

## Hunger strike girl back at US embassy after hospital scare

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London Evening Standard: A teenage girl on hunger strike outside the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square returned to begin a third week without food after being rushed to hospital.

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A teenage girl on hunger strike outside the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square returned to begin a third week without food after being rushed to hospital.

Soudabeh Heidari, 19, is the youngest of 10 people refusing to eat in a call for action to help Iranian dissidents housed in a camp in Iraq.

The student, from Mill Hill, was taken to University College Hospital this week after her blood pressure plummeted. She has also had kidney problems. But after eight hours in hospital she ignored doctors' warnings that they can do nothing for her unless she eats again and rejoined the protest.

About 3,500 people live at Camp Ashraf, which was set up north-east of Baghdad in the Eighties to house opponents of the Iranian regime.

Iraqi security forces entered the camp to take control on 28 July, leaving at least eight dead and hundreds injured since the violence began, according to Amnesty International.

"We don't want to get sick and go to hospital but we have to, to get attention from the US and this government and the UN," Ms Heidari said last night.

"If I want to walk a few metres, people have to help. In hospital the doctor told me: 'I cannot do anything for you. You need food immediately.'

"But the people in Ashraf are not just your ordinary people, they are the hope of the Iranian people to bring about change in Iran."

Ms Heidari came to England from Iran two years ago when her father decided they could no longer live under its oppressive authorities, which she claimed executed her uncle.

Some of the hunger strikers - six men and four women - are on their 17th day consuming only water and have no energy to do anything but lie motionless under blankets.

Azadeh Hosseini, also from Mill Hill and spokeswoman for the protesters, said video footage showed people in the camp being beaten to death and run over by forklift trucks.

"So far we've had absolutely no response from the Embassy," she said. "The US needs to take some sort of action and to recognise the fact that we are here."