

13 July 2009



Secretary-General

SG/A/1193*

BIO/4095*

IK/606

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

Biographical Note

SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS AD MELKERT OF NETHERLANDS

AS HIS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR IRAQ

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed Ad Melkert of the Netherlands as his Special Representative for Iraq. Mr. Melkert currently serves as the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in New York, and will replace Staffan de Mistura. The Secretary-General is grateful for Mr. de Mistura's valuable leadership in a challenging security environment for the entire United Nations Mission in Iraq.

Mr. Melkert brings to the new position a unique combination of extensive political experience, as a former Member of Parliament and Minister in the Netherlands, and economic and development expertise from his time at UNDP and the World Bank. As a result, he enters with a deep understanding of the nature of challenges and priorities that face Iraq at this phase of its transition.

Before joining the United Nations, Mr. Melkert served as a member of the Board of Directors at the World Bank for over three years where, as Executive Director, he represented Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Israel, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, the Netherlands, Romania, and Ukraine. The Board of Directors of the World Bank, chaired by the President, oversees the Bank's business, including approval of loans and guarantees, new policies, the administrative budget, country assistance strategies, and borrowing and financial decisions.

Mr. Melkert joined the World Bank after a long and prominent political career in the Dutch Labour Party. He was Member of Parliament and Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, becoming the party's parliamentary leader in 1998. In 2001, he was elected party leader, succeeding then Prime Minister Wim Kok.

Mr. Melkert has had a long-standing involvement in issues of international and development cooperation. He was active in the international and European youth movement and worked for the Dutch development non-governmental organization Novib. In Parliament, he was a member of the Standing Committees for Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation. As a Minister, he led the Dutch delegations to the United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) and to the International Labour Organization's annual meetings.

Mr. Melkert holds a master's degree in political sciences from the University of Amsterdam.

Mr. Melkert was born in 1956. He is married and has two daughters. In addition to his native Dutch, he speaks English, German, French, and Spanish.

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* This supersedes Press Release SG/A/1049-BIO/3851 of 9 February 2007.