



International Organization for Migration - Mission in Iraq IOM Helps Georgian Migrants Return Home

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IOM has helped 12 migrant workers from Georgia to return safely home after they became stranded in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Promised well-paying jobs at a factory in the northern Iraqi governorate of Dahuk, the workers traveled overland from Georgia to Iraq in March 2010. Upon their arrival, however, they found that the conditions at the factory were unsafe and their salaries were not what had expected.

After several months of dangerous work, the workers decided to leave Iraq. This was complicated by the fact that their employer refused to hand over their passports, and had failed to secure proper visas for the workers in the first place. Furthermore, the employer was demanding that the workers pay exorbitant compensation to the company for breaking their contracts.

The workers were able to relay information about their situation to the Embassy of Georgia in Amman, Jordan, which in turn contacted IOM with a request to help the workers to leave Iraq.

Working in close cooperation with the Embassy of Georgia, the Kurdistan Regional Government's Bureau of Migration and Displacement (BMD), the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) and other local authorities, IOM arranged for the workers to be provided with the necessary travel documents and transportation to return home.

"We highly appreciate [IOM's] valuable cooperation," said H.E. Mr. Zurab Eristavi, the Ambassador of Georgia to Jordan. "I think that with mutual cooperation we can avoid such cases in the future."

IOM's office in Georgia is also working with potential migrants before they leave the country to help them make informed decisions and avoid becoming stranded in a foreign country.



IOM staff in Dahuk assist the stranded workers in Dahuk



The workers prior to their departure from Iraq



H.E. Mr. Zurab Eristavi, the Ambassador of Georgia to Jordan (L) meets with IOM Head of Erbil Hub Lado Gvilava (R)

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