

Prime Minister of Iraq

Mustafa al-Kadhimi

Email: media.office@pmo.gov.iq

Twitter: @MAKadhimi

Your Excellency,

On the night of 3 June 2016, 1,300 men and boys considered to be of fighting age were subjected to enforced disappearance by the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), a state-affiliated armed group, as they were trying to flee the city of Saqlawiya, in Anbar Governorate, central Iraq, with their families. Out of the 1,300 men and boys, at least **643 remain subject to enforced disappearance** - a crime under international law. Their families have lived in agony ever since, not knowing whether their loved ones are safe or even still alive.

According to [credible testimonies gathered by Amnesty International](#) from former abductees, witnesses and relatives of those forcibly disappeared, the group fleeing Saqlawiya was met by armed individuals carrying machine guns and assault rifles. Witnesses identified the armed men as members of the PMU, based on emblems on their uniforms and flags. Armed members of the PMU separated the men and boys from the rest of the group and took them to buildings, garages and abandoned shops in the nearby area, confiscating their identity documents, phones and other valuables, and later bound their hands behind their backs, in most cases using plastic cuffs. At sunset, several buses arrived and together with a large truck transported a number of these boys and men. To date, the fate of those who boarded these vehicles remains unknown.

On 5 June 2016, the previous Prime Minister, Haidar al-Abadi, set up a committee to investigate disappearances and abuses committed in the context of military operations to retake Falluja. Separately, the local government of Anbar governorate also set up a committee which published its findings and stated that 643 internally displaced men and boys from the area of Saqlawiya are missing. To this date, both committees have failed to disclose any meaningful information on the fate and whereabouts of the 643 men and boys.

We urgently call on Your Excellency to launch an impartial, prompt and independent investigation with a view to establishing the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared; to publicly disclose the findings of all previous investigations by all the committees established; to take immediate steps to reveal the fate and whereabouts of those who had been forcibly disappeared by the PMU and to provide justice, truth and reparation to all victims and their families.

Yours sincerely,