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The Rt Hon Des Browne  
Secretary of State for Defence  
Ministry of Defence  
The Ministerial Correspondence Unit  
Floor 5, Zone A  
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Whitehall, London  
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29 May 2007

Dear Secretary of Defence,

Amnesty International wishes to raise with you the case of Ali Salam ‘Abdul Hassan al-Rukabi, an Iraqi student aged 18 who was shot dead in a Basra district, reportedly by UK troops. According to information that we have received, on 10 April 2007 Ali Salam ‘Abdul Hassan al-Rukabi was visiting his uncle's house in [REDACTED] in al-Qibla, west of Basra. As he stepped outside the house, and according to witnesses, he was shot, apparently by a UK soldier from a tank positioned in the same street. A neighbour who heard the shot came out of his house and rushed Ali Salam ‘Abdul Hassan al-Rukabi to Basra’s General Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival. He had sustained a fatal shot to the forehead above his left eye. His family said that Ali Salam ‘Abdul Hassan al-Rukabi was not carrying any kind of weapon at the time when he was shot.

Amnesty International has also received a copy of an Iraqi police report which refers to UK troops “opening fire indiscriminately at passers-by,” killing [REDACTED] a policeman, and two civilians, [REDACTED] and Ali Salam ‘Abdul Hassan al-Rukabi. This incident is said to have taken place at 3pm on 10 April 2007 in al-Qibla. In the police report no details were given as to the exact place and manner in which Ali Salam ‘Abdul Hassan al-Rukabi and the other victims were killed.

Amnesty International would appreciate receiving clarification from you regarding the killing of Ali Salam ‘Abdul Hassan al-Rukabi, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], including whether an investigation into the circumstances surrounding their death has been initiated by relevant UK authorities in Basra. We would also welcome receiving your comments about allegations that UK forces acted unlawfully by firing indiscriminately at passers-by, as the Iraqi police report suggests. In light of Amnesty International’s long-standing concern about the lack of

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compliance of Royal Military Police-Special Investigations Branch investigations with relevant international and domestic human rights law and standards, we call on the UK authorities to ensure that a civilian-led mechanism investigate these allegations.

Yours sincerely,



For Irene Khan, Secretary General