

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party  
*for the South East of England*

Rt Hon Alan Johnson MP,  
Home Secretary,  
2 Marsham Street,  
London,  
SW1P 4DF

March 29<sup>th</sup> 2010

Dear Home Secretary,

I am writing with reference to the asylum application of Iraqi LGBT leader Ali Hili, currently living in exile in London. This application has been outstanding for nearly three years and while it is outstanding, Ali cannot travel. This impacts not only on Ali himself but also limits his ability to raise the profile of how LGBT rights are oppressed on a daily basis in Iraq.

As I am sure you are aware, the group Iraqi LGBT estimates that over 700 LGBT people have been assassinated over the past few years. Human Rights Watch, working with the BBC for a report aired last year, confirmed that torture and persecution of the LGBT community is widespread and that many LGBT people claim life was safer during Saddam Hussein's regime. US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin spoke last month of their concerns for LGBT both in Iraq and as refugees, in a letter to US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton co-signed by 64 other Congress people.

Ali Hili, as a prominent campaigner for LGBT equality, will not be safe if he is returned to Iraq. He has received a fatwa from inside Iraq, as well as numerous threats in London which have forced him to move. He is under the protection of the Metropolitan Police. Moreover, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has advised 'favourable consideration' for asylum claims because of the situation in Iraq. I would, therefore, urge you to ensure that Ali Hili's asylum claim is granted as a matter of urgency and his right to travel guaranteed.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to hearing from you about this important matter.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.