

I am appalled to hear that your company Air Italy was involved in the forcible removal by a charter flight leased to UK Border Agency of 39 Iraqi's who had sought asylum in the UK to an unknown destination in Iraq on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October from Stansted Airport in the United Kingdom.

'Operation Rangat' was the name given to the charter flight by the UK Border Agency.

I am concerned, as a member of the public and as well as a potential customer, that this involvement will damage Air Italy's reputation.

Many of the cases of failed seekers of asylum from Iraq, have suffered from inadequate legal representation, poor translation facilities and a stubborn refusal by UK Border Agency to face the realities of the devastation Iraq has suffered since 2003 all these factors have seriously disadvantaged seekers of asylum from the Iraq in the UK context.

Iraq is one of the most deadly places in the world. Since 2003 over **186,924 civilian** lives have been lost and though the war is assumed to be over, there is no 'peace' and deaths continue daily/weekly.

#### **USA 2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices in Iraq**

Significant human rights problems were reported: a climate of violence; misappropriation of official authority by sectarian, criminal, and extremist groups; arbitrary deprivation of life; disappearances; torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; impunity; poor conditions in pre-trial detention and prison facilities; denial of fair public trials; arbitrary arrest and detention; arbitrary interference with privacy and home; other abuses in internal conflicts; limitations on freedoms of speech/press/assembly, and association due to sectarianism/extremist threats and violence; restrictions on religious freedom; restrictions on freedom of movement; lack of transparency and widespread, severe corruption at all levels of government; constraints on investigations of alleged violations of human rights; discrimination against and societal abuses of women, and ethnic and religious minorities; human trafficking; societal discrimination and violence against individuals based on sexual orientation; and limited exercise of labour rights.

Insurgent and extremist violence, coupled with weak government performance in upholding the rule of law, resulted in widespread and severe human rights abuses. Terrorist groups such as AQI and other extremist elements continued to launch attacks against Shia and Sunnis, fuelling sectarian tensions and undermining the government's ability to maintain law and order. Extremist and AQI attacks against Sunni SOI and tribal leaders and offices rose during the year. Extremists and AQI also conducted high-profile bombings near Shia markets and mosques and killed Shia religious pilgrims. Shia militias and armed paramilitary groups, some substantially incorporated into the ISF, also frequently attacked civilians and government officials. Religious minorities, sometimes labelled "anti-Islamic," were caught in the violence. During the year, despite some reconciliation and easing of tensions in several provinces, the government's human rights performance consistently fell short of according citizens the protections provided for by the law.

However lucrative the arrangement between Air Italy and the UK Border Agency is, participating in the forced removal of people to a country still in turmoil, where gross human rights occur daily, Air Italy stands to seriously damage its corporate image.

I am concerned that Air Italy may consider this operation of leasing planes to UKBA from a purely profit perspective, and may not be aware that many of the people you will be transporting are being returned to a situation where they - on all available evidence - can face torture and even death.

I would therefore urge Air Italy to reconsider its' involvement, present and future, in such schemes, until your company has fully appraised itself of the available evidence. There seems a great risk that negative media attention to the outcomes of such 'deportation charters' to war zones could be commercially damaging for Air Italy.

I would ask you Mr. Gentile, to immediately call a board meeting of Air Italy to discuss the issue of forcibly removing refused seekers of asylum from the UK, with a view to Air Italy, stopping the practice of leasing its' planes to UK Border Agency.

Yours Sincerely,

Name:

Address:

City:

Postcode:

Country:

Date: