



## PRESS RELEASE: "Cambridge Human Rights group launches national Iraq petition"

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### Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq

CASI is a society at Cambridge University. Its committee members are students. CASI is exclusively concerned with the humanitarian consequences of sanctions on Iraq. It does not support Saddam Hussein's regime and is not opposed to military sanctions on Iraq.

Cambridge students have combined old fashioned student activism with new fashioned information technology. This past week, students from the Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq (CASI) launched a national petition for the lifting of the non-military sanctions on Iraq. Unicef has estimated that an additional half million children under the age of five have died in Iraq under sanctions.

The students standing in the market square in the rain on Saturday were the old fashioned part. Ali Draper, an archaeology student who organised Saturday's event in Cambridge, was pleased with how it went. "The response from the public was very encouraging, despite the weather. Many people approached us, having heard about the effects of the sanctions through their churches, friends, or the media. At least one ex-serviceman who had fought in the Gulf War came to sign his name to oppose Britain's support for this disastrous policy."

The new fashioned part lies in the interactive website designed by physics PhD student, Seb Wills. "The website allows people anywhere in the country to download a version of the petition automatically customised for their own constituency," said Seb. The website does this by accessing the list of MPs on the House of Commons website and inserting their name and constituency into the petition.

Yousef Ghazi-Tabatabai, a maths student of Iranian background and CASI Co-ordinator, explained why the petition was being launched now: "The petition is designed to run up until the general election next year, and provides an opportunity for people to demand an MP who is committed to lifting economic sanctions. We launched it this week to co-incide with International Children's Day."

Copies of the petition are available from [www.notinournames.org.uk](http://www.notinournames.org.uk) or by sending an SAE to Seb Wills, Clare College, Cambridge CB2 1TL. The petition needs both signatures and Local Contacts, people to promote the petition in their constituencies.

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Unicef reference: 12 August 1999, "Iraq surveys show 'humanitarian emergency'", <http://www.unicef.org/newsline/99pr29.htm>

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