

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**Sulaymaniyah, Iraq**  
**12 May 2008**

### **Asuda Shelter Comes Under Attack**

On 11 May 2008 at 2300 HRS, Asuda shelter's building in Sulaymaniyah came under gunfire attack by unidentified gunmen. As a result of the attack, a woman held at the shelter was seriously wounded by three direct bullets. According to preliminary information, the gunmen opened fire on the shelter from a house [reportedly unoccupied] next to the shelter and shot at the shelter premises. The victim [S.H. M] a mother of 3 children from Chamchamal, Sulaymaniyah was immediately taken to Sulaymaniyah Emergency Hospital. According to the hospital reports, the woman's condition is currently stable after 4-hour long major surgery.


The woman was admitted into the shelter in March 2008, she was referred to Asuda by the Department of Violence against Women of the Police Department in Sulaymaniyah. She was accused by her husband of adultery and fearing abuse and honor killing she escaped her house and resorted to Asuda shelter.

The relevant security and police authorities were immediately notified about the incident and investigation is currently underway.

Asuda has been subject to various forms of direct and indirect threats because of its protection work. Women protection is a difficult challenge in Iraq and Kurdistan due to society's culture and tradition and lack of necessary laws and regulations to combat violence and abuse against women. However, this is the first time Asuda comes under direct attack.

Asuda for Combating Violence against Women was founded in 2000 in Sulaymaniyah and has been running a Women Protection Shelter since 2002. Since its establishment, Asuda provided protection to over 470 women.

Asuda calls upon the authorities in Kurdistan to act immediately to bring the perpetrators to justice.



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End of Statement

