

## Organisation of Women's Freedom in Iraq

### منظمة حرية المرأة في العراق

Al- Fardawse Square Area – Al Za'im Street – Next to Al Saadoun Private Hospital

Tel no. 011 964 17 170953

العراق- بغداد

قرب ساحة الفردوس- شارع الزعيم – جوار مستشفى السعدون الأهلي

## **The recent election game will not improve the situation for women**

### **Statement by the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq**

The game the US and its allies like to call the "Iraqi election" took place amid terrorist operations which killed more innocent people.

The authorities prevented vehicles from using the streets to isolate polling booths. Military helicopters hovered above people's heads and tanks surrounded them. It was an atmosphere of war!

In this game different forms of deception and blackmail were used by various reactionaries from Sistani , Talabani to Ayad Allawi and others to obtain the consent and fingerprints of people.

The coming "parliament" only represents the Islamic and ethnic parties and in no way represents the masses in Iraq. The election of this body will NOT put an end to the US occupation and its terrorism. Nor will it put an end to the terrorism of the political Islamists.

This "government" will NOT establish a state of equal citizenship for all residents of Iraq. It will NOT grant equal status for women and men. It is designed to add legitimacy to the American occupation of Iraq.

Its purpose is also to protect US-approved political groups against the outrage and discontent of the masses and against other sections of political Islam and remnants of Saddam's Baath party which also seek power.

The coming "parliament" will be nothing but a continuation of the last two years of administration by the Governing Council and the Interim Government. This means continued violation of women's rights through compulsory wearing of the veil, allowing polygamy and

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pleasure marriage, turning a blind eye to the crime of honor killing (exonerating the perpetrators of these crimes) and implementing Islamic sharia which means active discrimination against women, violating their rights and depriving them even from those few rights they enjoyed under the Baath regime.

The first articles of the "constitution" which is to be written by this "parliament" in August will state that Iraq is an Arab country and Islam is the official religion of the state.

The "constitution" will not accept any civil laws which contradict Islamic Sharia laws. This "constitution" will declare Arab Muslim males to be first class citizens. The non-Arabic speaking peoples, followers of other faiths, the non-religious and all women will be declared second and third class citizens.

We have no interest in this "parliament" and its "constitution".

It does NOT represent 60 per cent of Iraqi society, namely women. It does NOT represent the millions who refused to vote within Iraq and overseas. It does NOT represent the followers of other faiths and secular and progressive people. As it only represents a small minority in the society, this "parliament" is NOT legitimate.

We in the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq and women and men defending civil society did not vote for an Islamic-ethnic and sectarian "parliament" and we do NOT want a "constitution" based on Islamic sharia law.

We want to separate religion from the state in Iraq. We want laws which treat all residents of Iraq equally. We oppose all discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion, gender, sect and race.

We need equality for all residents of Iraq, including women.

Join us in the struggle for a secular constitution and a secular state in Iraq.

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**January 31, 2005**