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As Violence Escalates in Iraq, Iraqi Woman Makes Rare Trip to the US to Speak Out for Peace

Eman Ahmed Khamas Will Speak in Tucson on April 11 about daily life in Iraq and the possibility of an impending civil war.

WHEN: April 11, 7 p.m.

WHERE: Unitarian Universalist Church, 4831 E. 22nd Street, Tucson, Arizona

WHAT: On April 11, 2006 in Tucson, Arizona Eman Ahmed Khamas will speak first-hand about the situation in Iraq, especially the escalation of violence that's occurred since the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra. Khamas arrived in the United States on March 5th with a delegation of Iraqi women who want to tell their stories to the American public and urge US and UN officials to create a peace plan to end the escalating cycle of violence.

Khamas is a journalist, translator and human rights activist who lives in Baghdad with her husband and two daughters. She is a member of the Women's Will organization, which focuses on defining and defending women's rights outside of political party interests and opposing incarceration of women as hostages. Khamas regularly publishes articles on women's conditions in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, and has documented human rights violations committed by US and Iraqi forces. She is also involved in mobilizing emergency relief (medicines, food and clothing) for victims of the war, especially women and children living in refugee camps.

The Iraqi women's delegation that Khamas is part of is promoting a Women's Call for Peace that's been signed by 100,000 women around the globe. The call urges a shift in strategy in Iraq, from a military model to a conflict resolution model. It requests the withdrawal of all foreign troops and foreign fighters from Iraq, negotiations to reincorporate disenfranchised Iraqis, full representation of women in the peacemaking process, and a commitment to women's equality in the post-war Iraq. The full text is available at www.womensaynotowar.org.

The Iraq war has cost the lives of tens of thousands of Iraqis (estimates range from 28,535 to over 100,000) and over 2,300 US troops. In this month of the three-year anniversary of the war, the country remains wracked by violence and threatened with the prospect of civil war, Iraqi civilians are suffering from a lack of basic services, including electricity and clean water, and women's rights are being eroded.

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