



Another Iraq is Possible!

With Peace, Human Rights and Social Justice!

Dear Friends

We invite you to attend and seek your support for the first Iraqi Social Forum [ISF] to be held on **September 26-28, 2013 in Baghdad, Iraq** .

Active international solidarity is the need of this hour!

The Iraqi Social Forum is an extraordinary event that opposes decades of immense violence and destruction. It proposes a time and a space managed by civil society and social movements to build another Iraq based on peace, respect for human rights and social justice, in partnership with all those who adhere to the principles and charter of the WSF, adopted in Porto Alegre in 2001.

The loss of the lives of over one million people, the destruction of infrastructure, fatal and debilitating effects of depleted uranium and chemical weaponry used by the occupation forces cannot be forgotten, neither by the Iraqi people nor by the international movements who have been mobilizing against the war and the occupation.

The withdrawal of the US and occupation troops has opened the way to complete the struggle of Iraqi people for democracy and social justice, but the current Iraqi leadership has been built on sectarian lines, and does not guarantee the rights and safety of its citizens. Hundreds of thousands have protested in the streets of Iraqi cities since 2011 against corruption, for social services, for freedom of expression, and for an independent judiciary system. More than 2600 Iraqis have been killed since April 2013 in terrorist attacks, most of them in Baghdad. Still Iraqi civil society acts for change.

Now it is the time to all work together to build a way for hope to emerge, and to contribute to the desires of the Iraqi people for a civil, democratic society and State, based on respect for different cultures. The country is experiencing a political, economic and social crisis: this is the time to build partnerships, foster dialogue and cooperation, to find solutions to outstanding problems. Now is the time to end violence and terrorism for which the people of Iraq have paid, and continue to pay, a heavy price. These are the challenges of the Iraqi Social Forum, we believe that these are our shared challenges!

The WSF process is now well anchored in the region. Since 2008 we have witnessed successful regional social fora in the Maghreb/Mashreq, a World Education Forum in Palestine and the World Social Forum in Tunis earlier this year. These collective experiences provide a fertile ground for the Iraqi civil society to build the first Iraqi Social Forum as an open space for exchange of experiences and ideas, and to build a movement against neo-liberalism, for social change.

Iraqi civil society organizations will raise the following issues within the ISF: building a civic and democratic country; challenges faced by minorities; equitable distribution of wealth and social justice; trade unions, and peasant associations; rights of women, youth, children; economic, social, and cultural issues; nonviolence as a way of social, cultural, and economic change in Iraq; international solidarity campaigns with the Iraqi civil society. Sports Against Violence and Artistic activities will be associated to the forum.

The world witnessed huge demonstrations, unparalleled in the history, against the US invasion of Iraq. This international solidarity is now once again being convened in support of the Iraqi Social Forum. International participation in the Baghdad ISF forum event will be limited in numbers for security reasons, but the ISF preparatory committee is looking for a venue in Baghdad safe enough for some internationals to attend. We strongly encourage your remote participation from your own country, via the “Extended Iraqi Social Forum”.

Please consider the following ways of joining us:

1) Be with us in Baghdad. Be aware that this entails a certain degree of risk,

and that we will confirm international participation only in early September depending on the situation. Meanwhile, **you need to register before the 5th of August** in order to receive a letter of invitation and apply for the visa at the Iraqi Embassy in your country.

You will be contacted individually after submitting the application form here:

<http://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/registration-form-iraqi-social-forum-2013>

2) Extended ISF. Organize a solidarity event in your own country,

before or during the ISF, or a live exchange via Internet with a group in Baghdad , or a tele-participation in an activity held in Baghdad . A group of Iraqi volunteers is being trained to help connect with counterparts who want to exchange via Internet. Define with the local organizers which ISF activities will be enlarged for Internet participation, and build the corresponding connections.

You can learn more about the Extended forum and announce each of your extended collective participations in the ISF in a form accessible here: <http://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/extended-iraqi-social-forum-registration-form>

Let us know if you are willing to participate!

The Iraqi Social Forum Organizing Committee

The International Solidarity Committee for the Iraqi Social Forum

Member organizations of the Iraqi committee:

	Organization	City
1	Women for Peace	Baghdad
2	Tammuz Organization for Social Development	Baghdad
3	Laonf Group	Basra
4	AL Mesalla Organization for Human Resources Development	Erbil
5	Kurdistan Youth Empowerment Organization	Erbil
6	Information Center for research and development	Baghdad
7	Iraqi council for peace and solidarity (ICPS)	Baghdad
8	Al Amal Association	Baghdad
9	General Federation of Iraqi Workers	Baghdad
10	Iraqi Federation of Oil Unions	Basra
11	Press Freedom Advocacy Association In Iraq	Baghdad
12	Madarik for Studying Mechanisms of Conceptual Promotion	Baghdad
13	Yazidi Solidarity and Fraternity League	Ninawa
14	Engineering Professions Union	Baghdad
15	Iraqi Democratic Future Network	Baghdad
16	Ofok Organization	Baghdad

Members of the international committee:

Name	Organization	Country
Ismaeel Dawood	Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative	international
Martina Pignatti Morano	Un ponte per...	Italy
Judith Hitchman and Sergio Cordeiro	Support to "Iraqi Social Forum interpreters' team"	international
Sabiha Ben Ammar	Confédération Générale Tunisienne du Travail (CGTT)	Tunisia
Feroz Mehdi	Alternatives International	international
Mireille Fanon-Mendes	Frantz Fanon Foundation	international
Elena Laurenti and Nicola Visconti	A.D. Sport Against Violence	Italy
Pierre George	Support to "Extended Iraqi Social Forum team"	France
Mboirick Mohamed	Gathering of Young Mauritania for Development	Mauritania
Olfa Mohamed	Tunisian League of Women Voters	Tunisia
Ahmad Jaradat	Alternative Information Center	Palestine/Israel
Gershom Kabaso	Zambia Social Forum	Zambia
Terry Kay Rockefeller	September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows	USA
Felipe Daza	NOVACT	Spain
Raffaella Bolini	ARCI	Italy
Hamouda Soubhi	Alternatives Forum in Morocco (FMAS)	Morocco
Muhanna Al-Shamary	Friendship and Peace International Organization	Denmark/Iraq
Alessandra Mecozzi	Italian Network for the World Social Forum	Italy
Gustave Massiah	Initiatives Pour un Autre Monde (IPAM)	France

Link to read this document online, and check updates in the coming weeks:

<http://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/iraqi-social-forum/iraqi-social-forum-an-international-call-for-participants>

To receive support for international participation contact: icssi.project@gmail.com