

# *Ex British Cabinet Members Accused of Iraq War Crimes*

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London, January 13 (RHC)-- The International Criminal Court (ICC) has been asked to examine the actions of former British cabinet members and troops over claims of torture in Iraq. The European Centre for Constitutional Human Rights (ECCHR) and the Public Interest Lawyers (PIL) firm said in a statement that they have filed a joint complaint to the ICC, calling for a probe into British war crimes in the war-torn country.

In their 250-page complaint, the two NGOs called for a probe into the actions of senior British officials, particularly former Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon and Minister of State for the Armed Forces Adam Ingram for “systematic torture and abuse” of prisoners in Iraq between 2003 and 2008.

Over the past few years, more than 400 Iraqi prisoners have contacted PIL, based in Birmingham, central England, alleging “serious abuse and humiliation” by British soldiers. According to the law firm, the allegations ranged from sexual and religious humiliation to physical violence.

German daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reported that the British Ministry of Defense confirmed that there had been “isolated” cases of abuse by British soldiers in Iraq, but denied the alleged systematic torture by members of the British army.

The U.S. and Britain invaded Iraq in blatant violation of international law in 2003 under the pretext of finding weapons of mass destruction, allegedly stockpiled by former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. No

such weapons were ever discovered in Iraq. According to the California-based investigative organization Project Censored, more than one million Iraqis have been killed as a result of the invasion and subsequent occupation of the country.

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