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As Iraqi security forces repress protests, will the world condemn the violence?

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)) strongly condemns the Iraqi government's continuing, violent crackdown on peaceful protestors in the country, and calls on it to observe basic international norms in its handling of such protests. Citizens have a right to voice their political opinion without fear of immediate harm or reprisal.

Government and government-aligned paramilitary violence against peaceful protestors has been widely reported since a wave of protests swept the country, particularly the capital and the southern regions, in October 2019.

Repression of protests and individuals has continued since.

The most recent round of state violence has been directed against protestors in the southern city of Nasiriyah, in the Dhi Qar governorate. The city has seen growing protests over the last months, directed against alleged state corruption, and state [violence](#) itself.

On Thursday (25th) evening, 'dozens' of protestors were injured by security forces, it has been reported.

Responding to violence against protestors in the city this week, in a statement released [on Tuesday](#) (23rd), the United Nations Assistance Mission to [Iraq](#) (UNAMI) said that 'it strongly condemns the recent deadly violence in Dhi Qar. We again call on the authorities to put an end to impunity: those responsible for this and earlier attacks must be brought to justice.'



'Calm and peaceful resolution of differences are the only way forward', the statement continued.

One protestor in the city is reported as having said, "Our demands need to be met at once. That's the governor's resignation and holding him to account for corruption, and disclosing the identities of those who killed protesters and holding them to account".

The [Iraqi](#) government must abide by national and international law in their treatment of civilian protests. AOHR UK calls on both central and local state officials, to abide by those laws, and to generally respect the basic, universal right to protest.

AOHR UK [maintains its position](#) that the international community must put far greater pressure on Iraqi officials, to ensure that those rights are enjoyed by the whole of the Iraqi population.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)