

'Chemical Ali' execution debated

by UPI

BAGHDAD - The war criminal known as "Chemical Ali" remains in U.S. military custody as Iraqi officials debate the legality of his execution by Iraq. Ali Hassan al-Majeed, Sultan Hashem Ahmed and Hussein Rashid were to be executed within 30 days after an Iraqi appeals court upheld their sentences in early September, CNN reported Tuesday. The three Sunnis were convicted of war crimes against the Kurds in the late 1980s during the reign of Saddam Hussein. Various factions within the Iraqi government, however, disagree on the legal and procedural requirements for carrying out the death sentences ordered by the Iraqi High Tribunal, said Mirembé Nantongo, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Embassy in Iraq. The required three members of the Iraqi presidential council have been unwilling to sign the death warrant, as mandated under Iraqi law. "Coalition forces will continue to retain physical custody of the defendants until this issue is resolved, Nantongo told CNN Monday.

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