

Iraqi Property Claims Programme

For decades, Iraqis were unlawfully denied property rights, either for political, ethnic or religious reasons under the Ba'ath Party regime. Since 2003, the land and property rights violations have persisted and periodically increased due to the mass displacement and political turmoil between 2006 and 2008 and again in early 2014.

The Government of Iraq has acknowledged the importance of resolving the land and property disputes of the former regime as paramount to national reconciliation and conflict resolution. In 2003, it established the independent Commission for the Resolution of Real Property Disputes (CRRPD) to resolve land and property rights violations incurred under the former regime. In that same year, IOM started providing technical assistance to the CRRPD, now renamed the Property Claims Commission (PCC), which collects and adjudicates the Iraqi real property claims.

IOM Technical assistance has consisted of legal advice to the PCC's Appellate Commission (30 branches and 35 judicial committees); and designing and hosting a web-based property claims application and database. Furthermore, IOM has conducted IT training of CRRPD/PCC staff; assisted with the development and implementation of a public information strategy; and worked with the CRRPD/PCC and UNHCR to develop a programme for out-of-country claims. Based upon several

fact-finding missions in Iraq, IOM also designed a comprehensive claim form and information materials and developed proposals for the policy as well as administrative parameters of the property claims programme and encouraged voluntary reconciliation of claims where possible. In the envisaged future, this work will address the displacement-induced property and land issues engendered by the current crisis in Iraq, particularly in its Northern Provinces.

IOM has also provided technical assistance to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) in the design of options for resolving land and property disputes in Kirkuk Province, where resolution and enforcement of land claims has encountered the greatest difficulties. As such, IOM seconded a senior land expert to the UNAMI-supported local dialogue and negotiations.

IOM consolidated possible ways forward in a report entitled "Recommendations for Resolving the Remaining Land and Property Issues in the Province of Kirkuk", which provided concrete suggestions to policy-makers for resolving long-standing property and land conflicts. The Report was unanimously adopted by the Kirkuk Provincial Council (2009) as a basis for land negotiations in the Governorate and is available online on the LPR webpage.

For more information, kindly contact lpr@iom.int