



29 January 2016

## Statement of REDRESS to support joint NGO letter to the Prime Minister on war crimes allegations against UK forces

Carla Ferstman, Director of REDRESS, said:

*“Instead of standing-up for the rule of law and the fundamental principle that no one should be above the law, PM Cameron appears to have decided to publicly campaign against a criminal investigation which is meant to be free from government interference, and against the principle of accountability, when British soldiers are alleged to have committed war crimes.”*

*“To say that claims of alleged crimes are ‘spurious’ when there is an open criminal investigation is an outrageous interference in the IHAT process. Baha Mousa, an Iraqi hotel receptionist who died in British military custody with 93 separate injuries on his body, is one of the cases IHAT continues to investigate. To call this ‘spurious’ is an affront to his family and his memory.”*

*“To attack those who have brought this and other claims to light is to join the witch-hunt against human rights lawyers who are simply doing their jobs. These lawyers currently face disciplinary proceedings before the Solicitors Regulatory Authority (SRA) based on complaints made by the Ministry of Defence. It is simply wrong to try to influence the SRA through public attacks.”*

Along with a number of NGOs, REDRESS is a joint signatory to a letter to the Prime Minister which raises concerns about certain public comments made by him and Defence Secretary Michael Fallon regarding the ongoing work of the Iraq Historical Allegations Team (IHAT). IHAT is investigating allegations of murder, torture and other serious human rights violations allegedly perpetrated by British soldiers against Iraqi civilians. The letter was sent to the Prime Minister on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January.

The NGOs that signed the letter were HRW, Freedom from Torture, FIDH, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Legal Action Worldwide, Rights Watch UK and REDRESS.

The text of the letter can be found [here](#).

### Notes to editors

**About REDRESS:** REDRESS is a human rights organisation that helps torture survivors obtain justice and reparation. REDRESS works with survivors to help restore their dignity, and to hold accountable the governments and individuals who perpetrate torture.

To achieve this mission, our key strategies are: casework (providing legal assistance to individuals and communities in securing their rights); advocacy (with governments, parliaments and international organisations) and capacity building (working in partnership with like-minded organisations around the world).

**For further information** or to arrange an interview, please contact Eva Sanchis, Communications Officer, at [eva@redress.org](mailto:eva@redress.org) or call 020 7793 1777 (office) or 0785 7110076 (mobile).